



**AN APPLICATION OF BUDDHIST TEACHINGS TO  
BUSINESS MANAGEMENT FOR THAI  
BUSINESS LEADERS**

Mr. Sorayuth Vathanavisuth

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of  
The Requirement for Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy  
(Buddhist Studies)

Graduate School  
Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University  
Bangkok, Thailand  
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The Graduate School of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University has approved this dissertation of "An Application of Buddhist Teachings to Business Management for Thai Business Leaders" submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Buddhist Studies.

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### บทคัดย่อ

คณาจารย์ฉบับนี้ มีจุดประสงค์ที่จะศึกษาหลักพุทธธรรมซึ่งสามารถประยุกต์ใช้ได้กับการจัดการทางธุรกิจและนำเสนอรูปแบบของการประยุกต์หลักพุทธธรรมในการจัดการทางธุรกิจสำหรับผู้นำทางธุรกิจไทย

การวิจัยนี้ดำเนินการโดยการใช้วิธีการวิจัย ๔ ประเภทได้แก่ ๑. การศึกษาหลักพุทธธรรมในเชิงลึก ๒. การศึกษาในเชิงลึกจากองค์กรทางธุรกิจแห่งหนึ่ง ๓. การสัมภาษณ์เชิงลึกผู้นำธุรกิจไทย และ ๔. การสนทนากลุ่ม

ผลวิจัยพบว่ามีหลักพุทธธรรมที่สามารถนำมาประยุกต์ใช้ได้ เช่น พรหมวิหาร ๔, อิทธิบาท ๔, ศีล ๕, อริยสัจ ๔ หลักพุทธธรรมเหล่านี้ได้นำมาประยุกต์ใช้โดยผู้นำธุรกิจไทยที่ได้ให้สัมภาษณ์เชิงลึก ทั้งนี้ผู้ให้สัมภาษณ์หลายท่านได้ยืนยันว่า การปฏิบัติธรรมด้วยการทำสมาธิอย่างสม่ำเสมอ เป็นปัจจัยสำคัญที่จะทำให้การนำไปประยุกต์ใช้ได้อย่างมีประสิทธิภาพ

นอกเหนือจากการประยุกต์ใช้กับผู้นำธุรกิจไทยแล้ว คณาจารย์นี้ยังได้เสนอแนะการนำหลักพุทธธรรมไปประยุกต์ใช้ในองค์กรธุรกิจตามองค์ประกอบ ๙ ประการอันได้แก่ ๑. การส่งเสริมการทำงานอย่างมีหลักการ ๒. การเคารพในผู้อื่น ๓. การส่งเสริมกิจกรรมเชิงพุทธศาสนา ๔. การส่งเสริมการมีเมตตาและยึดถือความถูกต้อง ๕. การส่งเสริมการร่วมมือกันของผู้ปฏิบัติงานที่มีความสามารถและจริยธรรม ๖. การส่งเสริมการทำงานอย่างมีจริยธรรม ๗. ค่านิยมและวัฒนธรรมองค์กร ๘. การมีบทบาทในการสั่งการ และ ๙. การปฏิบัติตนเองเป็นต้นแบบ

**Dissertation Title** : An Application of Buddhist Teachings to Business Management for Thai Business Leaders

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### **Abstract**

This dissertation aims to study according to three objectives i.e. to study Buddhist teachings which can be applied in business management, to explore and demonstrate methods of applying Buddhist teachings to business management for Thai business leader and to propose a model of application of Buddhist teachings for Thai business management.

The study is conducted based on four distinct research methods which are critical study on Buddhist teachings, an in-depth research on one business organization, interviewing Thai business leaders and focus group discussion.

Through these research activities, the researcher has found that there are numbers of Buddhist teaching which can be directly applied to business management. *Brahmavihāra*, *iddhipāda*, Five Precepts and Four Noble Truth are some of the teachings for which are currently employed by several Thai business leaders who provided their opinions through in-depth interview. The critical element involves in practice of *bhāvana* or meditation. Several interviewees advise that business person should meditate regularly in order to be effective in applying Buddhist teachings for management in the organization.

Besides applying the teachings with themselves, i.e. Thai business leaders, this dissertation also provides suggestion on how to apply Buddhist teachings in organization through nine critical factors which can be termed as **PRACTICAL**. They stand for **P**inciple-centered practice, **R**espect to others, **A**ction-based program on Buddhism, **C**ompassion & equanimity among others, **T**eam of capable and ethical members, **I**ntegrity practice in the organization, **C**ultures & values, **A**uthority to manage and **L**eading with role modelling.

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Number of people help me to finish this study. I wish to say thank you to all of interviewee and focus group's participants for providing me the insight opinions. Without their contributions, this study cannot be fulfilled.

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I wish to dedicate this dissertation and express my deep gratitude for my late parents who presented and guided me with necessity of education and practice of Buddhism in our daily life. Without their hard works to support their children, things will not be as appeared today.

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Sorayuth Vathanavisuth

### List of Abbreviations

A	Aṅguttaranikāya
D	Dīghanikāya
M	Majjhimanikāya
S	Saṃyuttanikāya

#### Other Abbreviations:

CEO	Chief Executive Officer
e.g.	exempli gratia, example
ed.	Editor (s), edited by
etc.	et cetera/ and others
i.e.	id est/ that is to say
Ibid.	Ibidem/ in the same source
MD	Managing Director
Mr.	Mister
Mrs.	Missus
p.	page
Vol.	Volume

#### Example:

A II 18.

A	=	Aṅguttaranikāya
II	=	Volume 2
18	=	page 18.

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# CHAPTER I

## Introduction

### 1.1 Background and Significance of the Research Problems

In normal daily life, human being consumes numbers of products and services through various channels. They can buy product from retail store or on-line shopping just a click of a finger. When it comes to consumption, consumers in a society with vain and fickle values will prefer flashy and ostentatious products to high quality products which are not so flashy<sup>1</sup>. Growing demand of consumer is a result of clever marketing program which can stimulate purchase intention from the buyer.

As economy grows, variety of products and services also increase, which is in a matter of fact, faster than demand from consumers. The main reason behinds this fact is necessity of company to provide proper supply while introducing new product to the market continuously. New products hold the answer to most organization biggest problems<sup>2</sup>.

Individual consumer also has craving and defilement. Both of them cause individual to cry for new product and service to be consumed by them in order to be happy on daily basis. These craving and defilement stimulate one's desire over many things and also cause more stress when the demand is not fulfilled properly.

In this regard, requirement (or demand) from consumer keeps rising unexpectedly. It is a kind of action and reaction phenomenon. While company offers more products, consumers enjoys those products and want to continue consume them and also expect even better products to serve their needs and wants. Company also takes numbers of market research to find out in-depth requirement from consumer. Winning in business is about dominating. And success is about winning under that definition as often as possible<sup>3</sup>. Therefore, it is a never ending story.

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<sup>1</sup>Phra Brahmaganabhorn (P. A. Payutto), (Translated by Dhammavijaya and Bruce Evans; Compiled by Bruce Evans and Jourdan Arenson), **Buddhist Economics**, 2013, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup>Charles Merle Crawford, **New Products Management**, 8th Edition, (Singapore: McGraw-Hill College, 2006), p. 4.

<sup>3</sup>Jonathan Fields, **If Buddha Was CEO: The Four Immeasurables in Business**, Retrieved on 13 July 2014, [www.jonathanfields.com/blog/business-strategy-elevation/](http://www.jonathanfields.com/blog/business-strategy-elevation/).

What is described above is a simple explanation of how economy involves individual at personal level. Under requirement from the company, employee, either on the top executive or operational level, always works under pressure in order to catch up with endlessly requirement from customer. In this regard, employee always has stress which is not easy to handle. At another end of the spectrum, Buddhism recognizes many non-financial factors, which contribute to an individual's quality of life, are important<sup>4</sup>.

According to the Buddhist point of view, consumption is simply a means to human well-being. However when one indulges for the purpose of feeding desires, this can lead to ignorance and an increase in suffering<sup>5</sup>. Ignorance infiltrates our cognitive systems; it issues in a series of "distortions" (*vipallāsa*) which infect our perception (*sañña*), thinking (*citta*), and views (*diṭṭhi*) suffering<sup>6</sup>.

Buddhism offers definite solution for the above issue. Buddhism calls for the end of suffering. In a matter of fact, Gotama Buddha teaches many ways to get rid of all suffering (*dukkha*) and enlighten. As a consequence, human being will be happier and stay true with *dhamma* or natural fact. In addition, conversation and teaching of Gotama Buddha to Sigala according to Sigalovada Sutta<sup>7</sup> is a good example of how persons relate with people and society around them. Business organization can also be considered as a part of society which means it should not separate itself from society. It is right to say that doing business is not a 'value free' activity since business needs supportive condition for another part of society in order to be successful and sustainable. In this regard, profit should be treated only as a surplus of revenue over cost of goods sold.

Gotama Buddha also provided suggestion to business persons, rich householders, on how to preserve and increase their prosperity and how to avoid loss

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<sup>4</sup>Wanna Prayukvong, "A Buddhist economic approach to the development of community enterprises: a case study from Southern Thailand", **Cambridge Journal of Economics**, 2005: 1171.

<sup>5</sup>Maggie Chau, **A Buddhist View on Capitalism and Consumerism**, Retrieved on 14 July 2014, <http://newlotus.buddhistdoor.com/en/news/d/24148>, 2012.

<sup>6</sup>Bhikkhu Bodhi, **Facing the Future, Four Essays**, (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 2000), p.18-19.

<sup>7</sup>Maurice Walshe, **The long discourses of the Buddha : A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya**, (Somerville: Wisdom Publications, 1995), p. 30.

of wealth through *vyagghapajja sutta* - Conditions of Welfare<sup>8</sup>. At the first place, let's take a look at four conditions which lead to the welfare and happiness in this very life.

(1) *uṭṭhāna-sampadā* (The accomplishment of diligence, hard-working, persistent effort, being skilled in one's livelihood).

(2) *ārakkha sampadā* (The accomplishment of watchfulness, vigilance, protecting ones wealth from theft and disaster).

(3) *kalyāṇa-mittatā* (Good friendship, virtuous friendship, associating with and emulating those embodying faith (*saddhā*), virtue (*sīla*), generosity (*cāga*) and wisdom (*paññā*)).

(4) *sama jīvikatā* (Balanced livelihood, balanced living, abstaining from womanizing, drunkenness, gambling and evil friendships).

Besides, there are four 'conditions of spiritual progress' which conduce to a person's weal and happiness in one future life<sup>9</sup>.

(1) *saddhā sampadā* (The accomplishment of faith).

(2) *sīla sampadā* (The accomplishment of moral virtue).

(3) *cāga sampadā* (The accomplishment of charity).

(4) *paññā sampadā* (The accomplishment of wisdom).

Wealth alone, however, does not make a complete man nor a harmonious society. Possession of wealth all too often multiplies man's desires, and he is ever in the pursuit of amassing more wealth and power. This unrestrained craving, however, leaves him dissatisfied and stifles his inner growth. It creates conflict and disharmony in society through the resentment of the underprivileged who feel themselves exploited by the effects of unrestrained craving<sup>10</sup>.

Wanna Prayukvong also expresses that Buddhist approach to economics considers that rational behavior only develops after 'right views', or understanding, has been attained<sup>11</sup>. This is the first step on the Eightfold Path of the Buddha which

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<sup>8</sup> A IV 282, Bhikkhu Bodhi, **The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha A Translation of the Aṅguttara Nikāya**, (Somerville: Wisdom Publications, 2012), p. 1194-1197.

<sup>9</sup> Anjalī Chui, **Vyagghapajja\* Sutta: Conditions of Welfare**, Retrieved on 2 February 2017, <http://stylomilo.com/files/mv/YMBASr1/Dhamma/Notes%20for%20Vyagghapajja%20sutta.pdf>

<sup>10</sup>The Conditions of Welfare, Retrieved on 2 February 2017, [http://www.buddhanet.net/e-learning/ethics\\_v.htm](http://www.buddhanet.net/e-learning/ethics_v.htm).

<sup>11</sup> Wanna Prayukvong, "A Buddhist economic approach to the development of community enterprises: a case study from Southern Thailand", p. 1174.

advocates a sequence of personal development known as the threefold training<sup>12</sup> which, is comprised of (1) *sīla* or morality—the training and development of bodily and verbal behavior (2) *samādhi*, concentration, or emotional development and (3) *paññā* or wisdom.

In addition, to run business in the global capitalist framework, business leader cannot avoid to apply modern business practice into their routine business operation which usually begins with business model<sup>13</sup>, in order to define the right target audience of the business while carefully evaluate internal condition.

In this respect, business and Buddhism seems to separate from each other since the former purpose is on growth and financial benefit but the latter is on spiritual purpose. However, it is an interesting to find out linkage between both of them. Since, in particular, business person also needs to have peace of mind or mindfulness in order to obtain a good business performance.

On the other hand, the presence of wealth should not be only for profit but also for benefit of others. As for the ways in which wealth is to be used, business person should take the guideline of five principles of *bhoga-ādiya*<sup>14</sup>, which refers to uses of possessions; benefits one should get from wealth; reasons for earning and having wealth:

- (1) To use wealth to support oneself, one's family, and parents comfortably.
- (2) To use wealth to foster one's friends and colleagues comfortably.
- (3) To use wealth for protection from danger and all misfortunes.
- (4) To make *balī*, the fivefold offering:
  - (4.1) *Atithibalī*: offerings given as reception for guests
  - (4.2) *Ñātibalī*: to relatives, by giving help to them
  - (4.3) *Rājabalī*: offerings made to the state, such as taxes and duties
  - (4.4) *Devatābalī*: offerings made to deities, the things worshipped according

to beliefs or social traditions.

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<sup>12</sup> A I 235, Bhikkhu Bodhi, **The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha A Translation of the Aṅguttara Nikāya**, (Somerville: Wisdom Publications, 2012), p. 320.

<sup>13</sup> Alexander Osterwalder and Yves Pigneur, **Business Model Generation**, (Hoboken: Wiley, 2010), p.14-19.

<sup>14</sup> Phra Brahmaganabhorn (P.A. Payutto), **Dictionary of Buddhism**, (Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Publication, 2008), p.232-233.

(4.5) *Pubbapetabalī*: offerings made to the deceased.

5. To support recluses and holy men, monks who conduct themselves properly, practice well and develop themselves, who are not heedless or infatuated, and who maintain righteousness in society.

Besides, business practices in America, China, India and Japan have influenced Buddhism as Buddhism has influenced business practice.<sup>15</sup> Some of the business advice given by the Buddha over 2,600 years ago still seems sensible today. This suggests that some things about Buddhism have remained consistent despite its adaptation to different cultures.

During the time of Gotama Buddha there are numbers of story which demonstrate how Buddhist teachings could be related to running business. He advised Anathapindika the way of getting rich by work and zeal, makes friends and companions happy, keeps the goods in safety, makes the five oblations - to kin, guests, spirit, kings and deities, and leading heavenward, for all those recluses and good men<sup>16</sup>.

Gotama Buddha also told Anathapindika about four kinds of bliss to be won by the householder i.e. the bliss of ownership, the bliss of wealth, the bliss of debtlessness, the bliss of blamelessness<sup>17</sup>.

Schumacher rose in his famous book 'Small is beautiful'<sup>18</sup> which can be implied that business leader does not need to choose between growth and conventional stagnation. In a matter of fact, the question drops into the issue of how to move forward with the right way which will not harm the others and environment.

This kind of connection between Buddhism and business is also recognized by Watchara Ngamchitharoen in his research paper titled 'An Application of Buddhist Teachings in Economic Activities in Capitalist Society'<sup>19</sup> for which he clearly suggests proper approach to apply Buddhist teachings to business management. At the first

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<sup>15</sup> Charles Schwenk, **Managing Mindfully: Buddhism and Business**, p. 59, Retrieved on 14 July 2014, [http://buddhismandwork.com/Managing\\_Mindfully\\_PDF/BUDDHA.pdf](http://buddhismandwork.com/Managing_Mindfully_PDF/BUDDHA.pdf).

<sup>16</sup> A III 45, Bhikkhu Bodhi, **The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha A Translation of the Aṅguttara Nikāya**, (Somerville: Wisdom Publications, 2012), p. 665-666.

<sup>17</sup> A II 69, Ibid. p. 452.

<sup>18</sup> E F Schumacher, **Small is Beautiful**, (New York : HarperPerennial, 1989), p.66.

<sup>19</sup> Watchara Ngamchitharoen, **An Application of Buddhist Teachings in Economic Activities in Capitalist Society**, p. 1 of 3, Retrieved on 25 August 2014, [http://www.cubs.chula.ac.th/images/research/52\\_2/011\\_022552.pdf](http://www.cubs.chula.ac.th/images/research/52_2/011_022552.pdf).

place, the one who wants to use has to clearly understand Buddhist teachings and can apply with himself or herself. Then, applying to organization with strategic move is advisable at later stage.

This study will try to provide the answer to the above discussion by defining so called Buddhist teachings which can be used in business management.

## **1.2 Objectives of the Study**

1.2.1 To study Buddhist teachings which can be used in business management.

1.2.2 To explore and demonstrate methods of applying Buddhist teachings to business management for Thai business leader.

1.2.3 To propose a proper model of application of Buddhist teachings for Thai business management.

## **1.3 Statement of the Problems**

1.3.1 What are Buddhist teachings which can be used in business management?

1.3.2 How can Buddhist teachings be applied to business management?

1.3.3 What should be an application of Buddhist teachings to business management for Thai business leaders?

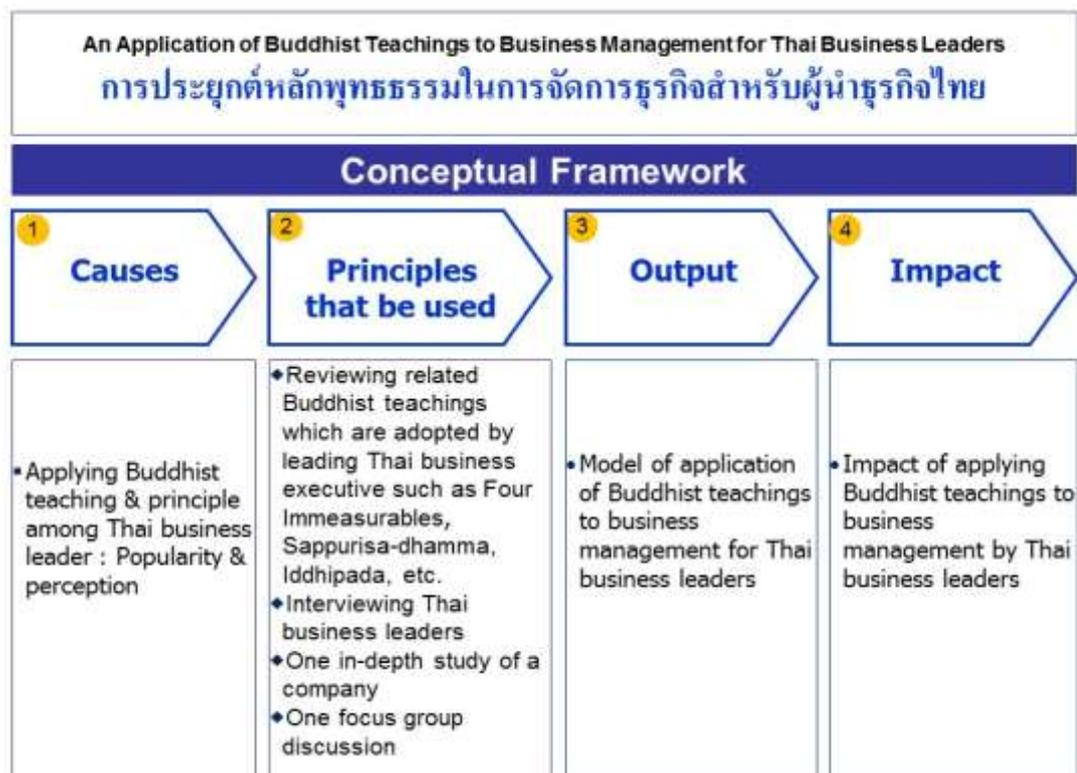
## **1.4 Definition of Terms used in the Research**

1.4.1 Application (of Buddhist Teaching): Activities and processes of taking Buddhist teachings to be used as a guideline for managing in business organization.

1.4.2 Buddhist teachings: Teachings in Buddhism which are generally perceived and practiced in Thailand.

1.4.3 Business Management: Managing of business organization for both people and task orientation. This terminology involves in both revenue-driven and non-revenue-driven activities.

## 1.5 Conceptual Framework



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

It is widely belief that Buddhist teachings are generally adopted and applied to business management. In this regard, the above conceptual framework can be seen on the first left box as the starting point of research which is treated as the causes or input to the research. In-depth critical study starts to involve on 2<sup>nd</sup> box, or can be considered as a process, together with Buddhist teachings which are in practice during the time of research. Then, the researcher can conclude and suggest the model of Buddhist teachings, or the output of research, which are suitable for Thai business leaders at the end on the third step. Impact is the fourth phase which demonstrates the impact of application of Buddhist teachings to business management.

## 1.6 Research Methods

This research's methodology involves three separated steps as follows:

1.6.1 **Collecting data** with critical study on Buddhist teachings and modern business management theory, interviewing and focus group discussion.

### 1.6.1.1 Critical study on Buddhist teachings:

The study conducts critical study on Buddhist teachings in relation to business management primarily focus on *brahmavihāra*, *iddhipāda*, Five Strengths (*pañcabalāni*), *sappurisa dhamma* (Qualities of a good man) and *aparīhāniya dhamma* (Seven Conditions of Welfare).

### 1.6.1.2 Critical study on modern business management theory

Management theory, which is influenced by Western practice, is also covered in this study especially on management definition, business model, change management, management system and strategic business planning.

### 1.6.1.3 Interviewing Thai business leaders

In-depth interview method is adopted for this study over another method due to its unique characteristics. The purpose of the interview is to allow the interviewees express their ideas towards applying Buddhist teachings to business management. In this regard, ten business leaders are interviewed based on questions which are provided to them beforehand (Appendix 1).

During the interview, the researcher used open end questioning technique and allowed the interviewee to answer and explain as long as they intended to with some comment, paraphrasing and further asking question in order to get deeper answer and knowledge from interviewees.

The researcher found, during the sessions, that these practices are useful due to the fact that each interviewee has different level of Buddhism's knowledge and terminology in particular. Therefore, further asking question can help the interviewees conceptual their answers to the point that the interviewer can understand their true answers and define the proper Buddhist terminology accordingly. The same approach is also adopted during focus group discussion in addition to asking question to different participant in order to avoid domination of particular participant who has higher communication skill than the others.

The interviewees are identified according to the following criteria:

1. They are executives or former executives who are either Chairman of the Board of Director, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or top executives who report directly to CEO.
2. The organizations, for which the interviewees manage, are the well-known business organization and have history of business success over the past ten years or so.
3. The interviewees are recognized as Buddhist devotees who practice Buddhism regularly.

List of ten interviewees is presented in Appendix 2.

1.6.1.4 **In-depth research on one business organization** which has a proven record of business success and widely adopts Buddhism on her business operation. In this regard, the author study the Siam Hands Co., Ltd. which its famous brand – Tangmo – has been around in domestic market more than two decades. The company is found and run by the President – Mr. Adisorn Puangchompu and Managing Director – Mrs. Amara Puangchompu – who has reputation of focusing on Buddhist management and still compete successfully in a cut-throat business environment.

The study mainly based on interviewing four executives, who are President, Managing Director, Production Manager and Human Resource Manager, by using the same set of questions for interviewing ten business executives (Appendix 1).

#### 1.6.1.5 **Focus group discussion:**

The discussion was organized on Saturday, October 1, 2016 in order to allow business leaders to express their opinions regarding application of Buddhist teachings.

There were 9 executives from different kind of business who were selected to participate in focus group activity due to their interest in Buddhism. List of focus group participant is presented in Appendix 3.

The discussion started on 1:00 pm and finished on 3:30 pm.

Before the focus group discussion was conducted, participants were requested to answer list of questions, which are similar to questions sent to in-depth interviewee, and reverted back to the researcher in order to compile the information and

prepare to present to the participant on focus group discussion day. These questions are shown on Appendix 4.

At the beginning of the focus group discussion, information gathering from answers of nine participants were presented to participants in order to provide conclusive information and set everyone in the same page first.

The focus group discussion was moderated by the researcher by; after giving result of the survey; going through only question no. 7 (Buddhist teachings), no. 9 (Applying Buddhist teachings), no. 10. (Benefit of applying Buddhist teachings), and no. 11 (Caution when applying Buddhism); due to time limitation. Otherwise the session will be too long which results in ineffective participation.

#### **1.6.2 Analyzing collected data**

After interviewing, the researcher identifies Buddhist teachings which are used by interviewees, focus group discussion and in-depth study of Siam Hands Co., Ltd. Then, the application of Buddhist teachings being used by the above business persons, focus group discussion and Siam Hands' in-depth study will be summarized in below table with further explanation on finding from each interviewee, focus group discussion and Siam Hands' in-depth study.

Source of information		Brahmavihāra	Icchāpāda	Five Precepts	Bhāvana (Meditation)	Satipaṭṭhāna	Sappurisa Dhamma	Paññā (Wisdom)	Four Noble Truth	Tilakkhaṇa	Noble Eightfold Path	Five Strengths	Five hindrances	Saddhamma
Interviewee	1													
Interviewee	2													
Interviewee	3													
Interviewee	4													
Interviewee	5													
Interviewee	6													
Interviewee	7													
Interviewee	8													
Interviewee	9													
Interviewee	10													
Focus Group														
Siam Hands														

**Table 1: Research finding and analysis (blank table)**

Refer to the above table, Buddhist teachings will be placed on the top row of the matrix while interviewees, focus group discussion and Siam Hands' in-depth study will be placed in left-hand column of the matrix. There will be a mark placed on the point where it presents Buddhist teaching is used by a particular party.

Discussion will be based on similarity among 10 in-depth interviewees, result from focus group discussion and Siam Hands' in-depth study supported by prior academic references. Then, the researcher will conclude the study with future research recommendation.

### 1.6.3 Formulating and giving suggestions.

1.6.4 **Scope of Time frame:** The study run from September 2014 – November 2016.

## 1.7 Review of the literature and research works concerned

1.7.1 Campbell, Andrew and Nash, Laura L. **A Sense of Mission**. Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1992..

**Abstract:** This book is written to explain in detail how to effectively handle organization's direction especially on emotional side of corporation. How to create and evaluate mission statements. It is the result of studies from more than 50 successful corporations such as Johnson & Johnson, Shell UK, British Airways, etc.

1.7.2 Field, Lloyd. **Business and the Buddha: Doing Well by Doing Good**. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2007.

**Abstract:** This book is written to properly demonstrate step-by-step logical thinking towards application of Buddhist teaching basically on the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path with issue of suffering is the main focal point. Numbers of practical application in real life business set up have been raised. This outstanding work by Dr. Lloyd Field should be highly recognized as one of the kind in the area of application of Buddhist teaching to business management.

1.7.3 Gopalakrishna, D. **Buddhism and Contemporary Management: With Special Reference to Vipasana Meditation**. Dehiwala: Buddhist Cultural Centre, 2006.

**Abstract:** A comprehensive book which relates Buddhism and modern theories of management, this book is written based on extensive research conducted by the author who is a faculty member in Bangalore University. It covers critical dimensions of Buddhism and management, impact of Buddhist meditation techniques, etc.

1.7.4 Kotter, John P. and Rathgeber, Holger. **Our Iceberg Is Melting**. London: MACMILLAN, 2014.

**Abstract:** This book is written to elaborate eight step change management process. It starts with create a sense of urgency followed by creating the guiding coalition, developing a change vision, communicating the vision for buy – in, empowering broad - based action, generating short – term wins, don't let up! and make it stick.

1.7.5 Osterwalder, Alexander and Pigneur, Yves. **Business Model Generation**. Hoboken: Wiley, 2010.

**Abstract:** This book discusses in detail of business model which can be applied to any organization. The author writes the book according to his PhD. Thesis. Nine components are elaborated which are value proposition, target customer, distribution channel, customer relationship management, core capability, partner, value configuration, cost structure and revenue stream.

1.7.6 Thompson Jr., Arthur A., Strickland III, A. J., and Gamble, John E. **Crafting and Executing Strategy: The Quest for Competitive Advantage - Concepts and Cases**, 14th Edition, New York: McGraw-Hill, 2005.

**Abstract:** This book presents the process from visioning to details of action plan. Strategy formulation is the key messages authors intend to share with the readers. It discusses long term view, vision & strategy, objectives and targets, action plan and monitoring of performance.

## **1.8 Expected Benefits of the Study**

1.8.1 Understanding which one of Buddhist teachings can be applied in business management.

1.8.2 Model of applying Buddhist teachings to business management for Thai business leaders.

1.8.3 Proper procedure to implement the application's model of Buddhist teachings in business organization.

1.8.4 Contribution of this work to daily practice

## CHAPTER II

### **Buddhist teachings and business management.**

Buddhist teachings<sup>1</sup> have much in common with modern managerial especially on important of harmony, leadership, people management, personal development and team building. The Threefold Training (*sikkhā*)<sup>2</sup> which is clearly elaborated by Gotama Buddha is the way for anyone to get rid of suffering. It comprises of virtue (*adhisīla-sikkhā*), to achieve a calm mind (*adhicitta-sikkhā*) and develop their wisdom (*adhipaññā-sikkhā*). Buddhist practice is about developing a clean and calm mind with neutrality to understand such complexity. However, as stated by Wanna Prayukvong<sup>3</sup>, it is not easy for human being to clearly see Dhamma or the natural fact since people were born with ignorance wisdom (*paññā*).

Besides, business also faces issue of continuous growth which put high burden to top executives for keep growing business while earns suitable profit. For this reason, they executives try to find the way to lessen and reduce stress to be better focus especially during working hour. They also search for new management technique to help them manage team and organization successfully.

#### **2.1 Business Management**

Modern management science started to be recognized of its important at the threshold of World War I due to the fact the large corporations were first beginning to take shape at the late of 19<sup>th</sup> century. Both of World War I and II are the major forces to stimulate management science since armies needed to recruit and manage millions of soldier almost at once. In this regard, it is right to say that management<sup>4</sup> can be

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<sup>1</sup>Charles A. Rarick, "Enlightened Management: An Analysis of Buddhist Precepts Applied to Managerial Activity", **Journal of Global Business Management**, October 2007, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> A I 235, Bhikkhu Bodhi, **The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha A Translation of the Aṅguttara Nikāya**, (Somerville: Wisdom Publications, 2012), p. 320.

<sup>3</sup> Wanna Prayukvong, **A Buddhist Economic Approach to a Business Firm: a Case Study**, Retrieved on 14 July 2014, [www.eco.ru.ac.th/eco/necon6/papers/g3/3.4.pdf](http://www.eco.ru.ac.th/eco/necon6/papers/g3/3.4.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> Peter F. Drucker, **The Essential Drucker**, (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2001), p. 4-9.

considered as activity which involves people, make them capable of joint performance, make their strengths effective and their weakness irrelevant.

On the business issue, in order to clearly understand what is a business, ones have to look with its purpose first<sup>5</sup>. In this regard, one valid business purpose is to create a customer. In a matter of fact, the customer is the one who determine what a business is since he/ she is the one who is willing to pay for product or service. The customer is the foundation of business and keeps it in existence and provides employment for employees. In this regard, it is right to say that business management is a practice of managing business which its main purpose is to make profit in order to secure proper investment for future growth and existing in the long term.

### **2.1.1 Business model:**

Generally speaking, business activity mainly involves selling product and / or service. Before starting the business, either the brand new one or a part of existing corporation, business executive has to think carefully regarding how to run a business. This format so called business model is the solid framework of each business to move for future mission. According to Alexander Osterwalder, business model should be comprised of nine components which can be applied to any industry<sup>6</sup> (Appendix 7).

(1) Value proposition is what the company offers the market. 7-Eleven provides convenience to individual consumers while Tesco Lotus goes after price-conscious shoppers.

(2) Specific target customer is who enjoys the firm's value proposition. Makro has attracted more food service clients by smartly shifting its focus to fresh food supply, resulting in better performance.

(3) Distribution channel is the way to reach and communicate with customers. Jeff Bezos put Amazon.com online in 1995 by utilizing the World Wide Web interlinked system that started in 1990.

(4) Customer relationship management provides communication of valuable offers to specific segments.

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<sup>5</sup>Peter F. Drucker, **Practice of management**, (Woburn: Butterworth-Heinemann, 2001), p. 34-35.

<sup>6</sup>Alexander Osterwalder and Yves Pigneur, **Business Model Generation**, (Hoboken: Wiley, 2010), p.14-19.

(5) Core capability demonstrates what a company can do best. Competing within an area of strength can enhance the market position of the firm.

(6) Partner plays a key role in today's competition. Japanese style Keiretsu is an excellent example of partnership among Japanese firms.

(7) Value configuration is how core capability, partners and cost structure relate together, resulting in a proper value proposition to a target audience.

(8) Cost structure presents the other side of business reality.

(9) Revenue stream is what all optimistic executives cry for. Revenue generated by the right business model will generate enough cash for future growth and a financial return to shareholders.

### 2.1.2 Management System:

To manage organization effectively, the 7S Management System<sup>7</sup> is usually referred. It is the work of Thomas Peter and Robert Waterman, two consultants working at the McKinsey & Company consulting firm in early 1980s. This management system comprises of Strategy, Structure, Systems, Shared Values, Style, Staff and Skills.

Strategy refers to actions a company plans in response to changes in its external environment. Structure is the basis of specialization and co-ordination influenced primarily by strategy, size, and diversity of organization. Systems<sup>8</sup> refer to formal and informal procedures that support the strategy and structure. Style (or culture) consists of two components which are organizational culture; the dominant values, beliefs, and norms which develop over time and become relatively enduring features of organizational life; and management style; more a matter of what managers do than what they say, how do company managers spend their time, what are they focusing on. Staff means the people/human resource management- processes used to develop managers, socialization processes, and ways of introducing young recruits to the company. Skills refer to the distinctive competences- what the company does best. Shared Values is the guiding concepts, fundamental ideas around which a business is

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<sup>7</sup> Thomas J. Peters and Robert H. Waterman Jr., **In Search of Excellence: Lessons from America's Best-Run Companies**, (New York: HarperBusiness Essentials, 2004), p. 9-11.

<sup>8</sup> Philip Kotler, **Marketing Management : Analysis, Planning, Implementation, and Control, 9th Edition**, (Upper Saddle River : Prentice-Hall, 1997), p. 87.

built- must be simple, usually stated at abstract level, have great meaning inside the organization even though outsiders may not see or understand them.

Besides organization may rearrange this 7s in different format and relationship among 7 factors<sup>9</sup>. Corporation can also focus each factor (of these 7 subjects) with different degree due to necessity of each corporation which is typically not the same.

### 2.1.3 Strategic business planning:

Having a right business model is a kind of target to the right group of customer which company is aiming for. Business can be effectively run, besides well-established business model, it also needs to have a proper strategic business planning and implementation. Thomson, Strickland and Gamble<sup>10</sup> define five step conventional strategic business planning, as displayed in Appendix 8, which is always started with the right Vision (or long term view of business), followed by Strategy, Goal, Action plan and Monitoring.

In this regard, it is a normal practice that CEO is accountable for producing a strategic business plan as a blue print for everyone in the organization - employees, management, board members and shareholders - to know the company's precise plans and its expectations from next year's operations. Based upon this, the following issues should be considered carefully, to cover the big picture when drawing up strategic business plan. As a rule of thumb, a good and effective Vision statement should contain the following attributes: Visualized (illustrating the desired future), Inspired (compelling to stakeholders), Short and Sharp (concise and with meaningful wording), Implemented (can be implemented), Opportunistic (potential business opportunity) and Numerical (can be measured in terms of achievement).

Following the Vision, Strategy is a brief plan that any business person will find not too difficult to understand. Under each strategic business planning, there should be more than one strategy but not more than five points in order to communicate

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<sup>9</sup>Andrew Campbell, and Laura L. Nash, **A Sense of Mission**, (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1992), p. 46-48.

<sup>10</sup>Arthur A. Thompson Jr., A. J. Strickland III and John E. Gamble, **Crafting and Executing Strategy: The Quest for Competitive Advantage - Concepts and Cases**, 14th Edition, (New York : McGraw-Hill, 2005), p. 18.

effectively to all stakeholders. They can be vital tools, highly practical and related to particular characteristics of the current industry, to support employees and executive morals toward tough times ahead.

The set of strategies will be followed by Measurement (or Goal). The measurement index will help management to assess whether each strategy is achieved (one measurement for one strategy or index numbers for each strategy). These sets of countable, realistic, hands-on measurements will be the key components to link inspired Strategy to be realized by means of measuring them.

The third component is Activity, the means to bring prosperous business to company. At this stage, management has to elaborate on each activity to help all participants understand what will happen in relation to company strategy and measurement indices. Each activity has to be clearly defined with a responsible persons.

Last but not least, management and the board should set a specific date to monitor and review the plan. The schedule should be indicated clearly even before day one of implementation to allow each party to be aware and prepare to achieve expected performance or, sometimes, to take a closer look on a contingency plan.

#### 2.1.4 Change Management:

In addition, business also faces issue of continuous growth which put high burden to top executive for keep growing business while earns suitable profit. For this reason, business executive tries to find the way to lessen and reduce stress to be better focus especially during working hour. They also search for new management technique to help them manage team and organization successfully. Change management is also another subject for which top executives in business world regularly address. The 8-step Change Management model<sup>11</sup> from Prof. Kotter is widely perceived of its simplicity and practical change process to any organization. The 8-step begin with STEP 1: Create a Sense of Urgency - Help others feel a gut - level determination to move and win, now.

STEP 2: Creating the Guiding Coalition - Putting together a group with enough power to lead the Change. STEP 3: Developing a Change Vision - Clarify how

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<sup>11</sup>John P. Kotter, **Leading Change**, (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1996), p. 20-24.

the future will be different from the past. STEP 4: Communicating the Vision for Buy – in - Ensuring that as many people as possible understand and accept the vision. STEP 5: Empowering Broad - Based Action - Removing as many barriers as possible and unleashing people to do their best work. STEP 6: Generating Short – term Wins – Creating visible, unambiguous success as soon as possible. STEP 7: Don't Let Up! Consolidating gains and producing more change. STEP 8: Make It Stick Anchoring new approaches in the culture for sustained change<sup>12</sup>.

## 2.2 Buddhist teachings

Buddhist Teachings are teachings from Gotama Buddha which can be traced back over 2,600 years ago. The teachings mainly guide the Buddhists how to release themselves from suffering. Suffering is caused by three poisons<sup>13</sup> which are greed, hatred and delusion. These three poisons let human being keeps continuing on suffering path.

### 2.2.1 Four Noble Truths:

Numbers of Buddhist teaching are generally well known among business leaders although they may not be aware of the exact terminology, according to Buddhist teachings, but they regularly apply in their business operations. The Buddha himself said that he taught only four ideas or Four Noble Truths (*cattāri ariyasaccāni*)<sup>14</sup>; dissatisfaction (*dukkha*), cause (*samudaya*), end (*nirodha*), and path (*maggā*). “Dissatisfaction” refers to the unhappiness we feel in our lives. “Cause” is the reason for this unhappiness: our undisciplined, grasping mind. “End” is the Buddha’s promise that we can end suffering by eradicating our craving. “Path” is the eight steps we must take to reach this goal<sup>15</sup>. These eight steps bring peace and happiness to those who follow them.

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<sup>12</sup>John P. Kotter and Holger Rathgeber, **Our Iceberg Is Melting**, (London: MACMILLAN, 2014), p. 130-131.

<sup>13</sup> Lloyd Field, **Business and the Buddha: Doing Well by Doing Good**, (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2007), p. 6.

<sup>14</sup> S V 421, Bhikkhu Bodhi, **The Connected Discourses of the Buddha : A New Translation of the Saṃyutta Nikāya vol. II**, (Somerville: Wisdom Publications, 2000), p. 1843-1844.

<sup>15</sup> Bhante Henepola Gunaratana, **Eight Mindful Steps to Happiness: Walking the Buddha's Path**, (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2001), p. 50.

Step one: Skillful Understanding of the Buddha’s message requires that we understand skillful behavior in terms of cause and effect and the Four Noble Truths and how they fit into the overall scheme of the Buddha’s teachings.

Step two: Skillful Thinking introduces us to three positive thoughts—generosity or letting go, loving-friendliness, and compassion. Step three: Skillful Speech explains how telling the truth and avoiding malicious talk, harsh language, and gossip can help us advance on the path.

Step four: Skillful Action lays out the principles for leading an ethical life—especially abstaining from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, and intoxication.

Step five: Skillful Livelihood explains why choosing an appropriate job or profession is important to our spiritual practice and how we should approach questions of business ethics.

Step six: Skillful Effort lays out four steps we can take to motivate our practice—preventing negative states of mind, overcoming negative states of mind, cultivating positive states of mind, and maintaining positive states of mind.

Step seven: Skillful Mindfulness refers to the practice of mindfulness meditation—specifically, cultivating mindfulness of your body, feelings, mind, and thoughts.

Step eight: Skillful Concentration refers to four stages of deep absorption we can reach in meditation.

### 2.2.2 *Brahmavihāra*:

The Four *Brahmavihāra*<sup>16</sup>; the four Buddhist virtues also known as the Four Immeasurables; comprises of *mettā* (loving kindness, friendliness, goodwill wishing happiness for everyone), *karuṇā* (compassion, wishing people to be free from suffering), *muditā* (sympathetic joy, altruistic joy, taking joy in the achievements of others) and *upekkhā* (equanimity, neutrality, poise equanimity amid success or failure). Some see that all beings are related, and so deals with them with *mettā* and *karuṇā*, helping them in their need<sup>17</sup>. In this regard, *upekkhā* typically perform as a balancer of

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<sup>16</sup> D I 252, Maurice Walshe, **The Long Discourses of the Buddha : A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya**, (Somerville: Wisdom Publications, 1995), p. 194-195.

<sup>17</sup> Phra Debedi (Prayuth Payutto), **Helping Yourself To Help Others** (Translated by Puriso Bhikkhu), (Bangkok, Buddhadhamma Foundation Publications, 1990), p. 43.

principle and too much kindness. Therefore, it is right to say that, for these Four Sublime States of Mind, the first three qualities are emotional-based; the last quality, *upekkhā*, is wisdom-based<sup>18</sup>.

### 2.2.3 Noble Eightfold Path:

The Noble Eightfold Path<sup>19</sup>, which is considered to be suitable for business management nowadays, can be classified into three groups - Mindful Awareness, Wisdom and Moral Discipline.

Mindful Awareness refers to being aware of what one is doing. Using such an approach, business executives can address difficult business problems effectively. Mindful Awareness has three approaches:

**Right Mindfulness (*sammā-sati*)** refers to being aware of one's thoughts, feelings, body and the business issues being faced. Without mindfulness, people will behave by instinct in accordance with their own mental models, which is suitable most of the time. But when tough decisions must be made during major crises or even small personal matters such as being late for a meeting due to traffic, business executives must practice mindfulness, being aware of each moment of a particular issue.

To be ready for any circumstance, business executives need **Right Concentration**, which in this context means meditation. When people meditate, they go deep inside and become aware of themselves to varying degrees, depending on the individual. Meditating regularly and continuously will improve productivity for long-term results. Practicing Right Mindfulness is a good start, but executives must sustain and enhance mindful ability with meditation as well.

**Right Concentration (*sammā-samādhi*)**, or meditation, can be subdivided into two categories - Concentration and Insight meditation<sup>20</sup>.

**Right Effort (*sammā-vāyāma*)** refers to persistence in hard work even in the face of daunting obstacles and a low probability of success. Moving along this path,

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<sup>18</sup> Soamwasee Namtip, **Buddhism & The Business World: The Buddhist Way to deal with business**, A conversation Between Ven. Phra Brahmaganabhorn (P. A. Payutto) & An International Management Consultant, (Bangkok: Chandrpen Publishing House, 2010), p. 59.

<sup>19</sup> S V 2, Bhikkhu Bodhi, **The Connected Discourses of the Buddha : A new Translation of the Saṃyutta Nikāya vol. II**, (Somerville: Wisdom Publications, 2000), p. 1524.

<sup>20</sup> A II 93, Bhikkhu Bodhi, **The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha A Translation of the Aṅguttara Nikāya**, (Somerville: Wisdom Publications, 2012), p. 474-475.

executives must have high stamina on top of being mindful. Another main approach is the **Right View** (*sammādiṭṭhi*) which refers to understanding business models and what should or should not be done both short and long term. Executives may wish to aim for high growth and healthy profits, but these must be based on reality, on whether such goals can be reached.

Following the **Right View** is **Right Intentions** (*sammā sankappa*), both of which fall under the Wisdom category since they require a cognitive ability to understand the world around us. Right Intention as a management approach is defined as doing no harm to others while performing properly in this material world.

The next three paths fall under Moral Discipline. Right Speech (*sammā-vācā*) entails maintaining proper conversation at all times. There should be no ill-intentioned words such as verbal abuse, gossip, lies, half-truths, harsh speech or white lies. Positive thinking and words of wisdom should be encouraged among employees in order to foster a good environment. Executives who consistently behave properly will be recognized as good role models while strengthening the desired corporate culture.

The next approach is **Right Action** (*sammā-kammanta*), which refers to abstaining from all wrongdoing, behaving ethically and following proper etiquette. Top executives applying this guidance properly will run their businesses in accordance with their company's code of conduct. Corporate governance and ethical standards are always embedded in their minds and corporate cultures to be the backbone of their businesses.

The last guidance is **Right Livelihood** (*sammā-ājīva*), which means abstaining from running a business that can harm others. In broad terms, it typically refers to all illegal businesses in which normal people are not involved. But specifically, depending on individual conditions this can be applied to any business they should not be involve in if they believe it will hurt others or society at large.

However, there are five areas of trade for which the Buddha suggested lay disciple to avoid as described in *vanijja sutta*<sup>21</sup>.

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<sup>21</sup> A III 209, Bhikkhu Bodhi, **The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha A Translation of the Aṅguttara Nikāya**, (Somerville: Wisdom Publications, 2012), p. 790.

1. *Sattha vaṇijjā* (trade in weapons).
2. *Satta vaṇijjā* (trade in human beings).
3. *Maṃsa vaṇijjā* (trade in flesh, trade in animals for meat).
4. *Majja vaṇijjā* (trade in spirits).
5. *Visa vaṇijjā* (trade in poison)

Applying the Noble Eightfold Path can help executives to achieve their goals while making peace and mindfulness internally. Business executives can apply to their typical business life. Therefore, the sequence of this Noble Eightfold Path is not in the same order as is typical, which would mainly guide laymen on the path to spiritual awareness and release from suffering.

Typically, the Noble Eightfold Path begins with **Right Understanding (or Right View (*sammāditṭhi*))**, which is formally defined as understanding the Four Noble Truths. The vision, mission and strategy of the organization determine the path which it takes. The organization culture and tone at the top indicates the sincerity which the organization will follow business ethics.<sup>22</sup> It is the responsibility of a leader to make decisions. Buddhism's contribution to the psychology of decision making is profound. The Buddha taught that, before making any decisions, one should first ensure that one is not acting out of the biased conduct (*agati*) which are (1) *chanda agati* - the going a bad way through will (2) *dosa agati* - the going a bad way through hate (3) *bhaya agati* - the going a bad way through fear (4) *moha agati* - the going a bad way through foolishness and delusion (*mohāgati*).<sup>23</sup>

These eight steps<sup>24</sup>, of the Noble Eightfold Path, are often represented as a wheel—the wheel of clarity, as opposed to the wheel of endless birth, death, and rebirth. Clarity stops the cycle of repeated births and deaths. The spokes on the wheel of clarity are the eight steps of the Buddha's path. Its hub is the combination of compassion and wisdom. By contrast, the spokes of the wheel of endless birth, death, and rebirth are the

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<sup>22</sup>Chandra Jayaratne, **Buddhism in the Board Room** – A presentation made at the 2600th SambuddhathvaJayanthi OPA Seminar under the Theme -Buddhism and Business Management, Retrieved on 14 July 2014, <http://www.tisrilanka.org/?p=7541>.

<sup>23</sup>Ajahn Brahm, **The Buddhist Contribution to Good Governance** - a keynote speech delivered to the United Nations 2007 Vesak celebrations at Buddhamonthon, Nakhonpathom Province, Thailand, May 2007, p. 4. Retrieved on 14 July 2014, <http://agnt.org/snv/resources/BuddhistContribution.pdf>.

<sup>24</sup>Bhante Henepola Gunaratana, *Eight Mindful Steps to Happiness: Walking the Buddha's Path*, p. 51.

many lives we have led and will lead in the realms of suffering. The hub of this wheel is the combination of desire, hatred, and ignorance.

#### **2.2.4 Sappurisa Dhamma:**

*Sappurisa Dhamma* (Qualities of a good man) is another Buddhist teaching which can relate to business management. Take a closer look at business leader, a leader's duty is not only to make decisions avoiding self-interest, ill will, delusion, or fear, the manager must also be a wise problem-solver. They must be skillful in: (a) giving feedback, (b) taking feedback, and (c) creating a meaningful agenda<sup>25</sup>. In this regard, it is clearly seen that the one that is responsible to manage the others and the company has to consciously aware of how to manage properly. This brings the discussion to the Buddhist teaching so called *sappurisa dhamma*<sup>26</sup> (or qualities of a good man). These *sappurisa dhamma* are comprised of knowing the law, knowing the purpose, knowing oneself, knowing how to be temperate, knowing the proper time, knowing the assembly and knowing the individual.

According to the *sutta*, good persons must be truly aware of themselves, roles and responsibilities, knowledge and capabilities. What are their preferences on particular issues? What are their beliefs regarding ethical and spiritual practices? What are their unique capabilities? If ones truly **know themselves**, they will be able to assess our ability to handle any assignment and use that power to complete it successfully.

Good persons also need to **know the causes** behind an issue and to firmly uphold principles. This second principle is based on the fact that human beings will not easily believe and accept anything. They will study an issue in reference to their own rational framework and try to find the logic.

The third principle is the ability to foresee results. Good persons **know both the purpose and consequences** of what they are doing. They are proactive when it comes to implementing previously agreed plans in order to achieve the ultimate goal. Shared vision plays a crucial role in this area.

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<sup>25</sup>Ajahn Brahm, *The Buddhist Contribution to Good Governance*, p. 7, Retrieved on 14 July 2014, <http://agnt.org/snv/resources/BuddhistContribution.pdf>, April 2007.

<sup>26</sup> **D III 254**, Maurice Walshe, **The long discourses of the Buddha A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya**, (Somerville: Wisdom Publications, 1995), p. 502.

**Knowing how to be temperate** is vital for everyone good persons not only for good persons. They tend to push for work performance only to the point that it is necessary to the organization. They also behave moderately and consume products and services only as needed. This is how the concept of sustainability has evolved.

The fifth guideline relates to **knowing how to manage time**. Good persons have to carefully and effectively evaluate the scope of work and also the time required. The best approach is to adopt a regular and steady pace of work to deliver the output as promised. Choosing the right time for work to be done is also essential since everything has its own pace.

Human beings are social animals. **Understanding people and the society** are essential for good persons since they need to take care of and serve the people around them. It is vital to them to behave according to proper social etiquette.

As the old saying goes, "When in Rome, do as the Romans do". Respect and compassion are critical elements of this sixth principle. When one bends towards others and tries one's best to understand and serve others' interests, the result will be highly rewarding.

Last but not least, if ones aspire to live with others morally, one must **understand individuals and their differences**. To truly understand the people around them, ones need to spend time getting to know them with a compassionate mindset.

In addition, the *sappurisa sutta* gives a list of 26 occasions when a false individual (*asappurisa*) shows conceit (*māna*) on account of his religious state, and 27 occasions a true individual (*sappurisa*) practises correctly and beneficially<sup>27</sup>.

An interesting point has been raised by Somdet Phra Buddhakosajarn, then Phra Brahmaganabhorn (P. A. Payutto), regarding sequence of *sappurisa dhamma* (or qualities of a good man). Phra Brahmaganabhorn (P. A. Payutto)<sup>28</sup> has an opinion that Gotama Buddha put 'knowing the purpose' first when he taught on leadership. When taking into account of modern management science, it is the same approach of setting long term first before considering the principle of doing thing.

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<sup>27</sup>Piya Tan, **The Discourse on the True Individual**, p.1, Retrieved on 14 July 2014, <http://dharmafarer.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2009/12/23.7-Sappurisa-S-m113-piya.pdf>.

<sup>28</sup>Phra Brahmaganabhorn (P. A. Payutto), **State of Leadership**, (Bangkok: Sahadhammik, 2008), p. 28-29.

The Sangha Supreme Council also advises on the website that *sappurisa dhamma* provides clear guideline for people to behave and perform without any conflict between material and spiritual belief. It is true to say that running business while holding ethical mind is the way that can be managed together<sup>29</sup>.

### **2.2.5 Aparihāniyā dhamma:**

Working in business circle with proper harmony and synergy requires a number of supportive conditions. *Aparihāniyā dhamma* or to the Seven Conditions of Welfare<sup>30</sup> provides guideline by starting with **listening to veteran and senior executives** is the first of seven conditions.

The second is **welcoming ethical and moral guidance from respected thinkers and opinion leaders**. Human beings usually know what is right or wrong, but regularly addressing and reinforcing moral integrity in the workplace is more necessary than ever in today's uncertain and highly materialism world.

In addition to listening to senior people in the organization and thought leaders, organizations should encourage **mindfulness and spiritual practice**. This third suggestion aims to allow employees and executives the opportunity to achieve peace of mind in order to work happily. When the time arrives that they have to make a tough decision, they can decide with full confidence, conviction, commitment and acceptance of any consequences.

Spiritual practice is a natural way toward peace of mind. Most human beings have religious faith or spiritual belief of some sort. Practices in line with those beliefs help many people create a comfort zone where they can regulate their emotions and feel calm.

The fourth element of working in harmony is **taking care of people who are less competitive** and need help. It is a fact of life that not everyone can be a star. It is also certain that an organization cannot work well if everyone is a star; there would be chaos because no one would listen to anyone else.

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<sup>29</sup>The Sangha Supreme Council, Retrieved on 14 July 2014  
<http://www.mahathera.org/detail.php?module=article&id=7&title=03>.

<sup>30</sup> D II 76, Maurice Walshe, **The Long Discourses of the Buddha : A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya**, (Somerville: Wisdom Publications, 1995), p. 232.

Hence, it is natural for any successful organization to have the right combination of team members -- both high achievers and average or even slow performers. The latter often don't get the respect they deserve. To work in harmony, the organization has to ensure that everyone will be protected from abusive behavior and treated with respect. That way, people will perform to the best of their ability.

**Compliance with the rules** is the fifth discipline that an organization must encourage. Rules, regulations, principles and norms usually take a long time to be agreed on and put into practice in the workplace. But they form the core of our understanding about how to behave in a community or organization, just like driving on the left side of the road. Although there is nothing that we cannot change, rules are something that should not be changed too easily, especially if the change is just to favor some top executive's preference.

Working in harmony also requires agreement and consensus among related parties. **Regular communication and meeting** are essential in order to allow each party to know where the others stand. Meetings on regular issues, such as weekly department meetings, should be agreed on beforehand. That way, everyone can effectively manage their time.

Timetables must be firm and rescheduling should not be allowed at the whim of a senior officer. Otherwise, it will send a signal that the meeting is not really important. Participation with a neutral and open-minded attitude is strongly recommended. It is also advisable to avoid the silo effect, in which one focuses only on one's own interest or that of a department rather than the company's benefit.

Last but not least is "**meeting ethics**". Not only should team members meet regularly, but also they should adopt proper practices. Calling a meeting with suitable time for preparation, especially the content of the meeting, is crucial. A clear and agreed agenda must be communicated well in advance. Being on time, both at the start and finish, is also important in order to demonstrate respect for others.

The above seven principles, if implemented properly, can help to effectively unite members of an organization to work hand in hand and achieve a shared vision.

### 2.2.6 Iddhipāda

*Iddhipāda*<sup>31</sup> or Four Bases of Power is considered to be important and necessary to business management due to the fact that it addresses basic issues of achieving expected result. These four bases of power are *chanda*, or purpose, *virīya*, or effort or energy, *citta*, or mind, and *vīmaṃsā*, or investigation, is the last one.

Whenever people plan to do any kind of work, they need to have a purpose, or *chanda*, of doing thing first. Otherwise, they will not have desire to do thing at the first place. In business organization, this can be comparable with corporate vision for which typically expresses sense of purpose of the organization and clear idea of how to reach desire stage and outcome.

Secondly; strong will, effort and energy are certainly necessary for any persons who want to finish their work. When ones are equipped *virīya*, they will not easily give up when facing obstacle. They will move forward with strong will. It is not only, they have a strong intention to do so but also because of they always bear in mind of *chanda*, or clear vision, which also provides them with sense of purpose and positive re-enforcement.

In order to be successful and get the job done, people must stay focus on what they are doing. *Citta* or mind is considered an important component in this regard since ones cannot be effective unless they are concentrating on what they are implementing basically at the moment.

Last but not least is investigation or *vīmaṃsā* which refers to reviewing themselves on what they have done, measurement and practical approach to improve or to do it better. It is truly important since, besides contemplative thinking, it also involve feedback of information which can let people to adjust, develop and improve themselves.

Although Gotama Buddha taught *iddhipāda* basically to support concentration or *samādhi*. However, these four bases of power are practically suitable also for non-spiritual activity such as business management. They can be considered as the foundation if people to be successful and achieve any business purpose.

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<sup>31</sup> S V 255, Bhikkhu Bodhi, **The Connected Discourses of the Buddha : A New Translation of the Saṃyutta Nikāya vol. II**, (Somerville: Wisdom Publications, 2000), p. 1718-1719.

### 2.2.7 Five Precepts

It is widely known and recognized how important of Buddhist Five Precepts<sup>32</sup>; abstaining from harming others, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying and intoxication; to be and also application for which Buddhist practices on daily basis.

When ones do not have intention or actually kill others, both human being and animal, their mind will not want to take advantage from others. They should have loving-kindness and compassion towards others. Besides not taking the others' belonging also bring peaceful mind to the persons. They will respect others and behave themselves not to consume too much which can cause suffering.

Having sexual misconduct with others who should not have the relationship can cause problem and endless consequences. Besides ones cannot stay from sexual desire, which can cause numbers of issues, they can be a cause of problem with others. If it occurs, they will not have time to do some other good thing for their life but only solve the issue which cannot be solved unless the person have to behave and cease sexual misconduct.

Telling the truth and saying only the right thing are normal practice ones should do. Practice of lying can only create problem which cannot be easily solve. Saying half-truth and white lie are not acceptable in any situation. In a matter of fact, both of them can be treated as a lie as well.

Intoxicate is certainly action ones should avoid. Intoxication of any kind of alcoholic beverage, not to mentioned illegal drug, is the thing that any human beings should not do. Nobody can find a good reason of taking alcohol since it only let the takers being emotional unaware and do thing that they do not normally do. In another word, intoxication will surely cause unmindfulness which can result in numbers of problem later on.

These five forbidden are mainly for worldly activity and normal person. However, all five teachings can be considered as the clearing path for ones who want to be good person with wholesome action. This means if ones practice five precepts regularly and continuously, they can be away from bad things and unwholesome action.

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<sup>32</sup> A IV 246, Bhikkhu Bodhi, **The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha : A Translation of the Aṅguttara Nikāya**, (Somerville: Wisdom Publications, 2012), p. 1174

In a matter of fact, it is rather logical to practice the precepts and people will be closer to spiritual practice because they can clearly see the benefits of being good persons and finally they want to move further in spiritual practice or releasing from suffering.

### 2.2.8 *Bhāvanā*<sup>33</sup>

Most of the items that are reviewed mainly relate to body not mind. What separate Buddhism from another religion is practice of *bhāvanā* or meditation.

Numbers of research has found that mindfulness can help reduce stress, enhance productivity and better treatment to some kind of illness. Over the course of many years, ‘mindfulness’, which has been used in relation to individual searching for insight peaceful mind, is one of the issue that business executives consider to help them and their teams to have better performance. It should be noted as well that, most of the times, public usually relates meditation with Buddhism.

Mindfulness is considered about a calmer, more open and undistracted mind, greater self-awareness, and an enhanced capacity for self-transformation not to mention disciplined passions and stronger human relationships as well. Over the course of many years, ‘mindfulness’, which has been used in relation to individual searching for insight peaceful mind, is one of the practices that business executive consider to help them and their teams to have better performance. It should be noted as well that, most of the times, it can be understandable on its relationship with meditation and Buddhism as well.

According Buddhist teaching, there are two kinds of mindfulness or *bhāvanā* that are recognized as definite ways of answering human problems. The first one is called concentration or *samatha bhāvanā*.

Concentration is a way of meditation by focusing on something, or *kaṣiṇa*, such as inhale-and-exhale breathing. In this way, we should be aware of thinking and feeling. We will enjoy our moment of peace of mind during concentration. But by the time we come out of our peaceful meditation, we will face reality again. Unhappiness and any other extreme feeling can be felt by us again, causing continuation of suffering.

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<sup>33</sup> A II 93, Bhikkhu Bodhi, **The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha : A Translation of the Aṅguttara Nikāya**, (Somerville: Wisdom Publications, 2012), p. 474-475.

The second kind of meditation is called insight or *vipassanā-bhāvanā*. According to Buddhist legend, after Prince Siddhartha left his wealthy and powerful life to look for inner peace and definite answers for himself (and human beings), he began practicing meditation in the form of concentration but found it was not what he was looking for, since it can only allow peace of mind during *bhāvanā* and does not last long. What he later found and practiced is *vipassanā-bhāvanā*, which opened the door for him to find *dhamma*.

Paul Griffiths wrote in his article Concentration or Insight<sup>34</sup> that concentrative meditation is a process by which the awareness is narrowed down from its usual wide spectrum to a specific single point, just as a searchlight beam can be focused from a very wide and diffuse area of illumination to a small and intense spot of light, while insight meditation will lead to *nibbāna*, which receives the usual schematic definition of being the destruction of *lobha* (lust), *dosa* (anger or hatred) and *moha* (delusion); the end of suffering; the breaking of the chain of conditioned co-production (*paṭiccasamuppāda*), which defines the phenomenal existence.

In this regard, it should be addressed that full concentration alone cannot bring enlightenment. Enlightenment can happen only when full concentration combines with mindfulness to break the fetters through insight. Powerful insight is necessary to see the impermanent, suffering, and selfless nature of all experience. Insight allows practitioner to see the role that greed plays in causing suffering and to let it go<sup>35</sup>. An empirical study<sup>36</sup> conducted through various statistical tools have conclusively proved that the ones who have undergone at least one *vipassanā* meditation course have achieved peace and developed personal effectiveness irrespective of gender, age, education, position, etc.

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<sup>34</sup>Paul Griffiths, "Concentration or Insight: The Problematic of Theravāda Buddhist Meditation-Theory", *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, Vol. 49, No. 4 (Dec., 1981): p. 605-624.

<sup>35</sup>Bhante Henepola Gunaratana, *Eight Mindful Steps to Happiness: Walking the Buddha's Path*, p. 245.

<sup>36</sup>D. Gopalakrishna, *Buddhism and Contemporary Management: With Special Reference to Vipasana Meditation*, (Dehiwala: Buddhist Cultural Centre, 2006), p. 260.

### 2.2.9 Paññā<sup>37</sup>

Working in business world requires ‘wisdom’ or *paññā* in order to understand what is going on. According to Buddhist teachings *paññā* can be categorized into 3 subject; namely: *sutamayā paññā* - the knowledge and wisdom gained from knowing or reading or based on the knowledge gained from others; *cintāmayā paññā* - the knowledge and wisdom gained by using ones’ intellect or mind to think and reflect; and *bhāvanā-maya-paññā* or wisdom obtained directly from meditation.

Each person will have different experience of gaining wisdom according to these three categories. Some may gain wisdom through *sutamayā paññā* first which means they listen or learn from others first. It can be studying in the class, listen to venerable who preaches Buddhist teaching, receiving mentoring program from others, etc. Whatever occurs, knowledge they receive is not their knowledge. It belongs to others who provide them. Therefore, the knowledge may not last long or memorize only by memory not understanding since they do not find out by themselves.

Ones may obtain knowledge, or wisdom, by contemplative thinking by using their own analytical thinking practice. This practice is termed in Buddhist teaching as *cintāmayā paññā*. It is right to say that it does not matter either *cintāmayā paññā* or *sutamayā paññā* comes first. However, both of them cannot provide true wisdom or liberation or completely release from suffering. Only *bhāvanā-maya-paññā* can provide ones with the right knowledge to liberate themselves from suffering.

### 2.3 Conclusion remark

This chapter discusses in detail of modern theory of business management such as business model, strategic business planning process, management system, etc. Numbers of Buddhist teachings which should be properly applied to Thai business management are discussed such as *aparīhāṇīyā dhamma*, *bhāvanā*, *brahmavihāra*, Five Precepts Four Noble Truths, *iddhipāda*, Noble Eightfold Path and *paññā*. Although Buddhist teachings are obviously lead the Buddhist on spiritual path, the teachings are combination of teachings for normal people and also the ones who intentionally liberate

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<sup>37</sup> D I 219, Maurice Walshe, **The Long Discourses of the Buddha : A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya**, (Somerville: Wisdom Publications, 1995), p. 485-486.

themselves from suffering. Therefore, it is right to say that there are numbers of commonality between modern theory of business management and Buddhist teachings since both of these two groups of theory, and principles, aim for achieving result; vision/ goal/ objective, according to modern theory of business management or *chanda* according to Buddhist *iddhipāda*. More details will be discussed in the next three chapters.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **Thai Business leaders' opinion towards applying Buddhist teachings to business management**

#### **3.1 Interviewing Thai business leaders**

Ten business leaders are requested for interviewing. At the first place, the researcher contacted their offices to request for an interview. List of question (see Appendix 1) which are already approved by the committee, were sent to the interviewee first.

During interviewing the researcher asked the questions, according to the pre-informed questions, and allowed the interviewees to answer in detail. The interviews are conducting during May 2015 – July 2016. Date and time of each interview is presented on Appendix 5.

Since this is the qualitative research for which information are mainly derived from interviewee's experience and opinion over the issue, of this study, therefore, detail of each interviews will be elaborated in detail, basically the key message which is related to the study, in order to provide the reader with completed picture of each interviewee. In addition, the interview summaries are sequenced alphabetically according the first letter of the first name of interviewees.

#### **3.1.1 Dr. Ajva Taulananda, Vice Chairman, Charoen Pokphand Group Interview date : May 18, 2015**

Dr. Ajva practices mediation as taught by Goenka whose program teaches practitioner the basics during a 10-day course and explains more in scientific terms about the connection between the mind and consciousness that gives birth to thoughts. Then practitioner go and study this concept practicing in further detail on his/her own. Goenka talks about sufferring, compassion and happiness. It also requires practitioner to sit completely still and focus on the perception of pain and suffering.

He also studies and practices meditation at YBAT (Young Buddhists Association of Thailand under Royal Patronage) with Phra Ajahn Surasakdi from Wat Mahaeyong. There you have to observe the 8 Buddhist moral precepts, sitting to meditate or alternating with walking in a circle to meditate. Phra Ajahn Surasakdi provides you with very clear directions for the guiding principles without specifying any particular method for meditation. You can choose whichever method best suited to you. So, from previously undertaking simple Concentration, he then changed to the preferred method and leaned more towards Insight; and was now able to develop and enhance his consciousness and understanding his mind. While, not being that strict or serious about chanting prayers, he is more determined about practicing meditation according to the associated teachings in a normal and natural manner.

According to his view, Buddhism is a religion that goes to the truth about nature and speaks about things that are natural. Afterwards, science then also discovers such truths and that Buddhism speaks about things that are normal and in nature, until Buddha then spoke about things that are small and not tangible that has degraded into tiny particles and molecules till they become minute atoms or even smaller, and then become an energy. Buddhism speaks about the sub-consciousness that afterwards are spoken about in relation to some aspects of psychology. However, after further and deeper study, Buddhism only speaks about things that are natural with regards to people, about various things and in a very profound manner. This is unlike other religions – since the Buddha was not really a ‘God’ in the sense of other religions.

**Basic Buddhist Teachings:** The teachings of Buddhism can also be used in a positive manner in business management practices. Originally, they are meant for the laymen and ordinary people – such as married couples living together. These teachings instruct us how to live within society and to be a good person, possessing the 5 basic Buddhist moral behaviors or Five Precepts.

The various teachings that we really make use of most in business management relate to *brahmavihāra* which comprises of Loving-kindness (*mettā*), Compassion (*karuṇā*), Empathetic joy (*muditā*) and Equanimity (*upekkhā*). All of which are basic *dhamma* principles in various aspects of the management of people - together with other Buddhist concept - *Iddhipāda* – which comprises of *chanda*, *virīya*, *citta* and *vīmaṃsā*. Whatever we undertake to do must begin with *chanda* or

commitment. We must examine all these various concepts, all which can be genuinely be made used of in our working activities - even Western management theory more recently refer to the abovementioned concepts. For instance, Mr. Stephen Covey wrote a management book “7 Habits” and “8 Habits”, which tell us how we should behave or how we should adjust our mindset and thinking together with how we should manage people. This is equivalent to, as what we call in this modern day and age, creating employee engagement. The principles of *dhamma* talk about the same things; namely: we cannot be effective if we do not possess *mettā* or *muditā*, or do not practice *upekkhā*.

He also addressed on ‘wisdom’ which is comprised of 3 stages; namely: *sutamayā paññā* - the knowledge and wisdom gained from knowing or reading or based on the knowledge gained from others telling you; *cintāmayā paññā* - the knowledge and wisdom gained by using your intellect or mind to think and reflect; which will then lead to *bhāvanā-maya-paññā*. In reality it is like, with regards to the Buddhist *dhamma* teachings, you put them into practice in order to gain a true and genuine understanding i.e. know and remember, understand, and then achieve true understanding.

**Four Noble Truth:** Buddha taught us about overcoming suffering – about the cause of suffering or *dukkha*, *samudāya*, *nirodha*, and also about the path to *nibbāna* or *magga*. These four components are fundamental of Buddhist belief so called the Four Noble Truth (*cattāri ariyasaccāni*). But to understand and apply this, requires practicing *dhamma*. In other words, if you only learn about the religious concepts without actually practicing them, then you only learn and know of what Buddha talked about.

If you are an executive or top management, you have to conduct business and you will not be able to contemplate or meditate or practice *vipassanā* all day, since these are two different lifestyles, since you are living in the worldly activities, then you need to conduct yourself as a good person living in the global society. In going away to meditate, you wish to become undetached and break yourself away from the world. These are two separate aspects of life. However, this does not mean that living your daily life excludes you from practicing meditation. You can sometimes practice it; and it will lead you to have a positive mental outlook and attitude or a sense of tranquility. At the very least, it will enable to you concentrate and focus better in your work as well as in whatever else you do.

So long as we live, Buddhism teaches us not to be greedy and let go of our desires, which often is contrary to the normal worldly ways that tell us to want or what we should want to have. Hence, Buddhism does not teach you not desist from having. However, if you have too much greed you will suffer, causing you to worry and be anxious to the extent of being very stressful. Then it is useless and not very beneficial for you. Whatever you want to do, and as such become so involved with it, together with feeling so stressful about it and wanting to do that thing only without wanting to or being able to do anything else at the same time, this is where it differs in Buddhism teaches us that once you want to reach a goal or achieve a specific objective, you should not become too caught up with it and think of only of that objective. Rather, you should do the best you can at the present time and do what you need to do, you will then move forward towards the intended goal.

You should not think only about the present goal or desire every day, day in day out. Nor should you only think about the past till you do not do your best in the present. In this manner, you will not be able to reach the future goal. This is when you will then feel suffering.

***Iddhipāda* vs PDCA:** While *iddhipāda* relates to what we need to do to achieve success, *brahmavihāra* relates to the principles of management and administration; As already said, according to the Westerners, to achieve successful outcomes, you need to have a goal. Then you clearly determine the role and also define the process to be undertaken to achieve the goal. As such, this is the equivalent to the concept of PDCA- or Plan, Do, Check, Act.

Once you have practiced meditation, then you need to do a self-assessment and correct your actions and then proceed further again. This is the principle and the process - just as with the concept of PDCA. Even the monks must review their actions. Every day they must assess whether they have acted in an appropriate manner and then need to confess any offenses made. Confessing is similar to PDCA, whereby once you have acted in a certain way, you then evaluate what actions you have undertaken incorrectly - namely check; and if you have acted incorrectly, you then confess and rectify your actions. This is just like PDCA; and the same general principles. As such, Buddhism teaches us about outcomes resulting from reason, rather than that we want a certain outcome and then take inappropriate or incorrect actions to realize the goal.

**Three marks of existence** (*tilakkhaṇa*) : Buddhism has never taught us to wish for results from impermanence or uncertainty; that would be like being dependent largely on luck. As such, to achieve an outcome, it must come from a reason - rather like an input - output process, in which you input something that is wrong, then the desired output will never be achieved. In other words, an input in the present will create an output in the future.

This then refers to cause and effect of whatever is good and positive. However, the real positive benefit is that Buddhism talks about letting go. Uncertainty or impermanence makes us realize that there is always change in this world. All things change and as such we talk about the Management of Change. Westerners have written so many books on 'How to Manage Change' or 'How to Successfully Manage Change'. But, first of all, you must accept change. You must accept that change is part of everyday life. Once you have accepted this, then you will be able to manage it more successfully.

Buddhism talks about concept of the three marks of existence (*tilakkhaṇa*) that clearly refers to the states of suffering, of uncertainty and impermanence, and of non-self or non-being. Change is an everyday occurrence; in the end nothing is everlasting or remains the same. If this basic concept can be accepted, then your lives will be much more peaceful. There will be no excessive and intense struggle or competition for this and that, or any actions to excessively take advantage of and exploit others. And if sometimes you are able to let go of this and that, it will then become a more peaceful existence.

In this regard, practicing *vipassanā* may help. When you conduct your business, things are not always certain. Even if you make forecasts and establish your goals, mostly events or the outcomes will not turn out as you have forecasted; there are always excesses or shortfalls. Thus, if you can find ways to accept this, then you take the appropriate measures to rectify the situation. Then you will be able to accept reality and view things with more reason. If you do not achieve what you target for, then there is always a reason; it is not a matter of luck. There is a natural reason for what happens; and you will be able to view everything with good reason and realistically. You can then accept it and do not blame someone else or blame your staff. It will help you to

work more positively. You need to look at the profound truth of the situation. As such, you need to practice meditation since everything exists in world of assumption.

*Supparisa dhamma*: Another teaching which I can refer to is *supparisa dhamma* which discusses on knowing ourselves, knowing the causes, knowing the purpose, etc. This can be compared to being like when you defining strategy and vision, in which process whereby you need to assess the opportunities and threats as well as to evaluate the associated problems and issues, these are the parameters you must assess i.e. know your own self as well as your own weaknesses and strengths together with the associated threats and opportunities. Comparatively, you need to know how to evaluate the situation and environment.

### **3.1.2 Mr. Amaret Sila-On, Advisor, S&P Syndicate Public Co., Ltd.**

**Interview date : June 8, 2015**

When asked what his thoughts were regarding Buddhism and if he thought there was any differences from other religious beliefs, Mr. Amaret stated that the difference are clear:

1. Buddhism has no ‘God’ while most of the other religions do with the exception of Taoism. Most major religions have a ‘God’; and as such the degree of belief is not the same. Where there is no ‘God’ many of the believers are puzzled as to whom they should believe in. So they place their belief in the associated teachings as in the case of Buddhism.

2. Another difference between Buddhism and other religions is that other religions place a primary importance on faith. You need to have 100% faith, truly believe in the respective ‘God’ and believe in every single word that their ‘God’ says. While, in Buddhism, where there is no ‘God’, you need to use your own reasoning; in fact, Buddhism is a religion that mostly incorporates logic. Although Westerners use logic, but when it comes to their religious beliefs, they do not apply logic at all. Buddhism is somewhat surprising and unusual in that all its principles and concepts are based on nature together with reasons.

Buddha spoke on many occasions that his religion is comprised of 3 stages:

1. *Pariyatti Saddhamma* (theoretical stage) i.e. teachings, theories and principles.

2. *Paṭipatti Saddhamma* (practicing stage) in which his teachings and concepts are applied in real life situations.

3. *Paṭivedha Saddhamma* (realization stage or actual outcome experienced) in which, if his teachings are correctly applied and practiced, the desired results or outcomes will be achieved.

As such, if this were to be applied to business practices, then the question is: at what level do you want to apply the Buddhist principles?

If you only wish to apply them only at the theoretical stage, then you will achieve one type of outcome; while if you wish to apply them at both the theoretical level and the practicing level, then the next level of results or outcome will be achieved. As for the realized outcomes stage, it will automatically follow on by itself. If you manage to succeed then you succeed; if you do not, then it will not happen. Generally for normal people, you do not need to think or worry about the realized outcomes; this will largely depend upon how much weight and importance you are able to give to the theoretical and the practicing aspects.

He added that there are 2 groups of people: Those who study and learn all the Buddhist teachings or theories as far as the Pali scholar level 9; while the other group consist of those monks who are disciples in the forest temples, who do not study at all and constantly undertake pilgrimages and only focus to the practicing or application of the teachings. If they do apply and practice these teachings correctly, then they will attain the required knowledge and automatically go on to achieve the theoretical stage such as Luang Poo Cha (Phra Bodhiñāṇathera) who did not study at all but constantly undertook pilgrimages and practicing the teachings. He practiced so extensively till he eventually acquired the knowledge at the same level of a person who studied up to the Pali scholar level 9 and eventually was even was able to teach others – even Westerners. This was most unusual and unique since he did not speak any foreign languages but he was able to do so since he had established so much faith on the part of his Western disciples. Those who were blessed and privileged enough in becoming his close disciples and practiced alongside him such as, Phra Sumetho (Phra

Rajasumedhajahn) or Phra Chaiyasaro – all advance far in the aspects of practicing Buddhist teachings. Why was Luang Poo Cha so successful in teaching these leading Buddhist monks? In reality, this is evident that the practicing aspect is the most important element, since no matter how knowledgeable you are of the theoretical teachings but if you do not apply or practice at all or apply them incorrectly then the desired outcomes will not be realized.

Therefore, with regards to business practices, the question is to what extent do we want businessmen to know about Buddhist principles? As such, if you wish businessmen to behave in a positive and good manner, then knowing Buddhist principles at the theoretical stage will be sufficient. But, if they also need to attain the various levels of *dhamma* achievement, then there is no other choice but for them to also apply and practice this knowledge. However, it is then up to each person as to what level of *dhamma* achievement as well as what realized results or outcomes they actually achieve.

In Buddhism - whether it relates to studying or practicing (but especially with regards to studying and learning – there are 3 stages:

1. Giving (*dāna*).
2. Having good morals behavior (*sīla*).
3. Meditation (*bhāvanā*).

For most people, if your mind is still not calm or still, you will not be able to decrease or lessen your own greed and then start giving. You will not be able to begin to doing anything, since if you start to practice, you need to possess and maintain good moral behavior. So if your mind does not possess stillness, then you are not able to achieve the giving stage and then not able to advance to the good moral behavior stage. This is what is important. Supposing you want to teach businessmen, then you need to tell about these various stages. What do they want to achieve? Do you only want to have a positive and good mind or mindset; or do you also want to give – like donate money to build temples, etc. or build Buddha images, temples and *vihara*. If you are satisfied to achieve only this stage, then that is fine. But if you want to advance further to the next stage, then you need to possess and maintain good moral behavior. This goal often frightens many businessmen, as they feel frightened of it being too difficult to achieve. However, if you really make an all-out effort to achieve this, it can be done.

You can both maintain good moral behavior and also conduct business. They do not conflict with each other. Having good moral behavior involves the five core good morals:

1. Not to kill (this you can do already).
2. Not to steal (not difficult to do, since if you maintain your mindfulness and wisdom, you do not need to go and steal from anyone).
3. Not to have an affair with someone else's spouse (this can be done also, if you take care in not becoming involved with anyone in an improper manner).
4. Not to lie.
5. Not to drink alcohol.

Both of the last two can easily be done if you choose to do so. And if you say that it is difficult to conduct business if you do not have any desires or wants, this is only an excuse not to possess or maintain good moral behavior.

Once you start and the more you practice or apply the *dhamma* principles, the less intense is your level of anger; or once you begin to feel any anger, because you are mindful of that feeling, it becomes more controlled and the level of anger is lessened. It is really up to you. No damage has been done. Further, the more you practice *dhamma*, the better is your ability to concentrate, resulting in your being able to work more effectively. Also if you are able to more quickly become increasingly mindful and fully aware of things, then there will be less chance of making any mistakes. Thus, achieving concentration or focus as well as mindfulness are not bad things but rather positive things.

When asked how long had he been practicing *dhamma* and meditation. Mr. Amaret said that he had been doing so for 30 years. He believed that each person's strength is not based on this but rather due to their prior *kamma*; whereby if your prior *kamma* is positive or good, then that person's physical strength will be good. This is because that person has accumulated positive prior *kamma*, and that person will not be at risk of any danger or harm or ill health. This matter of the person's accumulated prior *kamma* is one aspect; but now there is the matter of new *kamma*, which must be maintained in a positive manner – such as, exercising frequently, having and also maintaining good positive morals behaviors or living a positive and healthy lifestyle that will not result in any physical harm.

He also confirmed that he studied the *abhidhamma piṭaka* at Wat Mahathat Yuwaratransarit for 7 ½ years but added that this is not the same as having attained Pali scholar study whereby Pali scholar study is a much deeper study based on Pali scripts that requires a good knowledge of Pali. However, in the case of *abhidhamma piṭaka*, you only need some knowledge of Pali to be able to understand the key teachings of the Buddha which are mostly to do with the core Buddhist concepts and principles as taught by the Buddha.

When asked what were his thoughts and recommendations were with regards to these core concepts, as well as whether there were any key religious concepts, as preached by Buddha, that should be studied, in particular those that correspond or can be applied to the conduct of business practices, Mr. Amaret said: *iddhipāda*, which in fact is an essential element for achievement of *dhamma*. What Buddha preached and taught was that *bodhipakkhiyādhammā*, or states conducive to enlightenment, consists of 37 elements, of which *iddhipāda* is one of these elements.

As such, *iddhipāda* is important because if you do not apply this concept, then you cannot even begin the process of achieving *dhamma*; whereby *iddhipāda* comprises of *chanda*, *viriya*, *citta* and *vīmaṃsā*. He added that after having thought about and analyzing this concept, he concluded that if you do not apply these elements, you would not be able to succeed at anything you do including worldly pursuits. To achieve positive success, you need to like what you do. If you do not like what you do, it will be difficult to achieve any positive results. If you like what you do, then you will always strive to do more and do it often together with a strong drive to succeed (*viriya*). This will in turn leads to gaining experiences, skills and focus of attention, or *citta*, rather than doing it just for the sake of doing a job.

These 3 elements will lead you to analyze results, *vīmaṃsā*, so as to be able to conclude what is wrong or what is right as well as what needs to be done to improve the situation and how to proceed. *Vīmaṃsā* is the use of knowledge gained or *paññā*. It like possessing a passion or commitment, where you need to start by liking what you do. *Viriya* is being industrious and persistent or sustaining your best efforts so as to achieve successful outcomes. While *citta* is having attentiveness and concentration and *vīmaṃsā* is analyzing results to achieve knowledge.

He was asked that, as explained by Gotama Buddha, is it correct that if a person practices *dhamma* to a certain level that person will have achieved all of these 37 elements, of *bodhipakkhiyādhammā* or states conducive to enlightenment, through passing the many stages. Further, assuming a person lacks the *indriya* 5 stage, regardless of having advanced to whatever level of *iddhipāda*, that person will not have achieved *dhamma*. If so, then you need to go to the heart or core concept of Buddhism which is the concept of Four Noble Truth i.e. *dukkha*, *samudaya*, *nirodha* and *magga*.

However, not many people study each of these concepts in depth. So, what was his views on what then needs to be done to achieve *dhamma*, especially if you believe in the teachings of Gotama Buddha, we will see that these are the core concepts of Buddhism as we all understand that it relates everything in our life. While another meaning of *dukkha* is that everything or everyone that is born will die since there is no permanence. *Samudaya* is the source of *dukkha* or desires, *kilesa* or lust and delusions, whereby if a person does not possess *kilesa* that person will not feel any *dukkha*. Is this so correct?

Mr. Amaret said that, if a person has practiced *dhamma* to the ultimate stage that person will not feel any anger regardless of whatever happens or is done to him, or does not feel attached to anything or feel that anything belongs to them.

Then that person has reached a stage where *samudaya* has been neutralized or where there is no source of *dukkha* anymore, or the stage of achieving *nirodha* in having been rid of all *dukkha*. He said that this is the final stage; or that to achieve *nibbāna*, you need to follow *magga* that consists of 8 elements.

While this may be easy to say, but it is so hard to achieve. And if you ask that once you have achieved all the 8 elements of *magga* what will occur? What will occur is a state where all 8 elements come together, or a confluence of the 8 elements of *magga*; whereby you will then be rid of all *kilesa* and lust or desires and wants.

As such, in practicing meditative concentration or practicing *dhamma*; so as to look inside ourselves and analyze your state of mindfulness or the 4 *satipatṭhāna* i.e. body, feeling (*vedanā*), mind (*citta*), and *dhamma*; if you practice this in the correct manner or method, you will then achieve a certain level of *dhamma* and be able to feel inside yourself that every element within your being is in accordance with the Three marks of existence (*tilakkhaṇa*), which comprises of *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anattā*.

*Anicca* means that everything in this world is changeable and impermanent as with our being that is always changing; *dukkha* means that everything in this world will be born, live and die; and that nothing will last forever. *Anattā* means that everything in this world with a physical being are made up of various elements of nature; such as, our body is made up of the 4 primary elements i.e. earth, water, wind and fire. Once we are dead, we then return these elements to nature.

So, once we have practiced to a certain level, our mind will see that every element in our being comprises of the 3 marks of excellence; namely, there is no permanent physical being. Once at this stage of *dhamma* achievement, your mind will start to lessen the feeling of attachment, will no longer feel that this is our physical being or body; and when our mind sees that our physical being is made of only earth, wind, water and fire – all of which natural elements we borrow during our 80 or 90 years of life; after which we will then return these elements to nature again. Hence, there is nothing that we would need to feel attached to or what our body belongs to us; and there is nothing we should cling to, as one day we must return them all. Once our mind reaches that point, we will then be able to advance towards the full achievement of *dhamma*. In seeing the three marks of existence inside our being or ourselves, it indicates that we are ready to advance to towards the full achievement of *dhamma* or the ability to let go of all things. This is the whole point of practicing *dhamma* – whether it is just learning the theories or concepts or learning to practice *dhamma* to be able to let go of everything.

### **3.1.3 Mr. Boonyarith Mahamontri, President,**

**Lion Corporation (Thailand) Ltd.:**

**Interview date : May 12, 2015**

Mr. Boonyarith has been with Lion Corporation (Thailand) since its establishment in 1967. This successful joint venture (JV) between Saha Pathanapibul and Lion Japan is considered as the role model for numbers of JV business under Saha Pathanapibul conglomerate and also the leading FMCG (Fast moving consumer goods) in Thailand.

When asked if and how he practices *dhamma* or mediation so as to develop his concentration or if he goes to meditate in a temple or a retreat at all, Mr. Boonyarith said: Yes, if time permits, since he and his immediate family are practicing Buddhists since he was young and lived near Wat Thammapiratararam. He was ordained as a monk at the age of 25 at Wat Suthat Thepphaaram. Unlike, many families today, his parents were positive role models and passed on the values of being diligent, hard - working, honest, and responsible.

He tries to find time to sit and meditate before going to sleep or sometimes just concentrating his mind in the car while his driver is driving. He does not have a deep understanding of it; but he does chant prayers for about 15 – 20 minutes every morning and evening on a daily basis. Although, once he also practiced *dhamma* and mediation at Wat Amphawan (Sing Buri Province) with Loung Por Charan (Phra Dhamsinghaburacharn); and his method of mediation usually involves controlling and being aware of the rhythm of his breathing – as taught by Phra Dharmakosacarya (Buddhadasa Bhikkhu), whose teachings on *ānāpānasati* or the method as taught by Phra Bodhiñāṇathera (Chah Subaddho or Luang Poo Cha). He understands there are many methods, each with its respective sub-methods. He believes, each person's mind is different and a person should find the method of mediation that best suits them.

**Buddhist Teaching :** When asked to explain in his own words about the teachings of Gotama Buddha – such as the concepts within the *tipiṭaka* – and how these teachings can be applied to work activities, he said: Gotama Buddha taught us about having *sajja* in living your life. This is applicable not only to practicing *dhamma* itself but also to other aspects of life – such as, living your personal life in the current world, in your work, in taking care of your family, in belonging to or being part of society as a whole. Buddha's teachings and principles are applicable to every aspect of life and by everyone. Even in the economically developed countries, many Westerners or foreigners also came to recognize or believe in the principle of Buddhism – such as, Einstein, who saw that Buddhism was not so much a religion but more about honest truths about living your life, which can be proven and from which you can see the outcomes almost immediately. There are no strict commandments or rules; but rather it is up to you to adopt the ways as taught in living your life.

When asked what he thought was the most important principle of living your daily life as taught by Gotama Buddha, he said: As we all know, the principle of doing goodness, not doing anything wrong or immoral or harmful to others as well as having a positive outlook and mind. As for applying these concepts to your working life and in being part of society as a whole, the most important principle He taught us is to possess the 5 moral precepts which will result in a society that is peaceful and mutually happy each other and sharing with others. If we all have faith in each other and show mutual goodwill towards each other as well as live our lives in accordance with the 5 moral precepts, society as a whole and everyone will benefit and exist happily together.

He added that possessing the 5 moral precepts means being a person with moral good behavior – not harming others, not telling lies or not being deceitful, observing all the positive traditions or acting immorally, and not drinking any alcoholic drinks. This makes us careful and act with perseverance, always being aware and mindful of your actions.

He also related a story that in Taiwan there is a Buddhist organization called the Tzu Chi Foundation, headed by a Buddhist bhikkhuni. Tzu Chi Foundation is an international humanitarian and non-governmental organization with a worldwide network of volunteers.

There are four missions which are charity, medicine, education and humanistic culture to promote humanistic values through Da Ai television network, to broadcast goodness program without any advertising. One of Tzu Chi's mission is education to instill virtue and etiquette, having kindergarten, secondary, primary, as well as medical university. All the disciples living there are Mahayana bhikkhuni. What he wanted to say was that if you truly have faith and only act in a positive manner and not act in any immoral manner, you will always achieve success - just like these bhikkhuni.

The bhikkhuni there uphold the rule of “no work, no meal”. They grow rice, vegetable, fruit, and also produce candle, pottery, wood craft, etc., as for living costs in the temple. Donations and contributions will flow to the foundation for the mission of charity.

So always doing good is not in any way contradictory to having a livelihood. Initially, Mr. Boonyarith aimed to create an organization of good people; and often he

was asked whether it was possible for an organization of good people to operate a business. He believes that the objective of a business and acting as a good person are separate issues. Business has the objective of making a profit; but the goal of being a good person is to give to others and to make sacrifices for the benefit of others.

In this regards, he relates a story that Buddhadasa Bhikkhu (Phra Dharmakosacarya) wrote a book called “An Economic Study of Buddhists”, which is a story of a fisherman and a rice farmer who mutually shared the products of their labor with each other with both giving receiving more than they each expected. This is a win-win situation and a Buddhist was of doing business where they wanted to make only a sufficient amount of profit in an equitable and honest manner, without taking advantage of other people or without deceiving others. As such, always acting as a good person can be applied to all aspects of life – personally in behaving towards your family and friends, at work, and in being part of society. It is not an obstacle to conducting a business; and in fact facilitates your business activities.

**Sharing of Buddhist Teachings** : When asked if he also shared such knowledge and Buddhist teachings with his work colleagues, he said yes; since his objective is to create an organization of good people on a sustainable basis.

The 1997 economic crises (Tom Yum Kung and then the Hamburger crises) was a major changing moment. Although, the Company did not operate a business that made so much money that the excess profits was invested in what turned out to be an economic bubble; yet the crises still affected the Company because the loans were acquired from overseas and they doubled overnight because of the new high foreign exchange rates. In summary, many companies, even very old and long standing organization do not last forever – especially those that operate their businesses without any good moral ethics and positive treatment towards others. Further, Buddhism and Christianity and other religions – as they are also like corporate organizations that promote positive moral behaviors – have lasted many thousands of years.

He added that this is a subsidiary and also a JV (joint venture) business with the Lion Group in Japan; but there they are not as concerned as we are here about creating an organization of good people. It is an initiative of the Thai Company that set a target to maximize sales and optimize profits at a sufficiently adequate level - in accordance with the Buddhist philosophy.

**Applying Buddhist Teachings** : When asked about his viewpoints on applying various Buddhist teachings in the world of business – such as the 5 Moral Precepts of Buddhism which can be applied to business practices together with other Buddhist principles such as, the concepts of *brahmavihāra* and *sappurisa dhamma* - given the basic concept of business is to achieve high sales revenues and high profit: he said: With regards to making profits, the concept of *sappurisa dhamma* can in fact be applied and it is also a positive aspect. In this regards, he said that you have to ask yourself what is the overall objective of your business. Namely, do you want to make a living in only the short term or on a longer and sustainable basis? Since in this free and openly competitive business environment, if you set a high price to make a short term profits you will open up opportunities for your competitors. Your business then does not become sustainable. It is a short sighted strategy. It is better to achieve a small profit but on a sustained long term basis while accumulating extensive experience and expertise. This way, it becomes a barrier of entry for any new players in the market place. And if there are new players who become successful, we have to further develop our business expertise and lower overhead costs so as to remain effectively competitive.

He added that while in your personal life, you need not know the Buddhist teaching in great depth. You only need to know and apply one key concept: be a good person with moral behavior towards others; not to act in any immoral manner and to have a positive mindset. The positives benefits will be realized by themselves. It will be a win-win and honest existence for everyone. You will also have many genuine friends.

He also added, that rather than trying to make too much profit from each other – your business partners, customers etc. - the primary aim is to achieve happiness for everyone concerned and treat others in a positive manner. In this way, wealth and other positive benefits will follow accordingly. It is like Buddha's teaching us about planting mango trees. Once you plant it, do not just sit and wait to see when you will be able to eat its fruit. But you must find other types of mango trees and keep planting more, and constantly taking good care of them. And one day, they will bear fruit for you to enjoy. It also like the case of the Tzu Chi Foundation that was set up not to seek donations but rather to do good and help others through doing good deed and to promote

good moral behaviors. It now has a large and widespread following and much wealth – both of which were secondary benefits and not the main objectives of the foundation.

Besides, for all the personal care products marketed by the company, the sales price points are not the highest – though also not the lowest – in the market when compared to the competition. These prices are based on being able to make some profit for the sustained growth of the business. The focus is more on delivering ‘value’ to the customers of each product.

**Caution of Applying Buddhist Teachings:** With regards to his viewpoint on the thinking that if you practice *dhamma*, your drive and your desires may be reduced, which is against the core concept of doing business where you need to focus and strive to achieve success all the time, he said: Buddhadasa Bhikkhu worked tirelessly and published extensive teachings with the aim of helping others, driven by faith which is a stronger motivation than desire.

As such, people who believe in and always act with good moral behavior do so not for their own self - interests or gains or for the sake of becoming famous; they do so for the sake of helping others.

He would always hire good people – who can be taught and trained to possess the required capabilities and are always willing to develop themselves in a positive manner; while capable people cannot be easily taught to be good persons. Many people think that if you become a monk, all you do is to sit and meditating and do nothing else; and then you will then be rid of your worldly desires and wants. This is not true and is often misunderstood. There are many good monks who are devoted to the teachings and religion activities and do not really have any worldly roles.

**Humanised Organization :** ‘Humanised Organization’ is based on strong corporate foundation to ‘Build Goodness in Society, and Bring Good Health to Consumer’. This concept has not happened over night, it is the result of our focus on moral principle of goodness as our core value during the last decade. ‘Admire Good People, Empower Smart People’ is the corporate culture in relation to ‘Humanised Organization’ strategy.

With regards to having initiated the concept of establishing a good organization or ‘Humanised Organization’ based on the *dhamma* teachings’ that is the core value and corporate culture of the Company, Mr. Boonyarith was asked that if he

talked about this concept with his team and work colleagues and if such discussions focused on the religious aspects or on people within the organization acting in a good and positive manner, he said: While the discussions centered on people being good persons acting in a positive manner, but of course examples used were taken from Buddhist teachings and principles, since we do not know about other religions but we all believe in Buddhist principles and teachings – such as the 5 Precepts which is a basis for personal behavior. However, the working principles we use are much more - such as, being based on the concept of *brahmavihāra* that relates to coexisting with and treating others.

He then went on to explain further details about the concept of a ‘Humanised Organization’ based on the *dhamma* teachings. As at 2009, Lion Thailand celebrated its 40th anniversary. It was established with the objectives of being an organization that would grow on a sustainable basis and also to be an organization based on achieving happiness, with a corporate commitment of doing goodness for society as a whole, as well as being a source of happiness to the customers. The corporate value is conducting a business combined with good moral behavior based on the updated corporate culture of promoting and praising good and able and people.

The definition of a good person is one who believes faithfully in the concept of positive behaviors and good moral ethics. The concept was based upon and adapted from the examples set by HM King Bhumipol Adulyadej together with other well-known exemplary persons. But the Company focused more on the concept of being faithful to doing good and providing benefits to others; for without a firm faith to this principle, then you would only tend to do good for your own personal benefits or personal reputation and fame or for monetary gains in order to be rich. Then once you are a good person, you need to develop yourself in also being an able person.

This then leads to initiating various activities aimed at promoting and supporting this concept – such as, offering food to monks every Monday at the office ever since we celebrated our 40th Anniversary in 2009.

There were also various other activities such as: the Happy Eight program, which is like the Thai Health Promotion Foundation (ThaiHealth)’s concept, but has 8 aspects relating to our staff; whereby rather than just focusing on their income, work safety, salary, and welfare and benefits, the Company also expanded the concept to

include looking at their personal well-beings including their immediate families', what sort of outlook and mindset do they have, what state of health are they in – ie: Happy body, Happy mind, Happy soul and Happy money. The Company then applied this Happy Eight concept one aspect at a time until now all the activities relating to the 8 aspects were completed. At the Bangkok and Sriracha facilities, the Company provides a special room for practicing meditation.

At the beginning, the Company invited various meditation teachers or gurus every Thursday. The Company also built a gym for the staff to exercise, a daycare room for looking after very young babies of the staff, who need to return to work but do not know with whom they could leave their young infants while at work. The mothers can also easily and conveniently breast feed their babies during the day. The Company visits nearby temples for a cleaning day. The Company also has a Phra Bodhisattva Program, whereby the staff can make donations to the fund, which will then offer monetary help to those who are in need. The Company allows time for staff members to become a monk, and even sponsors the ordination ceremony. These are some of the activities based on the Happy Eight concept. The Company has have established a Human Rights Hall (at the Sriracha facility), in which examples of all such positive activities are exhibited.

When asked if there were any other organizations in which their management practices also included promoting doing good for the benefit of others in such a comprehensive manner as this Company does, he said that he was sure there were, but generally they do not advertise this aspect - like him, who would not be advertising this if this interview had not taken place,

Focusing on doing good deeds for the staff is a core principle in creating a good organization. He added that Thais mostly like to do good deeds for those far away from them rather than those immediately close to them, which does not promote a cohesive immediate community. At the heart of the Humanized Organization is doing good deeds for those immediately within the organization - work colleagues, subordinates, and superiors, as taught in the concept of the *brahmavihāra* – namely: loving and kindness, compassion, and empathetic joy, which are the *dhamma* teachings of Gotama Buddha, who taught that if you make an effort to do good and positive things, desist from behaving in an immoral manner, and have an open and kind outlook, then

*dhamma* will follow and be achieved automatically; but you have to possess all the 4 concepts and do so in moderation through showing equanimity by knowing what and when enough is enough.

He also added that in creating the Humanised Organization in the Company there are 4 units:

1) Unit 1 responsible for developing and promoting good moral and ethical behaviors.

2) Unit 2 responsible for promoting being a Giver as the Phra Bodhisattava.

3) Unit 3 responsible for the Happy Eight program.

4) Unit 4 responsible for undertaking good deed, for cooperating in undertaking good deed with the local community. It is no use to establish the concept of a good organization, you also need to have specific units responsible for implementing the 4 aspects in a proactive manner; otherwise it is just talk only with no tangible outcome. All these 4 units are directly responsible to the MD, who regularly reports the progress made. (Note: This is an interesting example, as such normally in other organizations such general activities are under the Human Resource Management (HRM) or Employee Relation (ER) or Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) unit staffed with minimal number people). This facilitates the MD to be able to get directly involved, in the initial stages, so as to clear up and obstacle - like assigning required resources, coordinate with others internally within the Company etc.

Such activities need to be led by people who have a firm belief in this concept so as to drive its implementation successfully, helped by various volunteers who also need to belief in the concept. Currently, the people doing this also have their normal jobs; but he is thinking of staffing these units with people who are specifically and only for such responsibilities as described above. The volunteers can join in undertaking various community assistance projects – out of their own willingness to do good and help others – sometimes on their own free time instead of staying home to relax or do whatever they enjoy doing - which in turn gives them happiness. This is just like the members of the Tzu Chi Foundation. This is part of being a good Buddhist.

He also gave another example of doing something that will benefit the staff. At the Sriracha there is a pilot project undertaken by the staff to plant organic vegetable – for use in the staff canteen. Additionally, it is an activity for the staff to learn about

planting vegetable that they can copy at home for their family. Undertaking this pilot activity is better than telling them about it; since this way they are actually undertake the work and learn from the hands on experience. Staff volunteers take turns in the planting, and looking after the vegetable plot. It is also healthy for the staff to eat organic vegetables.

He added that the Company has set it as a mission – rather than just an ad hoc activity – to create and establish an organization of good people. And to realize and implement this mission, the Company established 4 working groups (as mentioned above) reporting directly to the MD, since it is a new set up.

### **3.1.4 Dr. Prasarn Trairatvorakul, Former Governor, Bank of Thailand** **Interview date : June 22, 2015**

When I was studying in the Mattayom class, I attended a Catholic school – namely, Assumption College. Actually, at that time I had some degree of interest about religion, but not what you would call a high degree. However, when I attended Chulalongkorn University, I participated in some activities together with the University's Buddhist Club at Suan Mok. Although I was not that serious a believer, there were some points of interest; so I was more interested in the core ideas or concepts more than anything else. Things have happened before and many knowledgeable people have thought as well as have spoken of it. The core ideas have been summarized, which have been quite useful; so there is no need to use much time and effort in thinking about it.

**Buddhist teaching for business management** : I use the concepts or principles of *dhamma* fairly often, which are fairly easy to understand. As for practicing *dhamma*, if we examine the 10 Virtues of a leader or *brahmavihāra* or even, at the initial stage, the *iddhipāda*, then we will see that they all offer recommendations that are very precise and comprehensive. What is really important for someone in this position (i.e.: the Governor of the Bank of Thailand) is to control your emotion; whereby you can immediately see this as one of the concept in the Virtues of a leader. Additionally, possessing both compassion and kindness, showing courtesy and gentleness towards one another, and knowing when to exercise power that all relate to being in control of

your emotions are to be found in the abovementioned Virtues. Further, the *brahmavihāra* is also clear on these points – namely, compassion, kindness, sympathetic joyousness and impartiality or fairness. Working in such a position, you experience satisfaction and achievement together with failure and disappointment, as well as experience good things or smooth sailing and bad things or obstacles. So the concept of equanimity (*upekkhā*) is of vital importance with regards to effectively keeping your emotions in check.

Equanimity (*upekkhā*) can be applied to both minor and major or important matters. As an executive or senior manager, you have subordinates with whom you are satisfied as well as dissatisfied. Or there will always be some shortcomings in the achievement of important tasks. Thus, the matter of Impartiality or fairness can be important, which can be related to managing your emotions. Namely, executives or senior managers who do not possess impartiality or fairness will often reveal or display their emotions. This then will reflect badly on the person in the capacity of being in a more senior status. Within the concept of the Virtues of leader, many of the virtues may incorporate common key components. In fact, the core these virtues are very similar, comprising of 5 groups or categories relating to various aspects of existing and living together as a family. Namely, they talk about speaking the truth, not acting dishonestly, or making sacrifices. Yet they all have a similar theme that serves as a core alignment component among themselves.

**Practice of mindfulness** : I am not really an expert in this matter. Rather I am more of a practitioner at the beginner level in practicing Concentration and not at the level of practice of Insight. However, since I grew up and trained more in the field of science, whatever I do is based more on sound reasons. And much of the *dhamma* principles are based sound reasons.

With regards to basic meditation, when I was a monk I was taught that this was the base for exercising your mind and feelings. If you first exercise your mind and feelings to be positive, then this will be the basis for doing positive and good things. With regards to concentrating on your breathing, science clearly explains that this is the working of your left and right brains. The right brain registers images or various perceptions as well as the sense of hearing and touching; while the left brain deals with processing – i.e.: thinking and counting – much like a computer CPU. It receives

information and then will always compute. If your mind is not a rest, it is the left brain processing upon receiving some information or upon some event occurring just like a computer always computes. This is creates worry, anxiousness and stressfulness.

With regards to practicing meditation, in the beginning it is a strategy to stop the thinking process or disperse the computing process, through pulling for inspection and then dispelling just the thinking or computing process. This is quite reasonable. As such, the part of practicing meditation that I think is very beneficial relates to the various aspects of *dhamma*. I think that practicing meditation can cure stressfulness in the short term; namely, if at that juncture you feel that the computer is processing information endlessly then you need to find a way to make it stop – but only temporarily. However, sitting and meditating will not solve this problem completely. It needs the application of the *dhamma* principles – namely, this is natural for some positions like that of the Governor of the Bank of Thailand. You have information and you have principles and procedures that point to one direction with regards to practicing; however, other people believe because you are in a position of power, you should practice in another direction. And the wager will often be based on the position and reputation. If you can see through these issues with *dhamma* principles, then the stressfulness can be dissipated. Such high and powerful positions come into your life and they also go out of your life – it's only a matter of time, really. And afterwards, when we continue to live our life will we feel proud or not? It is a matter of being steadfast and committed to the principles in the face of the situation that occurred at the time, and what sort of impact it will have or not have. This is the way that such things go.

**Managing profit and non-profit organization:** In reality, there are organizations that seek profits and those that are non-profit oriented. If you talk about which *dhamma* principles are to be used in these cases, then there incorporate more similarities more than dissimilarities. Whether it is the SEC (Securities and Exchange Commission), Bank of Thailand or Kasikorn Bank, each all want to create confidence and trust on the part of their respective Stakeholders. While the stakeholders are wide spread and comprise of wide-ranging types of constituents - such as customers, clients, staff and the general public.

Banks are business organizations that want to make their clients who visit the bank to feel positive. The side benefit is that the clients can experience the services

of the bank for which various types of fees are paid that then lead to profits. The Bank of Thailand is the same. It wants the people in general to have confidence, so that it can remain in operation and feel proud about the organization. Therefore, there are more similarities than differences with other organizations. Namely, those businesses thinking more about making profits in the short term without taking into important consideration the happiness or satisfaction of its customers will not go far. While those modern businesses that think more about customer satisfaction, with profits being the subsequent result rather than being the leading driver; whereby the leading driver is customer satisfaction. The first day I came to work at the Bank of Thailand, I put a question to the staff to make them think: Does the Bank have customers? After a while, they all said that the Bank does have customers. Then I asked them: who are the customers of the Bank and who are your customers, as well as, in what the Bank does, do we have products? The Inspector of Commercial banks replied correctly that whenever he visits commercial banks to review their operations, he meets with the staff and management of these banks. These people then are his customers, all of whom have the right to feel satisfied or dissatisfied with our products. Whether they will love us or not love us is based on whether they trust and respect us. This is just like a customer coming to buy a product. Those who come to visit our museum are also our customers; and those applying for licenses are also our customers. Or further away than this, we determine and implement various policies – whether it relates to interest rate or foreign exchange rates – then the business sector and people in general are all our customers of these policies. We need to establish trust, of which the associated activities come in many forms; such as, disclosing information, explaining the reasons behind those policies, and acting in a timely manner. These activities have a purpose and similar objectives – namely: that the organizations remain in operation with pride; or both sides need to survive together. It is not that the non-profit party does not think about survival or can do anything it wants. This is not true. For instance, nowadays the people in general can criticize you, or they can indirectly cause you to be terminated. Or in the case of many government or public sector agencies that lack in the trust and confidence until some people call for their dissolution. This situation is no different for business companies that do not achieve any success. As such, there are more similarities than differences.

**Buddhism and risk management:** If you talk about applying the Buddhist teachings, these are some of the issues you need to be careful about. They may be explained, such as the concept of sufficiency economy. In reality, if you look what has been explained, it is not as they were worried about it, because in fact business management terms also incorporates the same thinking – such as, acting with reason and care, managing risks, and not acting too excessively. In fact, sufficiency is another way of looking at this thinking. A person has referred to His Majesty's speech on the matter – namely, not acting too excessively and knowing how to manage risks. These are the same specific principles we talk about involving financial matters – namely, not acting excessively or not having too much debt or being over leveraged. And if you ask does it mean not spending at all or not? His Majesty says no and explains that if you have the means then you should spend, and only wanted to warn that those who have only a little money and cannot afford it should not spend beyond their means.

We talk a lot about managing risks – in modern terms it is being prudent. However, in spirit, being prudent is being careful. You may say that this makes people inert but it is not so. If you are too adventurous, then it is not being prudent; and it will lead to dangerous outcomes. This thinking is also in the *dhamma* teachings. I think that many things depend on the interpretation being made.

If you act according to the *iddhipāda*, for instance, you must have *chanda*, *virīya*, *citta* and *vīmaṃsā*. To say that people are inert or inactive or uninterested is not correct; but people have to look at and examine the downside risk. It is not the entire progress or being reactive alone; but rather it is clear that you understand there are various degrees or types of action; and some people achieve an imbalance in their actions.

In management terms, this happens often. You may believe people worry and are being prudent or are too concerned with the downside risk to the extent of not being willing to take any risks at all. In not taking risks, you will not achieve the desired return. In the modern business terms, it teaches about giving proper balance; and having balance is not acting in too conservative a manner. Being too concerned about risk till a flow is not achieved. As such, not achieving any business flow is not good. I think that in Buddhist *dhamma* teachings does not want people to be like that.

As we have learned from history, Gotama Buddha practiced self-mortification for a period of 6 years. This is an extreme; and eventually, he explained that it is not the right path. What he taught was achieving balance. If we apply the principles of *dhamma*, we will see that how things should or should not be. Hence, there are some differences between Buddhism and other religion; namely, stressing good reason, using good sense and reasoning instead of setting your heart to believing only in one thing. Thus, there is no problem to explain why things happen.

**3.1.5 Dr. Ronnachit Mahattanapreut,  
Senior Vice President - Finance and Administration,  
Central Plaza Hotel Public Company Limited  
Interview date : July 15, 2016**

Dr. Ronnachit has practiced mediation ever since an early age - like many Thais living in the Thai cultural environment, becoming well-versed in chanting prayers while praying to the Lord Buddha as he was able to remember and repeat these prayers after having heard them only once. He has read many books on *dhamma* and has been interested in not only Buddhism but also in Christianity and other religious beliefs; and often asked himself how and why are humans born as well for what purpose? He has had various practical experiences; but due to personal obligations in studying and helping his family, he did not get the opportunity to study *dhamma* in-depth. However, after completing university and starting work, he was able to spend more time studying this subject further and finding answers to only some of the questions he had.

Thinking that there were many reasons behind what the Buddha and other religions tries to teach us, he has read more books, comparing various religious teachings till he reached a certain level of understanding as well as studied Buddhist teachings to reach a higher level of understanding. He thought about wisdom (*paññā*), meditative concentration (*samādhi*), *pariyatti* or the studies of Buddhist teachings, the practice of meditation (*paṭipatti*), *paṭivedha* and so on. He then realized that you cannot only read about these teachings, but must also practice what you have read and learn so as to reach a further level of better understanding and be able to ask more questions, together with studying for himself in practicing various methods of mediation –

regardless of whether it was based on the *dhammagya* concept, *ānāpānasati* with *bhāvana* Buddho as taught by Phra Ajahn Mun Bhuridatta Thera or as taught by Wat Mahathat Yuwaratransarit, rise & fall, and most recently as taught by Goenka regarding self-introspection of your *vedanā*.

He has now practiced mediation for over 30 years; and has reached an understanding that in studying Buddhism - or any other religious teachings – you must, in fact, also put them into practice and apply them in your current daily life. As such, you should then ask yourself what you must do or how you must act whenever coming across a situation – both happy situations or unhappy problems and issues. This will lead you to think about and understand the real cause of the unexpected situations or whatever and then to come to understand how to react or respond without being too stressed. You can also adopt this way of thinking to your work life, in which you meet so many people – namely, your superiors, your peers and your subordinates as well as other external stakeholders. You will then begin to understand that everyone you meet or are in contact with all have differing points of view and objectives. When they come to meet and discuss things with you, they all have their various agenda and reasons, based on their own personal desires and wants etc. In coming into contact with and experiencing various situations, you will then be able to respond and react to each different situation you are facing at that time without feeling stressful or any unhappiness, since you understand that it is inevitable or impermanence (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*) and non-self (*anattā*). Hence, you will not be misled or react without being careful. So, how can you apply such disciplined thinking in our everyday life in order to maintain your mindfulness or full awareness, and do not act carelessly through careful planning and thinking through all the issues.

In having attained a Doctorate degree, while studying he realized that even having studied a subject matter in depth but if someone else before you has established a theory, has research the associated issues and then has reached specific conclusions; then, if it interests you, it should be still worthwhile to undertake further in depth research in the same matter to gain an even more in depth inside information and knowledge. This principle was applied by the Buddha, when, at the age of 29, He was ordained as a monk and spent 6 years (till 35 years old) traveling around the country to learn from various teachers about the truth and meaning of life - until on *Vesākha* Day,

when He eventually attained true Enlightenment. It is the same as studying for a Doctorate degree, whereby we gain deep inside knowledge about a specific subject matter, but unlike the Buddha, there are many levels of ‘inside knowledge’ to be attained. As such, this concept can always be applied to your real daily life.

He has practiced many methods of meditation based on varying concepts - almost weekly, and is various serious and disciplined - at various places and also at home. He has now gained extensive knowledge, insight and a deep understanding, after 10 years of serious and disciplined practice at the age of 62.

As he practiced further, he gained deeper understanding; and then applied this in his daily life. Before, going to sleep he would review the day and the lessons learnt, so as to know how to respond to the same or similar situations next time around, together with chanting prayers. He will control his breathing so as to enhance his mindfulness and will automatically awaken refreshed and alert. The technique he uses for this is now second nature for him as he has now practiced this for some time. Namely, once he has chanted his prayers, he lies down in a comfortable position, focusing his mind, breathing naturally and letting his mind float free as well as focusing on and observing the movements of his breathing. When chanting prayers, he uses the simple method, focusing on the Buddha and various teachers as a means to recall mindfulness or awareness through being calm and serene. Because of his extensive practical experience, he can meditate for a much longer period than others. Once achieving a state of *vedanā*, then you need to use wisdom (*paññā*) to consider the things in this world – whether living or not living, whether in a solid, liquid or gaseous state, and whether it exists in the air or in the vacuum as well as whether humans, animals, plants or whatever – all such things are subject to Three marks of existence – namely: 3 principles of being changeable, of not being able to be controlled, being *anicca*. As such, if you become attached to them you will feel *dukkha* (suffering). Everything lacks any physicalness, or are intangible, since we cannot touch or feel them or hold on to them physically. Once you come to understand that all things are subject to the rule of three marks of existence and yet we come attached to them, it will cause us to feel *dukkha* (suffering). As such, once we comprehend and accept this basic fact, we can co-exist with them in any form or manner; and whatever happens we can find a solution

through using wisdom (*paññā*) ; we can find factors or reasons that can control them or otherwise.

**Applying Buddhist teachings to business** : As for applying religious teachings, principles and knowledge in the business world, he stated that mostly it is used in relation to making projections and expectations. For a real life example, he was instructed to look at the hotels business potential in the Maldives and if it is positive then to propose the terms and conditions for approval by the Board. After visiting the Maldives, the potential looked positive as it was still a virgin tourism market although the investment and logistics costs were high. Then, based on available and credible data, he analyzed the demand and supply aspects of this market for the past 10 years up to the present together with projected future trends for the next 10 years - including available number of islands/locations for hotels development. An assessment of the marketing capabilities and strengths of the company was then made together with various associated business projections - that included Plan A and Plan B, in case the various expected business situations did not realized that would then result in the tourism market to decline, (In fact this was the case, when a political crisis occurred with the new and former Maldives Presidents having a major disagreement, together with the tsunami event in 2004 and also the original land lord/business partner becoming more demanding). As such, there were already back up business/operations plans already in place without having been instructed to do so by the Board; whereby if it was apparent that marketing and operational aspects were not viable or the tourism market issues cannot be fixed, the overall investments would have to be reduced and new sources of investment funds found, then the project turnaround operations could then be implemented. And citing another example of a hotels management project, he stated that there will always be satisfied and dissatisfied business partners or those wanting to terminate the deal. In the case of a deal being terminated, then negotiations will take place regarding compensation costs; but mostly this ends up in legal proceedings being taken.

He added further that, in negotiating such deals being terminated, apart from being mindful and aware, other applicable Buddhist principles include being equitable and not taking advantage of the other party, showing kindness) and also, sometimes, compassion; also if the other party is angry, you need to show a sense of equanimity –

namely, apply the concept of *brahmavihāra*. As such, this concept of the *brahmavihāra* is directly applicable to the negotiations process.

In the past, while at the Central Ladprao location, he used to hold classes and discussions for subordinates and work colleagues on practicing mediation and applying Buddhist principles at work, namely: Loving-kindness (*mettā*), Compassion (*karuṇā*), Empathetic joy (*muditā*) and Equanimity (*upekkhā*). Although, everyone tried to practice mediation and the *dhamma* principles, everyone still possesses various personal desires and needs. Showing your subordinates kindness and compassion, they will then trust you and consult with you if they have any problems; this way you are in a good position to help them resolve any issues.

He said he still mediates every morning after controlling and focusing on his breathing. When he was very serious about meditation, he used to sit and meditate daily for 2 – 3 hours. This is because, after much practice and reaching a certain level of expertise, the mind understands and he is able to let go. Just by closing his eyes and becoming aware of his breathing, he can achieve a level of awareness and mindfulness, impermanence (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*) and non-self (*anattā*); and the more you let go there is much more clarity of mind for self-introspection. He agreed that, in summary, the techniques he uses involve *ānāpānasati* and *vedanānupassanā*.

Asked if he makes use of the practice of rising & falling technique, he clarified that whenever he felt that his mindfulness was been withdrawn and you feel that there is some movement in your body and is not completely still, you can then make use of the concept of rising & falling technique since once your mind is completely still you can achieve full awareness. However, he does not make use of any one concept of method in particular, due to having studied various methods and concepts for practicing meditation.

When asked about what other Buddhist principles - apart from sati or mindfulness, like the Principles of *brahmavihāra* – does he apply in undertaking his work; such as some people apply the principle of *sappurisa dhamma* which relates to the 7 virtuous qualities of a person for example, his response was that he mostly uses what comes naturally – like having compassion and the Principles of *brahmavihāra*. He also applies the concept of *iddhipāda*, which requires perseverance, tolerance,

endurance and self - restraint together with diligence or hard work and focus or concentration.

As for practicing meditation the level of his understanding relates to self-introspection of *vedanā* and the mind. He uses the concept of Seven Factors of Enlightenment (*satta sambojjhaṅgā*), whereby, previously it was understood that to achieve *dhamma* enlightenment you must fully understand the concept of Seven Factors of Enlightenment (*satta sambojjhaṅgā*) that involves being fully aware and having mindfulness at all times and then undertaking Investigation (*dhamma vicaya*) – namely: having mindfulness is being fully aware at all times and Investigation (*dhamma vicaya*) is knowing the full truth as things appear – whether to your eyes, nose, ears, tongue and body. Even your thought is Investigation (*dhamma vicaya*) – without distorting any actual facts. Further, he added that if you are industrious and diligence or *virīya* and are always alert, then you will achieve a feeling of satisfaction together with *passaddhi* or calmness or quietude.

Thereafter, you then need to further develop and enhance your concentration and then adopt the concept of *upekkhā*, which in this sense it is not like layman that says you need to ignore and let go of your unhappiness or *dukkha*; but letting go in this sense means fully understanding it and then putting it aside while still retaining it in the back of your mind. This is what it means to let go.

He agreed that this was the Seven Factors of Enlightenment (*satta sambojjhaṅgā*), and it is what he applies in his work activities and then carefully self-introspects his mind. In this regard, he acknowledges that Goenka is very clever in that he is always mindful and displays *upekkhā* at all times; namely, he make use of the beginning and the end Seven Factors of Enlightenment (*satta sambojjhaṅgā*).

When asked, as some people say, if you practice *dhamma* it makes you lazy or inactive as well as you slow down and are not willing to strive to achieve other things – you only want to go to the temple, he says that there are 2 different thinking about this. One thinking is that once we achieve an understanding we often live a very humble and simple life and become less ambitious and active in our wants and desires or drive. The second thinking is that once we have achieved true understanding, yet whatever role and responsibilities or duties we still need to fulfill and fully discharge them - but without becoming attached to such roles or responsibilities. As such, he agreed that you

first need to possess *iddhipāda* – namely, whatever obligations you have you need to fulfill them but without becoming attached to the concept of Seven Factors of Enlightenment (*satta sambojjhaṅgā*). It is acting in a humble manner. Further, this, as Buddha taught us, is to be aware of your duties and responsibilities and not to take advantage of others.

He continues by saying that many people apply the concept of *Four Noble Truth* – namely, everything has a reason or *samuddya*; and you should overcome the reason since the reason results in *dukkha* – as has been taught by Luang Poo Dul. He adds that initially he did not understand Luang Poo Dul, but once reaching a certain level of understanding then you will understand the concept of Four Noble Truth - as explained by Luang Poo Dul about having *samudaya* and *dukkha*.

He added that initially you have *samudaya* followed by *magga* and then *nirodha* – namely, the reason occurs first, which then results in *dukkha* – that includes physical *dukkha* and emotional *dukkha*; whereby emotional *dukkha* is a feeling you create inside yourself, while physical *dukkha* is external felt by your body when it comes in contact with external situations. Then you have *magga*. It is best to extinguish *dukkha* so as to completely be rid of the feeling of *dukkha* while *magga* is positive thinking, actions and speech, together with living in a positive manner together with being industrious and having mindfulness and *samādhī*. When asked that, from the viewpoint of being a businessman in an religious environment that does not facilitate business activities, while a businessman still has wants, desires and goals to create this or establish that, how can the Buddhist principles be applied in such a situation since the business needs to grow and survive, he says that, in reality, the Buddhist ways can be applied in order to sustain the business. Namely, this is in order to enable the business continue for a long time, through starting with a firm foundation as well as through understanding and not taking advantage of the stakeholders. The stakeholders who are in your ‘business ecosystem’ should be able to benefit in getting what they want while your goals of achieving growth for your business will be realize in accordance with the established objectives and strategies. Now, because your strategy is based on some uncertainties that may be obstacles to the achievement of your goals, so you need to adjust your strategy and goals. However, if you fully understand the reasons for what has occurred – that may enable and support the realization of your goals or that may be

an obstacle to the goals - you then need to have a back-up plan for your goals. Thus, instead of being frustrated, you have full awareness of the situation and so you can then find positive solutions to the situation and face whatever issues that may have occurred. As such, you become more effective than a person who does not apply the dharma concepts. As an example, in being in a hotels business, he says he faces many, many changeable situations.

While the hotel business is complicated with many difficult situations – like the red shirts led political rallies etc. - all these negative situations can be resolved such as by requesting some staff to take their due holidays or relocating staff to work at hotels located in Pattaya or Phuket. This is so that they will continue to earn a steady income. As such, we try to solve these difficult situations by always applying our knowledge and wisdom or *paññā*.

He agreed that there is much need to make use of the acquired knowledge and wisdom – namely: using *paṭivedha saddhamma*, while having always practicing mediation and chanting prayers for a long time.

When asked if there was anything that requires special caution and careful attention when applying Buddhist principles in business management practices, he said that some people are immediately successful but they fail to always consider that they might become complacent and think that they are special or have a special gift in this regard. As such, they may then one day fail to be successful in applying these principles. This has actually happened to many businessmen, who have been successful all along till one day because they have become too overconfident and fail. They have invested all they have without any back up plans and their business then fails. This may be because they have not applied the Buddhist principles truly 100% - such as, they make merit - or undertake some merit making ceremony with some Ajahn or other - but still hope to gain something in return. Making merit must be undertaken in an honest and altruistic manner for the sole purpose of making merit and nothing else; as well as everything you do must be based on your wisdom, knowledge and abilities. You must not act imprudently or without due care. Towards the end of his life, Gotama Buddha said that all monks still care for their own benefits – or yours; they should not act in an improper or careless manner. This was His last sermon. Even at the last minute, He admonished us like this. Thus, those businessmen who have been successful – either by

applying His principles or otherwise – should not be careless in their undertakings or actions.

When asked, if at the present time, he still applied Buddhist principles in managing and in allowing his team to also become involved in such activities – or namely, how did he get others in his team to become engaged in applying Buddhist principles in their management activities, he said that when those people outside his immediate Department or even within his Department observe his behavior or how the way he negotiated, they often asked him questions about it. So, he takes the opportunity to subtly embed in his replies references to Buddhist principles. This is better than telling or teaching them outright or in a direct manner, since not everyone will be able to understand or be receptive. He does not want to compare himself like being Gotama Buddha and start to preach to them; he wants to be like some learned Ajahn, who when going to visit others will first observe to see that whether or not the audience is willing or receptive to the Buddhist principles.

When asked if apart from applying the Buddhist principles in his management practices, are such Buddhist principles also involved or applied in any other areas of the organization – such as, in defining the corporate values or the corporate culture, he said that yes. As such, the corporate values incorporate such concepts as being attentive and committed, being sincere, being trusting etc – namely: being sincere to customers and clients, being attentive in your work, as well as being fully committed to your duties and responsibilities.

**3.1.6 Mr. Sanan Angubolkul, Chairman & President,  
Srithai Superware Plc.  
Interview date : June 10, 2015**

Mr. Sanan said that he himself does not practice developing mindfulness. Instead, when looking back at what has happened in his life including many experiences and situations he has gone through, he believes that we must always get to know the truth or real situation around us together with the real causes of it so as to be able to overcome issues or sufferings. As such, he always teaches his subordinates that they should not only look at the problem or issues; but must look beyond this. Since they

already know the causes of the actual problem that has already occurred, but they may not know how to solve it in the meantime, they should go and do something else. Then they come back to revisit the problem later, which would then not seem to be such a big problem after all. This is being mindful and accepting the situation.

He added that normally people with problems or sufferings may not be able to sleep while the problems keep going round and round in their minds. But for him, by becoming focused and mindful leaves his mind not to think of anything at all as well as to forget everything. This way, you then just do everything by yourself and no one can influence you. It is up to you alone to rely on yourself.

He learned this method from a natural instinct and not from anyone, through saying to himself : there is no one you can count on but yourself. Therefore, you need to focus your mind to become fully mindful of the situation and stop worrisome. The following day, you will then become mindful, and gain some knowledge and insight with an ability to solve the problem or tackle the negative situation. You need to let things go, have mindfulness, and be calm so when you revisit the problem you can effectively solve it through being mindful with gaining knowledge.

***Brahmavihāra*** : When asked whether he prays, meditates, practices any *dhamma* activities or goes to temples, Mr. Sanan replied that in fact, he does not regularly do so. However, as a matter of fact, he has been applying numbers of Buddhist teachings. For example, *brahmavihāra*, firstly, with regards to showing ‘Loving-kindness’, whenever any bad incident occurs he automatically and always tries to teach others to show or share loving and kindness towards the others, who may have done something that annoy us or may not be as knowledgeable as we are. He would not be angry with others but rather try to understand why they did so. If we can do this rather than feel angry, it can make us feel better, since we forgive them. We should build such feeling from inside.

Secondly, with regards to showing ‘Compassion’, it means that since we do not have problems or sufferings, we should desire and try to teach others to be rid of any sufferings. Also, we should help them to think of how to be free from sufferings, and closely monitor the outcome so as to continue to help them, if needed.

Thirdly, with regards to showing ‘Sympathetic Joy’ over the success or happiness of others, he is often seen as always having a positive attitude towards and a

feeling of happiness for others. When we are young and show the sympathetic joy to others, it may not be meaningful for them. But being a leader and senior person, whenever he shows sympathetic joy to someone, it means a great deal to him and it inspires him. With his leadership and social status, doing so is a great opportunity to give recognition to and to motivate others in their moment of happiness. It is also to boost morale by expressing genuine joy to them – in person or via a letter. Even though you may not personally like someone, as a leader, you need to show the joy to inspire and motivate him in a positive manner anyway.

Fourthly, with regards to showing ‘Equanimity’, whenever our subordinates have problems and feel some sufferings, we can help them only to a certain degree but cannot solve their problems or suffering entirely. As a leader, at least we can give them words of comfort to relieve them from their sufferings and raise some degree of awareness on their part of the real cause of suffering so they can find their own ways to solve or avoid it.

*Saṅgaha-vatthu* : He said that *brahmavihāra* comes from within inside. While giving a lecture he always says that when a person’s mindset changes, his character also changes; since you have both an inner character and an external character. The internal character is what and how you think; while the external character is how you naturally act or behave. For example, when you think in a negative way, your words and facial expressions will reflect this negative mood; but if you have a positive mindset then your words and expressions will be on the contrary.

Further, your actions also reflect your inner mindset. As such, your life will also change in accordance with the inner feelings. Everything then starts from and depends on the state of the inner mindset. Therefore, you need to instill a positive mindset in people. If you have a negative mindset, you will always feel troublesome and suffering. Human beings are clever than other animals; and thus possessing and showing the *brahmavihāra* comes from the inner state of mind.

In terms of management, this means ‘actions’; but actions alone are not enough. You firstly need a vision or a dream that will then be realized through actions being taken. This is the first of the *saṅgaha-vatthu* that involves ‘Giving or Generosity’.

Sometimes his children complain that he does not need to give too many things to many persons. He teaches them that it is his nature that he wants to give them, as he

feels much pleasure and happiness to be in a position to be able to give things to other people. This applies not only to give but also forgiveness, as he knows that no one is perfect in this world.

Showing love and kindness to others is also a way of giving – just as giving time - even on weekends or holidays. It can be made by giving lectures and sharing knowledge and experiences (e.g.: at ACC and AFS - organizations etc.) to educate people. It is a way of repaying debts to society by opening opportunities to the new generation, just as he himself used to be given life-changing opportunities for advancement in his career.

*Saṅgaha-vatthu* is also related to ‘kind words’. People who know him personally or at work agree that he has never been rude to or used unkind words with people. When speaking, he always shows respect to others regardless of who they are or where they come from. This is because your words are means to convince and make people believe in you. If you do not speak well or disrespect others when talking to them, you will find it hard to make friends. If you speak well and in a polite manner, they will even forgive you when you have done something wrong.

The way you speak and talk is important, as it is a medium through which you can communicate with others in a positive manner. You should not admonish people or alienate people through the way you talk with them. Instead, you need to be courageous enough to always speak the truth, and of course in a courteous manner. For example, you can give advice to other people with no need to tell them that they are wrong or have done something wrong. This way, you will not have any enemies or alienate anyone.

The third *saṅgaha-vatthu* is ‘Rendering Aids’ or providing benefits for others through helping them – which he does all the time. And the fourth *saṅgaha-vatthu* is ‘Nature Friendly’ by consistently giving an ‘Even and Equal Treatment’ to or understanding other people without looking down nor intimidating them.

**Social Capital** : He believes all businesses have 3 common elements :

1) Finance Capital. While money is not the most important element, it is a means that enables you to help others. Money is not a god, but it is a key aspect of business. He also participates in some non-profit organizations aimed at helping others who are in need. Those organizations may generate more income than expenses,

however, this excess amount is not called a profit but a surplus, which is then spent to further develop the organization so as to be able to provide continued assistance to others. Nevertheless, you need to undertake some activities that will be beneficial to others so as to attract contributions and be sustainable.

2) Human Capital. Human resources are a key to business. Whether an organization will have good reputation is dependent upon its people. Bad people will easily destroy the organization. Thus, the key is how to develop your human resources to be both competent and good. The more positive and moral behavior they have, the more we can ensure that the business is not conducted in any illegal or improper manner, but with moderation and not in any excessive manner.

3) The last aspect is "Social Capital". The more people become educated, the more important of this "Social Capital". People, nowadays, tend to be more selfish, care for their own interests, and be competitive with others. However, people and organizations that show their willingness to make contribution to society will be trusted and be more respectful by others. Therefore, a business can achieve a unique advantage by demonstrating a high degree of social capital.

*Sappurisa dhamma* : He said he has practiced this concept of *sappurisa dhamma* all along, namely: acting with moderation and perseverance, having a sense of sharing, and knowing the right timing and occasion. Most importantly is knowing the right people and yourself, knowing the local communities, and having good justification in taking action. These things are vital especially if you are expanding your business overseas. This is what he always tries to teach others to understand the local culture, customs, and languages. If you do not follow these, you will never succeed in approaching and connecting with them.

As such, the Key Success for Srithai Superware is by stretching out into the local communities, and establishing a solid connection with local people. It is a basic act in accordance with the concept of *sappurisa dhamma* .

With regards to applying the *dhamma* principles in business management, he believes that it is more a natural instinct which he has consistently practiced all his life, both personally and work-wise.

**3.1.7 Mr. Somprasong Boonyachai, Former Chief Executive Officer,  
Intouch Group (Shin Corporation Plc.)**

**Interview date : June 9, 2015**

Mr. Somprasong said that he applied Dhamma principles both to his personal life and work life, through having studied from various learned monks and teachers, such as: Somdet Phra Buddhakosajarn (Prayudh Payutto), whose many books he has read, and more importantly Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara, the Supreme Patriarch, together with another learned teacher MR Kukrit Pramoj whom he respects a great deal. He believes that all these 3 learned teachers are well versed in Buddhist teachings and principles, from whom he has learned a great deal over a long period of time. These 3 persons have all had a major impact on this thinking, together with the *tipitaka*.

**Practice of dhamma** : When asked if currently he practices Dharma and mediation often, he said no; but spends time reading books on these subjects, which facilitates him to think and have various ideas. Dharma, once it is correct and the truth, can be practiced anywhere and anytime. As such, should you go and practice in a temple or retreat? Yes, it would be good, just like a professional athlete joining a sports camp to practice, or a student attending a special tutorial school before taking exams. This is because, once you are at the special retreat or temple to practice, the overall environment, location and ways of behaving in the retreat all facilitate the actual practice of meditation that will result in what in religion is called *sappāya*. There will also be many teachers to help teach and guide you. But for me, to do this and stay for any length of time is not practical. My main issue and key concern is achieving mindfulness.

*Dhamma* has many elements, one of which is *sati and sampajañña*. The fact that he can achieve mindfulness means that he is able to practice a certain level of mediation – through being fully aware of his being while sitting and talking with his Ajahn, together with being aware of what are his likes and dislikes and being fully aware of his emotions and feelings – like being angry or ceasing to be angry. If you can attain this level of mindfulness or awareness, then you are able to control your emotions and feelings at all times. This is a method of practicing dharma, and as he was able to achieve this, he felt no need to go and practice outside in a retreat or a temple. He also

believes that for people to achieve concentration or *samādhi*, there is no need to go to practice in a temple or retreat. For example, when you sit alone and think about your past good deeds that results in a feeling of self-contentment that will then lead to a feeling of contented calmness and serenity or *passaddhi*, and then possibly a sense of concentration or focus. He added that he mostly practices the development of mindfulness - rather than mediating by sitting or walking in a circle – which is developing a heightened sense of feeling and self-awareness. In practicing *satipaṭṭhāna*, there are 4 elements:

1. *Kāyānupassanā* which relates to your body and your bodily behavior (or body language).

2. *Vedanānupassanā* which relates to your present feeling or emotions.

3. *Cittānupassanā* in which there are many aspects to this element that relates to your present state of mindfulness or awareness.

4. *Dhammānupassanā* which relates to the level of your understanding of *dhamma* concepts; whereby if you maintain your mindfulness, you will not go off in a tangent.

He adds that yes, mindfulness is the basis and foundation for your state of concentration and focus. They always go together – mindfulness and concentration as well as the 4 elements: *sati and sampajañña*, mindfulness and knowledge or wisdom. Thus mindfulness will lead to knowledge and wisdom – as our ancestors often say. By having Sati and then knowledge, we can then live successfully anywhere.

Gotama Buddha teaches us that *appamāda* is the *dhamma* concept of being careful and cautious or perseverance, resulting from having full mindfulness and not losing your self-control or self-awareness.

***Lokiya-dhamma and Lokuttara-dhamma:*** With regards to the involvement of Buddhist religion on our lives, you must first look at the word rightness or *dhamma*, which means the right way or method and correct behavior. If you speak of *buddha-dhamma*, which means the right ways or the correct behaviors as taught by the Gotama Buddha, whether He did happen or not, the real meaning of these teachings already exist in nature and He has found the truth and has explained these truths for us. He has also explained these truths in the *tipiṭaka*. Layman's happiness from, is called *gihisukha* (House-life Happiness) or happiness derived from having wealth and assets as well as

from having no debts or obligations. Happiness derived from working has no penalties. As a businessman, he needs to have *lokiya-dhamma* and cannot have *lokuttara-dhamma*. As a CEO, he can achieve happiness as long as he remains in the *lokiya-dhamma* and needs to act in a correct manner in accordance with the concept of *lokiya-dhamma*. In this regard, he has a word for this : *kāmabhogī*.

*Kāmabhogī* is one who consumes and enjoys *kamma* - which in this sense does not refer to sex or sexual feeling only, but rather worldly happiness and joy. In enjoying worldly happiness and joy - or *kāmabhogī* – Gotama Buddha spoke in praise of this in this manner: *kāmabhogī* has 4 aspects or components; namely:

1. A person who legally acquires wealth and assets without being deceitful, or who sells things based on their true quality without over-advertising, or who does not sell anything that is dangerous or harmful –such as, drugs. IT is a person who has a rightful and lawful occupation or livelihood. As such, by doing such things, wealth is acquired in a rightful, correct and legal manner, which is the core of this particular aspect.

2. Once wealth and assets are acquired, the person then makes use of such wealth and assets to bring him happiness and joy.

3. That person also then knows how to use the acquired wealth and assets through sharing it with others so as to bring happiness and joy to them.

4. That person is the master of his wealth and assets.

One thing he learned from Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara is that happiness is derived from not taking advantage of or exploiting others or yourself. So, in order to answer the question that, as a businessman, does he also apply and put into practice as well as practice dharma principles, he said yes – most certainly with reference to above principle of Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara.

**Buddhist Teachings** : He is sure many people have been through such experiences and as a result has suffered. So what to do? You then need to make use of *lokuttara-dhamma*. Most things are not enduring and have their life cycle; so sooner or later your suffering regarding that problem will end sometime unless you do things that may extend the feeling of suffering and then a new situation will occur resulting in more suffering.

Another way of looking at this is never to be careless or lapse in being cautious. Currently, we may have achieved much success in our work, which has been due to a set of positive factors and circumstances or a certain business environment, of which we are a part. However, this does not mean we will continue to be successful in the future, for future external environment and circumstance change. Thus, we must always be careful and cautious and not be complacent. We must constantly research and acquire more knowledge.

Another thing is *santosa*, whereby many people who have go to the temple to practice *dhamma* may often say they have already done this often and it is enough learning. But this is an excuse for being too lazy to continue going. It is a false feeling or thinking, and being content with what they already have tried to do and what knowledge they have already gained to date.

The opposite viewpoint is that you must always strive to achieve more and always acquire more knowledge. In religious terms, as: Somdet Phra Buddhakosajarn (Prayudh Payutto) teaches that while you should be satisfied with what you have enjoyed; you should never be satisfied with doing positive or good deeds. So what is doing positive or good deeds. It relates to always searching for more knowledge and striving for self-development. This is always acting in accordance with the concept of *iddhipāda* (*chanda*, *virīya*, *citta* and *vīmaṃsā*) as well as not exploiting or taking advantage of other people. It is also observing the concept of *saṅgaha-vatthu* or being a person who knows how to give to others.

He added further that *piyavaca* is the concept of speaking well to others, and that *atthacariya* or behaving in manner that will benefit others. The other aspect of *aṅgaha-vatthu* is *samānattata* or acting towards others in a consistent and equitable manner – not exploiting or taking advantage of others. Further, being a senior person or a leader, you must possess the principles of *brahmavihāra* namely: loving and kindness or showing good will towards other so that they will feel happy without looking for anything in return, which is also being kind and acting with mercy; being compassionate or doing and help others if you are in a position to do so in order that others can overcome their suffering or problems; having empathetic or sympathetic joy and celebrating other people good fortunes, which is opposite of feeling envious of other people's success or happiness, that will result in many people wanting to be

friends with you; and lastly acting with equanimity or being fully impartial and looking at things as they truly are without any other emotions or feeling that may be biased being able to distort the real facts.

With reference to *upekkhā* and if it can be related to the principles of corporate governance. Some people say that governance can relate to *upekkhā* through overseeing the company with impartiality and without any bias through not having any negative or positive feelings. Thus, executives and management must always act in a correct and rightful manner with impartiality and without bias.

With reference to other *dhamma* principles being applied to business and management practices – such as, executive must possess vision – which relates to the *dhamma* concept of *cakkhumā*, he said: This concept is derived from *pāpaṇika-dhamma* or the concept for business men, which includes:

1) you need to have *cakkhumā* or insight or good vision about the future, which requires knowledge, experiences and a great deal of reasonable actions without any excesses, based on what he has done and achieved to date;

2) *Vidhūro* or a comprehensive and accurate knowledge as to what needs to be done, since even with vision but lacking in competency or ability you will not be successful, which is equivalent to having knowledge and experience as required for the job whereby this competency may be just your own or, in the case of a large organization the combined competency of all the internal units involved;

3) *Nissayasampanno* or required financial resources – including knowing where to acquire these resources, such as borrowing from friends or financial institutions though use of various types of financial instruments; whereby if you have element 1 and 2 then this 3rd element will not be able to acquire. He talked further about *iddhipāda*, which is the equivalent of PDCA (Plan, Do, Check, Act) – in other words, this is the flow or cycle of business activities.

**Sharing of Buddhist Teachings :** When asked if he regularly discusses with or disseminates information to his team and other executives or incorporates into the corporate policy and corporate culture as well as part of the corporate vision and value the dharma principles, he said: yes, he does in talking and meeting with his superiors, work colleagues, suppliers or business partners the dharma principles are discussed. Such as, governance relates to telling the truth and being open as well as keeping your

word in acting according to what you have promised to do. This also relates to maintaining your personal and the corporate reputation and integrity as well as being intent on not exploiting or taking advantage of others – such as, intentionally defaulting on any financial obligations even if you are having some financial problems.

Honesty is vital in business – especially for the leader.

According to *dasavidha-rājadhamma* or the ten virtues of leadership. In this regard:

1. The leader must also be willing to give (*dāna*) , whether it is giving an opportunity to your subordinates, giving knowledge and information, advice and suggestions or recommendations, or clearly defined goals and targets, and importantly giving forgiveness for any unintentional wrongdoings – although this must be within with the established internal disciplinary rules and regulations.

2. Displays good moral behavior (*sīla*).

3. Be willing to make self – sacrifices (*pariccāga*) rather than just donating money.

4. Shows commitment to the your responsibilities through making best efforts to discharge the assigned duties – or as referred to in Buddhist terminology having *ājjava*, which that means being committed to your duties

5. Be circumspect and respectful to others (*maddava*)

6. Possess firmness and determination (*tapa*) in carrying out your work activities through not giving up easily as well as not being distracted or swayed by whatever you hear without undertaking careful analysis and thinking through the real facts.

7. Be in control of your emotions and not be easily angered (*akkodha*).

8. Take care to act or react to any situation in an equitable manner without displaying or being driven by any personal emotions and bias or excessive meanness – such as, acting towards both people within and outside of the company (e.g.: suppliers, sub-contractors) who may possess less stature or standing than you, or finding excuses to delay payments when due as promised – or *avihimsā*) have endurance and restraint in taking any actions when under pressure, as well as be patient in listening to others

9. Be patient in response to any obstacle (*khanti*).

10. always remain in the correct status and rightful situation – and not allowing any irregular circumstance to dominate you so that it then becomes a norm – or *avirodhana*.

These 10 moral principles in being a good and positive leader – or leading with righteousness. He says he just follows these principles – without talking about it to people internally in religious terms, for fear of being accused of trying to teach *dhamma* to them.

Similarly, although he encourages his people to learn and develop themselves to a higher level of capability – or *santosa*. He also encourages them to never cease doing good deeds, to teach their respective subordinates when they themselves become a leader, and never to stop learning new capabilities so that they can better themselves.

He also tells them that learning, studying, training, developing yourselves are all necessary and will be so throughout their life, that this can be achieved through reading and attending internal training classes – this is *sutamayā paññā*, or knowledge gained from reading and listening to others.

Once you gain this new knowledge, you must then think how to best apply it, adopt and adapt it for practical use – or *cintāmaya-paññā*. Then, you will need to implement the newly adapted knowledge as well as make any further adjustments as required based on the newly acquired experiences; which will then result your becoming successful - or *bhāvanāmaya-paññā*. However, he uses simple words – rather than *dhamma* terminology to explain to them.

When asked that such concepts are now embedded in and part of the corporate culture, since he has been a leader in the organization for a long time, he agreed. He added that you need to think through and then undertake the right course of actions so as not take any extreme actions that would be incorrect direction. You must try to define the correct course of action as appropriate – which can be summed up as "doing the proper thing". He uses differing terms when talking to differ business units – such as, “the best promotional campaigns” when talking to the marketing group or “optimize” when talking to the engineering group. This is because you need to find the most appropriate terminology that is familiar and that can be easily understood by the respective differing audiences.

He then explained that he typically communicates with his people to have the right view and right attitude, through being positive about yourself, about the company and also about your work colleagues. This leads to thinking, studying and reading, which will then lead you to the appropriate or right concept that is based on the correct thinking. He uses this approach of explanation instead of *sammādiṭṭhi* and *sammā sankappa*.

When asked about the corporate culture and value, he said: The corporate value is to deliver quality in whatever we do, so that we can be successful through having in place an overall value chain that incorporates this ‘quality’ corporate value, which will achieve a quality end result.

Another aspect is the required corporate culture, which he believes comprises of 3 I’s

1) Individual talent – meaning that we respect the fact that every person has their respective inherent talents and abilities.

2) Innovation meaning whatever we do, it must involve use of knowledge and experience to result in the development of innovation.

And 3) Idea Change – whereby based on the other two is, our past successes will never last forever and will always change, as with all events and situations will change. So we must understand and adapt to such ongoing changes. As such, we must strive to change what needs to be changed and promote what should not change – such as, the genuine goodwill and loyalty of our customers; while IT and work processes will also change This impermanence is a core Buddhist principle - or *anicca*; so we must not rely on the past successes the company has achieved, but accept any ongoing changes and be adaptable to them.

Therefore, we cannot afford to be complacency and self - contented or self - satisfied. Being complacent or self - contented, as mentioned earlier, relates or the *dhamma* concept of *appamāda* or of always acting with care and not lacking in caution.

**Notice on Applying Buddhist Teachings :** Some people say that if you apply or put into practice Buddhist principles as a framework for conducting business, it may slow you down and dampens your drive for achievement. For example: if you promote the study of Buddhist principles or the practice of *dhamma* for 2 or 3 days or

over the weekend, thereafter your staff may feel less drive to undertake various actions thereafter.

This is a wrong way of looking at the practice of *dhamma*. You need to separate this from who you are and what are your work responsibilities and duties, which is a key aspect of undertaking a business. You should apply *dhamma* principles to help your personal thinking and development. But if you use the learning of the *dhamma* principles as an excuse to avoid discharging your assigned responsibilities then it is very wrong and misuse of the Dharma principles learned. As such, you need to clearly identify and know why and what is involved in practicing of *dhamma* principles, which, in general, involves these 3 key dimensions or aspects: good moral behavior (*sīla*) , Concentration or *samādhi*, and praying or *bhāvana*; whereby:

- Good moral behavior involves positive behavior; so, as a norm, all company staff should observe and maintain this aspect.

- We also support if any staffs would like to attend meditation retreat outside their working hour so that they can have an opportunity to study at least the practice of Concentration and their feelings and emotions will become more calm; and then they will be able to focus or have *samādhi*, which will lead them to have an increased feeling of happiness by letting go of their worldly worries or daily pressures. This will also result in their feeling more energized and focused, that will then enable them to more effectively solve their work or personal problems through being able to really focus on the issues and finding the right solutions.

### **3.1.8 Mr. Supachai Verapuchong, Deputy Managing Director,**

**Thai Nakorn Patana Co., Ltd.**

**Interview date : May 17, 2015**

Mr. Supachai responses to research question in his own words as follows:  
Which Dharma principles or which philosophy within the principles of Dharma should be applied? It is the *brahmavihāra* or the 4 Principles of Virtues Existence, which is the Brahma principles whereby in the Buddhist teachings Brahma is the leader. Therefore, the leader in every organization – whether in the Government sector or the private

sector – must possess these *brahmavihāra* or virtues; namely: Loving-kindness (*mettā*), Compassion (*karuṇā*), Empathetic joy (*muditā*) and Equanimity (*upekkhā*).

Many Buddhists incorrectly define *upekkhā* – such as, meaning stillness or calmness; but this, in fact, is not the correct meaning. In the Buddhist teachings, *upekkhā* means consistency or equanimity. When we have a feeling of Loving-kindness (*mettā*), we then feel Compassion (*karuṇā*) together with Empathetic joy (*muditā*). Further, *upekkhā* is one of the highest principles of Buddhism related to being consistent in having *dhamma* in your heart. This is the true meaning of *upekkhā* within the Buddhism.

Of course, executives and manager need to apply the principles of Loving-kindness (*mettā*), Compassion (*karuṇā*), Empathetic joy (*muditā*) in the managing their subordinates. They need to be display kindness towards their subordinates; but an important management principle is that they always need to act in a consistent manner and treat all their subordinates with equanimity (*upekkhā*). This is a basic *dhamma* principle also.

Working with your subordinates, you often need to forgive them for their mistakes or errors, but this forgiveness needs to be based on the principles of Equanimity (*upekkhā*) and of being equitable based on correctness. Therefore, sometimes we need to analyze the situation based on associated feelings. If the mistake was due to an intentional carelessness, it can be forgiven. But if the mistake was due to an intentional wrongdoing – such as cheating – then it must be dealt with or disciplined appropriately; otherwise you cannot effectively control or manage the majority of the group.

Everything is based on learning from experiences, I believe that, like me, all managers or executives mostly learn from making mistakes and from experience. I may be able to speak about it and be easily understood, but I am not yet that good in practice or in applying the principles. I still need to learn more and will be learning all my life. Therefore, today, I am in the process of accumulating all my experiences and lessons learnt, as well as to then pass these on to my subordinates for their benefit. For example, within the Group of companies, whatever mistakes are made, it is better that we share these experiences amongst all the companies within the Group so as to be an example of the problems and issues being faced. Currently, the Group operates 5 hotels. If, for

example, the hotel located in Angkor Wat has a problem, we will then share this experience with the other hotels located in Phnom Penh, Krabi, and Phuket. It is a sharing of the information regarding the various problems or issues and mistakes being faced within the Group. Therefore, the same problems or mistakes should not occur again elsewhere, as it should be a lesson learnt by all. If the same mistake occurs for the second time, then I considered this it is not acceptable. This then is based on the *dhamma* principles; whereby we can forgive everyone as everyone can make a mistake for the first time round.

My own father has always taught me that in conducting business he did not need any strategies; his basic strategy was always acting in an equitable manner. My father taught me this since I was a child. Thai Nakorn Patana Co. has been established for more than 40 years now; and the company slogan we used was “Business with Ethics”, which has been used since the company was started over 40 years ago. Namely, we placed great importance on good moral standards. Thus, we applied the principles of positive moral ethics to our business conduct, and we are able to co-exist with Buddhist practices. Now we have arrived at the 2,600 year of Buddhism; hence I would like to give this aspect before the Principles of *brahmavihāra*. Apart from the Principles of *brahmavihāra*, there are many, many other Principles that form the overall *dhamma* jigsaw.

Another *dhamma* Principle I would like to mention is the Four Noble Truths, which is a core principle of Buddhism; namely: *dukkha*, *samudaya*, *nirodha* and *maggā*. This means solving a problem based on an analysis of the root cause of that problem. Today, every dimension or aspect of our society, we tend to solve a problem by looking at the symptoms or end result of the problem; whereby by doing so the real cause is not completely resolved. It means that these days our society relies more on the passage of time to be the agent of change. To quickly resolve any issues, Buddhism never relies on time being the indicator. In overseeing activities to ensure that we move towards the achievement of our objectives, Buddhism has never made use of the passage of time.

If I were to undertake marketing activities so as to achieve a 30% share of the market within a period of 5 years, I have now made ‘timing’ a condition of this targeted achievement. Now, in using this ‘time’ condition, it means that we have gone outside the *dhamma* framework. Why? It is because we now have made the condition

of ‘timing’ to be the overall framework instead of using the target of achieving a 30% market share (or, possibly, of being a market leader) as the core framework, and then deploying your best efforts through use of the Five Strengths concept.

This Five Strengths concept is the principle of achieving success through: Faith or *saddhābala*, Effort or *viriyabala*, Mindfulness or *satibala*, Concentration or *samādhibala*, and Wisdom or *paññābala*. We must believe and have faith that the target we established can be achieved; if we lack this Faith or Belief then it cannot be achieved. In every business or and in every social context, you need to have this Faith or Belief and best endeavors and efforts; yet you will not be able to achieve success if you also do not have Mindfulness, followed by Concentration. Once you have this Concentration, Wisdom will then follow. Additionally, a guideline is offered based on the concept of *sammā ditṭhi*, which is the concept of not causing harm to yourself and others that is based on the Five Precepts concept. If you do not use the ‘timing’ condition, you will not meet with failure, or the concept of the Five hindrances:

You will not fail and not feel agitated or stressed. Why? It is because you have the objective of being a market leader; and then every day you make your best endeavors and efforts based on the concept of the Five Strengths. So you see, this the heart and core concept of Buddhism.

The Principle of *dhamma* for Unity is also another core concept. You see it is the principle of Seven Conditions of Welfare, meaning things never lead to decline but only to prosperity; and conditions of welfare. Regular meeting, do not repeal old regulations; you see, within the concept of *dhamma* for Unity, you begin the meeting together you should end the meeting together. Also, within the concept of *dhamma* for Unity, the elderly generation as well as those who are underprivileged are looked after and taken care of. This is part of establishing your reputation and authority. I think that every principle and concept are interconnected. In fact, every principle and concept can actually be applied to all aspects of management.

The concept of *sappurisa dhamma*, or the 7 Virtuous Qualities, in being a good person is also applicable to marketing; namely: knowing the reasons, knowing the purpose & consequence, knowing your capabilities and limitations, knowing how to be temperate, knowing the correct timing, knowing the community, and knowing the different individuals.

You can ask if this is more applicable than the 4 Ps, Marketing Mix theory, which is the key principles of marketing management. Knowing the reasons means knowing the reasons for undertaking a business – i.e.: demand; and what would be the outcome of these reasons; you also need to know your own self.

You need to assess yourself; namely: if you have 100, yet you go and invest 1,000. But, if you have 100, then you invest only 30 - 40 and keep the rest. Correct? This is assessing yourself and your limitations. Knowing the timing means knowing the right moment when to launch a business and new products – such as: in launching a skin lotion, you need to do this in the cool or winter season - which is a core marketing principle. Therefore, all these principles or concepts can be applied to business. So whatever principles or concepts you talk about, it can be actually applied in the conduct of business and management. As such, the concept of knowing the community means if you are operating in Vietnam, then you need to know about their way of life and thinking; the same also applies if you are operating in Cambodia or in China. This is the concept of being a good person or behaving in a positive manner – or the concept of *sappurisa dhamma*. I think is the core concept of marketing – much better and more effective than the western marketing concepts.

I think that chanting prayers is one method of practicing Concentration; but it is only a basic method. Buddha taught us to practice Concentration as part of the four postures by walking, sitting, standing and lying down. He praises those who practice Concentration in any manner – and not only in a sitting posture, which is not wrong but is only a basic posture in practicing *ānāpānasati* – or mindfulness of breathing. It is the practice of controlling your mind by saying *buddho*, and it is not wrong but is only practicing at being completely still. Thus, there are 2 methods in practicing meditation – namely: through a staying still and through movement.

The method of stillness benefits yourself but not others and lasts only for a short while. This differs from the other method of practicing meditation through the use of movement, which benefits both yourself and others and lasts longer. As soon as you wake up, you can practice meditation; talking with me while you can also practice mindfulness. Through having Mindfulness together with constant in-depth knowledge, you are able to build up and capture your own inner feelings or emotions. This is the goal of practice of mindfulness. If you know your own inner feelings and emotions all

the time, you are in the state of mindfulness; therefore, Buddhists need to understand that practicing with the method of movement; and executives and managers must be mindful based on the movement method in their working activities.

I myself, I understand; but my personal weakness is that I still lack a solid practice of the 4 core methods of meditations – i.e.: walking, sitting, standing and lying down. I freely admit that my level of understanding of *pariyatti* is like a monk who is a Pali scholar; but have still not practiced it so as to be able to be at the *paṭipatti and paṭivedha* level. By knowing it but not having practice it, you will never be a holy person. Hence, Gotama Buddha has established a specific criteria in this matter, namely: *pariyatti, paṭipatti and paṭivedha*.

I chant on a daily basis; but I chant silently in my mind when have some free moment at the airport lounge or during the flight. If I have the time, I also sit and meditate in the mornings for about 5 minutes after having chanting for about 25 – 30 minutes.

I oversee overseas businesses; and I apply many of these principles in my work whenever I have the opportunity to talk with the local Management Team as well as the sales team and not only with the management group - regardless of what staff level is involved. Every chance I get, I try to insert some of these principles or concepts in my discussions, regardless of whether I am visiting in Laos, Cambodia, or Vietnam. Sometimes, I speak openly and mention directly what principles Buddha has taught us.

All the countries which I visit for work believe in Buddhism. Therefore, we observe the same principles and concepts; so wherever go and talk to my friends, work colleagues or subordinates, we can all talk and understand the same things as we exist within a similar thinking framework. This is because live in the ‘golden land region’ that worships and believes in Buddhism since the time of Ashoka the Great. Hence, when I talk to people there, mostly everyone understands and can be inspired in their thinking. I try to lead and direct them in their thinking – like holding up a candle or a torch to show them the way towards the right direction so that they will not go in the wrong direction. However, ultimately, it is up to them whether or not they do go in the intended direction.

When I visit Vietnam, I speak in Thai and one of my subordinates translates into Vietnamese for me. This person is very capable and good in translating things

accurately to their original meaning since he understands the ways of Buddhism. But if I visit Laos, then it is ok, since we speak and understand more or less the same. In Cambodia, I speak both in English and Thai; and many of my managers there can speak and understand Thai quite well.

We hold merit making ceremonies in every company every year - even in the Sofitel Hotel that is managed by expats, whom I invite to join in the merit making to learn about offering food to the monks whether they understand it or not. It is a way to explain to them Buddhist practices; and I also give them relevant books to read on the subject. Even at the golf course, we hold the annual *kathina* ceremony, offering food and robes to the monks. This is a tradition that we uphold every year, which is in the framework of the Principle of *dhamma* for Unity. It is like preserving as well as practicing the positive and good traditions that our ancestors have upheld unceasingly. We need to only promote these traditions based on their original concepts and also to enhance them.

The businesses that I oversee in every country - such as, in Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam, - total almost 10 companies, including the hotel company that is managed by the overseas Sofitel Hotel Management company, all hold a merit making ceremonies every year, by inviting monks from a temple located in each respective local province to chant and preach to us Buddhist teachings or principles that are specifically applicable to and also reflects our relevant management practices. As for practicing of mediation, to date, we have not done much in this regard. We have not advanced to that level as yet. We have not reached the point of taking our subordinates to sit and meditate; but, for now, we just promote and hold various religious events or ceremonies.

### **3.1.9 Mr. Supol Wattanavekin, Chairman, Kiatnakin Bank Plc.**

**Interview date : July 8, 2015**

Mr. Supol responses to research question in his own words as follows: I have been interested in *dhamma* ever since I was a university student. I managed to get hold of a book from the Chulalongkorn Buddhist Club, which in fact was the first book I read that I truly understood and believed. The book made me become interested in

this subject and wanted to know more about it. I think that it was more of a belief - together with my own curiosity in wanting to learn more rather than a really deep belief. Perhaps you might not call it a belief. It motivated me to become more and more interested to the point of my trying to practice meditation through visiting various temples here and there. I wanted to try out various Ajahn as well as to try practicing meditation and chant prayers. I did this in a very unsystematic manner for a while, till I met up with a friend who invited me to Baan Raiva to attend Khun Mae Siri's class. There were about 10 people attending. After that I began to understand what Buddhism was really all about.

She taught Walking Meditation and also Sitting Meditation. Previously, I read all sorts of books on the subject as well as books on *dhamma* and Loak Thip magazine. I was merely interested but not really serious about it. So I learned about these things in this manner. Most recently, I attended Goenka twice. In fact, I was beginning to become a bit disinterested, as I thought I was not making much progress despite having read various books together with trying out this and that. In fact, I practice mediation only a little, so it was probably had to expect much progress. Then, after practicing it (as taught by Goenka) I gained a better and much clearer understanding; and I also felt I was now making more progress.

**Buddhism and management** : In regard to Buddhism's relationship to management practices, for me it's a matter of thinking back about it; meaning, after completing the work, only then we start to learn. Once we learn, then we come to understand that they are connected. It's like assessing facts and trying to find the reasons. So, I do not apply it to work or other aspects of life so much; but after learning and reexamining past experiences in work or life in general, we then have a better and clearer understanding of it. With regards to Buddhist religion in general, my own personal belief is that it relates to consciousness and awareness if we are really able to live in the present. To me, simply put, is what Enlightenment is about or is at.

When we look at someone playing golf at a normal speed, but then we look at it at a slow motion speed, it is totally different. Similarly, with regards to consciousness and awareness. Having awareness and not having any awareness is completely different. Being aware, you will see and understand what is normal. So, if you do not see it, then what is the point awareness? As I said, people make decisions

based on reasons and beliefs. Or you can call beliefs as being emotions or feelings. Thus, having awareness means disregarding emotions or having *upekkhā*.

I believe that as executives and management, we need what is called in Buddhism as *kalyāṇa-mittatā*, which I translate into business English as “Teamwork” success. In anything we do, apart from good team work, there needs to be good team members; and if not then it will be difficult. Further, if you do not accept your own lack of understanding, it will become an obstacle. There is a need to have *kalyāṇa-mittatā* since everyone has their limitations.

Buddhism talks about 3 levels of knowledge: Level 1: Through listening to other – or Ajahn tells you what things are, then it is like that; Level 2: Ajahn tells you what things are, but you try to be clever by arguing till you cannot argue anymore; and you so accept and believe what Ajahn has told you. But it is still Ajahn’s own idea. However, it is only when you put it into practice and apply it yourself, then it becomes your own knowledge. Myself, I am at Level 2; I listen a lot and read a lot, but it is still knowledge gained from others. If I forget the information, then it is totally lost; but if I apply the knowledge myself, then I will never forget it.

Sometimes, we practice things without having understood them or having intended to do so. For example, with regards to the Four Noble Truths namely: *dukkha, samudaya, nirodha and magga*, when we study and learn about western style management, the phrase “root cause analysis” is often used, which really means that whenever there is a problem, you need to analyze and really understanding the issues so as to find out what are the real causes of the problem. It is the similar with regards to *dukkha, samudaya, nirodha and magga* but it is a much deeper situation. Namely you must learn what *dukkha* is and from where it originated, as well as in what way or how the situation can be solved together with what the situation will be like once the issue is resolve

In western style management, you do a real root cause analysis, which upon really reading about it appears much more superficial and shallow. Comparatively, root cause analysis at most is like only the surface of the Four Noble Truths. It is only good and useful that it can be applied much more easily. In Buddhism, the concept is still somewhat only a theory or an abstract concept and not yet a really practical application. However, in the west, once it become a practical application, then we look at the

framework or concept but do not really understand the actual content. It is like a lawyer. At the time when I was studying, there are those who only look at the framework or concept. Whatever the Ajahn says or how the final legal verdict says then you try to find the associated reasons. However in the principles of Buddhism, you cannot come to a conclusion; you need to really assess and examine the *dukkha* itself and not only listen to what others tell you what *dukkha* really is and then say that what it is.

Once I attended a seminar on management practices. We were told to do some brainstorming. I know that you should never stop learning. We were told that learning is important. So what to do? How to begin? What is to be done so as to start the ever ending learning process? I mean for people and not organizations. How to start? Read books or start conversing with other people? So I thought of the word: *suci-pu-li* (*suta-citta-pucha-likhit*), or *bāhusacca* as appeared in *nāthakarana sutta* and *natha sutta*, that means: listen, think, ask, and write. Is this the learning process then – namely: listen, then think about what you heard; but if you do not understand then ask questions, and lastly write down the answers or review what you have written down.? And what is writing down? And so it the process goes around in a circle. So, as I thought, is this the learning process then? I studied and graduated with a law degree. The numbers used in the laws are the numbers of each Article or Section of the law. In studying the law, the method of thinking consists of 3 stages: establish a basic principle, analyze the facts and then summarize. Afterwards, lay out all the facts, lots of facts and evaluate what facts are true what are not, what facts relate to others, and what facts do not relate or are not connected to other facts. So, if you do not have a set procedure or methodology in working, it becomes very, very confusing.

When I was studying, I thought back that you should use the knowledge that you have acquired and compared it to what you have seen and experienced. This should be correct, since as in religion we are told that the way to advancement or making progress, you need to start by believing. And the main obstacle to advancement or progress is hesitating and doubting, or namely: Five hindrances, part of which is hesitating and doubting. That is, lacking in a belief.

The way lawyers think is, firstly, to lay down the principle. Thus, both in life and in work, we must first establish a principle, which is based upon things that we believe in. In this context, being a Buddhist means the principles of *dhamma* and being

self - reliant. Everything happens for a reason or being in the present and not in the past. No bias means *upekkhā*.

Therefore, knowledge and belief go together, because Buddhism teaches us that it is not only just believing. Whatever we believe in, it must be proven through doing it yourself. Hence, these 2 things always go together.

I feel that the principles of *dhamma* in Buddhism are more indirectly applied in management practices. It was not intentional or planned; and it was not a core principle; such in the case of root cause analysis being related to awareness or consciousness, which is doing something based on the true facts and discarding any bias.

I think we are influenced by the immediate circumstances. We may make different decisions at differing times. That is, if we make decisions at a time when we are feeling fearful, worried, anxious, wary, excited or something unusual as well as allowing our emotions to dominate our thinking, then it will not be a good decision. Hence, Buddhism will enable us to be mentally calm, namely: *upekkhā*.

When we gain more knowledge, our thinking capacity and decision making will then be at its very best of our personal ability. It is a matter of belief and I think this is true. In Buddhist teachings, there is Threefold Training – Virtue, Mind, Wisdom. If you do not possess virtue then concentration will be lacking; and if concentration is missing then there will be a lack of intellect or wisdom. Correct? Once there is wisdom then virtue will be enhanced. And so it goes on around in a circle.

People often ask me how I work. I tell them that the work is not difficult or hard, and I do not excel at it. It is not hard in the sense that we take deposits and then lend out the funds. In attracting deposits, how do we establish trust and confidence; and if so then people will deposit money with us. In lending out funds, we need to be careful and somewhat cautious so as to avoid making too many bad loans. So in reality, it is not that hard. In lending out funds, we can choose who to lend to. If uncertain, then do not lend it out, since no one is forcing you to do so. As such, if you discard greed, everything you do will be based totally on reason.

Greed is one kind of emotion. If you use *upekkhā*, then the numbers will indicate whether you can lend out the funds or not, and thus you will not regret it. Apart from *upekkhā*, *su-ci-pu-li* (or *bāhusacca*) and the Four Noble Truths, I think that having

awareness or, as people generally say, acting based on real facts or the truth and not behaving in an excessive manner. Everyone who has awareness will also have *upekkhā*. *Upekkhā* is really a consequence and it needs no training to achieve it. If we see things as they are, then we can let go.

**You must rely on yourself** : I apply the law or lay down a basic principle in living and in working. In legal terms, it means having a solid principle or a pillar. Don't go awry or get distracted. The surrounding circumstances or situation may make you feel confused; but if you have a solid principle you will be able to remain standing still and undistracted. Once things settle down everything will become clear; then you will realize and know what is what. In the Buddhist teachings it is called the basic principle. This is how we can relate to what is about to happen around us; whereby if they do not measure up to basic established principle, then you discard and ignore it. For example, assume that the concept of karma is a principle. Whoever does something will get back the same thing. But, can this principle really be proven. I cannot really, as I do not have the knowledge or ability to do so. But I believe it. I believe in the concept of *kamma*. You must rely on yourself.

During the (financial) crisis, everyone had the same opinion that we should go and find a business partner to come and help us out. At that time, almost everyone did not work as they were solely busy negotiating with someone who might be able to help. They also overlooked using the root cause analysis and only saw the cause. And if you lend to borrowers, it will result in more bad loans. We only did other things. We attempted to find a positive *kalyāṇa-mitta* to join and help us. But, in the end we have to rely on our self, since no one wants to be friends with someone who is bad and not capable. We only try to attach our self to them in the hope of making us rich. It was an aspect we did not think about.

Another thing, which may not have been popular at the times, was connection. If we thought that we can go and rely on those within the business network, it is against the principle of relying on yourself. Thus, I did not join or participated in any of activities that were aimed at establishing a connection. I used the time to talk with Ajahn so that at least I acquired more knowledge, or to read books, or to meet with clients. All such activities enabled me to enhance my capability to be more self - reliant rather than creating opportunities to rely on others.

**Encouraging Buddhist Practice** : I do not talk much about this with the team, since, as I said, I learn by myself and do not know that what I know is the genuine concept or not. This is because I myself am still researching and still learning. Hence, I may be right or may be wrong sometimes. I also allow the Kiatnakin Bank's staffs the opportunity to practice and hope that once they learn more then they may able to adopt and adapt the concepts for use.

There are many types of activities; one type is that we sponsor the Young Buddhist Association of Thailand, because they already have programs for every month, although I cannot remember how many activities. Additionally, we promote and support the establishment of a Buddhism club for those who are interested to become active members. The club often invites monks or guest speakers to come and participate in the club events or recommends organizations or groups to whom the bank should give its support.

### **3.1.10 Dr. Veerathai Santiprabhob, Governor, Bank of Thailand**

**Interview date : July 25, 2016**

Dr. Veerathai responses to research question in his own words as follows: I have been interested in Buddhism for a long time, ever since attending graduate school overseas studying for my doctorate degree, during which period I lived alone. At that time there was no such thing as email, and telephoning home was quite expensive. Being alone for most of the time was quite stressful. Studying for a doctorate degree, I received many books from various professors. Many of my close relatives were also interested in Buddhism, so I tried to study and pursue this subject matter more closely. However, I did not have the opportunity to really study it till afterwards when I became more keenly interested. Then I started to practice Buddhism.

Previously, I was like a person who possessed a high thinking base studying for a doctorate degree and a theorist, so I thought that Buddhism was a philosophy of life – just as many Westerners would often think. I really thought that then; but when I had the opportunity to really study Buddhism, I then came to realize that Buddhism was in fact not a philosophy at all but was, in fact, the true facts of life comprising of much more detailed aspects and more in depth elements than merely being just a guiding

principle or philosophy of life. As such, this was still a basic understanding; so I thought it would be important to gain a more in depth understanding of my own body (or being) and my mind (or feelings).

Thus, over the past 2 years prior to assuming this position (as the Governor of the Bank of Thailand), I decided to cease my full time work and gave my full attention to this subject matter in which I became more and more interested. I stopped being a Director of various Boards and became a Director of Fiscal Policy; but I had more free time available to gain increased interest and study further about religion. On reading more on this subject matter, I became even more intrigued on the importance of this aspect of life, as well as had more time to practice various religious activities.

I practiced the art of mindfulness – namely, reciting prayers and meditating every day in the morning for about half an hour as well as in the evening. I have done this continuously for the past 7 – 8 years. However, nowadays I have less and less opportunity to do so; so I go to a retreat in order to meditate and feel a sense of complete isolation in being on my own. But, recently it has become increasingly difficult to do so due to having a lack in free time. I have been to many venues for mediation; but recently one venue that has proved to be of much benefit for me is with Ajahn Surasakdi of Wat Maheyong. Although I did not go to Wat Maheyong itself, since Ajahn Surasakdi has many retreats located up country; and the one I mostly go to is located high in the mountains in Chiangmai. Initially, I began by being ordained as a monk in the network of remote forest temple at Wat Pha Muang in Phu Ruea with Ajahn Khanthi; then I began to practice Buddhism under the teachings of the remote forest temple that primarily focuses on Concentration. And I also think and become uncertain sometimes as to how I might make use of such teachings in my daily life. Since then, I have been practicing Buddhism, listening to various Ajahns but mostly through self-learning activities. However, since many people recommended Ajahn Surasakdi, so I gave it a try. What Ajahn (Surasakdi) has essentially taught me is about the balance between Concentration and Insight meditation. Because Ajahn teaches about wisdom and intellect, thus achieving a positive balance; together with about being attached to something and being able to let go. Once you can achieve letting go, then you will appreciate Ajahn's (Surasaki) method of teaching. You can then listen to him on your

own to further develop your capabilities in this regard. Thereafter, I made use of my knowledge, focusing on my *satipaṭṭhāna*.

I believe this is truly important in many aspects of life. It makes you understand what is life and that life is your body (or being) as well as your mind (or feelings). We pay more attention to the aspect of one's body (or being) In this new era, the newer generation pay too little attention to the aspect of one's mind (or feelings) Further, especially in our current daily lives, the immunity or protective system with regards to our mind (or feelings) has a more important role. Thus, I will tell everyone, in these simple terms, we all understand why we need to exercise our physical body, but in reality the need to exercise our minds is not any less important than exercising our physical body. This basically is life, comprising of these 2 aspects. Hence, we need to be fully certain that we can be able to exercise our own mind – and a method of exercising our mind is through meditation, of which there are many different forms or means of doing so. Phra Ajahn (Surasakdi) has stressed on contemplation or practice of mindfulness and meditation. However, I have considered that it is simpler to think of these activities as being the same; namely: the act of meditation can take many forms.

**Practice of mindfulness** : Previously, I did think it was necessary to sit and meditate every day, but subsequently I became aware that this was like a necessity of life. It is just like when I said that just as we need to exercise our physical body – just as we need to eat - as such we also need to exercise our mind or to undertake the practice of mindfulness. This is a factor in enabling to increase my productivity and to have much improved endurance. Whenever due to the need to travel, I am not able to meditate or do such similar activities, I will feel much confusion in my head from having many, many issues in my head; and I will feel a lack of clarity of thought and a big reduction in my thinking power. Then, if there are any many issues, it is hard to manage them. However, whenever we continuously practice it, then there is effective concentration, and mental productivity will be significantly increased. However to achieve this level of realization, it means having to practice meditation or undertake the practice of mindfulness to a certain level. When if we have developed the practice of meditation to a certain level, then it benefits our overall mental productivity and level of endurance. This is just like a person who becomes attached to running or jogging isn't it? Even if you are a member of top management you feel you must exercise by

running or jogging for half an hour a day at least; because if you do not do so, then you cannot work effectively or sleep soundly. As such, for the same reason, I clearly see benefits for my productivity and endurance; secondly I achieve a much better quality of sleep, and sleep more soundly. Previously, I thought a lot while sleeping and do not get a full night's sleep. Also I have a note book by my bedside. Nowadays, since practicing meditation more, I sleep fully and soundly through experiencing a deep sleep. This is a great help. I think sleep is a common problem for most people in senior management positions – especially in times when there are many problems or issues to think about that will impact being able to sleep soundly.

I myself see the importance of meditation and reciting prayers, both of which enable us to effectively evaluate our power of concentration and thoughts. Sometimes, we even forget the prayers that we recite every day. We recite and then have to stop since we cannot remember what to recite further. This is good measure of our ability to concentrate and an indication that our mental faculty is being impacted by my many problems and issues – to the point that we cannot even remember all the words we need to recite. It is true that reciting prayers is a way of meditating that will facilitate better concentration; but I think that there is not one specific method that is correct. I think that each person, who practices meditation, can decide that for any given moment what form or method of meditation is most appropriate and effective. Once any changes or development in their respective practice habits occur, then there will be other more appropriate forms or methods of meditation or other means of achieving the right balance. For me, at those times when I liked to walk a lot, I thought that I was able to achieve a more effective state of concentration or meditation while walking rather than sitting down.

I have to say that I have never claimed to have practiced meditation very successfully; but I think what I have benefited is the opportunity to practice, which has made me aware of the importance part of life, as well as that at this stage further continued practice is required. Further, it is just like being an athlete; whereby people like to compare this to being someone who exercises their mind (or feelings) and someone who exercises their body (or being). At the beginning it is certainly harder to start doing it, but you have to keep doing it often and in particular sport as well as in a way that is most suited to you personally till at one point in time you will become

attached to exercising. It will become a part of your daily life. Whenever you do not exercise, your body chemicals will not be able to work effectively together as it should; you do not feel fully refreshed and you feel the urge to always exercise. And once you do so, your endurance will improve; there will be a better balance in your life and your health. With regards to your mind (or feelings), it is just the same; you need to exercise it till one point in time you will then realize on your own what Buddhist religion teaches you. Each person must realize on their own what the end result of this realization will be; what it means to have achieved a balance. You will then identify what is truly at the core or essence of life and what are the non-essential elements of life; what things are the 'must have' and what things are the 'nice to have'. Further, if there are many confusing matters in your life because you are too greatly concerned about those things that are 'nice to have'. You are not able to let go of them since you have not spent time in achieving a true state of realization in your mind. However, if you exercise your heart (or mind) at all times, it will make you realize and quickly identify that some things are only nice to have so you will then not need to think seriously or worry or feel stressful about such things. Then you can focus on and give greater importance to those things that are the 'must have' of life.

Most people do not realize the importance of practicing mindfulness or meditation. I have many friends who are my peers or junior to me who can go to the temple to practice meditation together with me. We all sit down to talk about which Ajahn we have met. Whatever teachings are positive we pass on to each other. Namely, we are all interested and become more increasingly so. It can be seen clearly that what I see now is quite different from 10 -15 years ago. 10 -15 years ago, those who became interested in practicing meditation are only from the elderly age group; but nowadays you will see that more and more of the younger age groups becoming interested in practicing meditation. There are more opportunities, choices and written teachings with regards to meditation – including technology systems – through which we can easily access and learn about the principles of *dhamma* and methods of meditation. At the various events held by the Buddhadasa Indapanno Archives you will see many, many younger people attending.

Now, with regards to the practice of mindfulness, many places realize that it is an important life skill, especially in this current global environment where many

fast paced changes are happening all around us and impacting us as well as becoming more serious or significant every day. Therefore, if people do not have any means of protective immunity for the mind, then we will easily feel uncertain and unstable, and also become easily susceptible to being a victim to the various ongoing current trends, ways of thinking and fads.

In America, currently many leading universities now include the subject of practicing mindfulness in their syllabus. It is a life skill of the new generation; and it will become an increasingly important life skill - as in the case of other key life skills such as, communications skills or financial management skills.

With regards to the means of immunity protection for the mind, it is an important matter since establishing a stable and strong mindset is a means of protection. Thus, practicing mindfulness or meditation is important; and through continuous practice, we can realize and identify what matters are important, what matters are essential or core issues, and what are the non-essential matters. We can then be able to let go of those matters that are not important or unnecessary. Further, we can then change our behavior, since I believe that in being able to change our behavior or in telling ourselves what principles we will uphold or adhere to, this must come from our being aware or achieving a genuine inner state of realization. It is not like reading a book that tells you there are 5 Moral Precepts and you must act in accordance with these 5 Precepts; but you must be truly aware of or recognize that once you have crossed over or breached that Precept then what impact will occur. Namely, it is a more a matter of having a full and deep realization of this aspect. Therefore, the fact that we fully understand the practice of mindfulness, it will lead to the creation of a full realization that will then affect people's behavior as well as enable us to let go of those things that we should not have. A simple question that the Dalai Lama likes to ask is: Among all the things that you want, can you separate them as to what is 'need' or what is 'greed'. This may seem an easy question; however, with regards to the many things coming into your life, if you do not have a state of consciousness or mindfulness then you will not fully understand and be able to fully realize. You will not be able to identify and separate these things; and you will then be caught up in the ongoing trends of global capitalism, which will result in many subsequent problems or issues.

In my mind and thinking, I think that every person will have 3 bases: namely, a thinking base, an action base, and a mind base. Organizations are the same; they will also have a thinking base, an action base, and a mind base. If you work for yourself, then I think you need to have a positive balance of all these 3 bases, in order to grow and achieve a sustainable future. From our studies, we will have many, many theories; then the action base is to achieve results from our actions or being outcome oriented or doing things that you believe in so as to realize actual results. However, the aspect that we give less importance to is the mind base.

Mind base can be explained in many ways. How we think about our own happiness, how we understand ourselves, how we establish a means of immunity protection for our mind (or feelings) – especially so in regards to work where many benefits for all those around us are involved that will result in various pressures being brought to bear on us from many directions. Therefore, we must both have a strong and stable mind base and also understand what is considered appropriate with regards to finding happiness for ourselves. Therefore, this is also the same in the case of organizations; there must be a good balance of the 3 bases. Some organizations will accelerate their work activities so as to achieve good performance results and big profits – this is having a large action base. As for its thinking base, it makes use of people, technology and brains; but if these people cannot coexist in a happy manner together then many problems will arise. And in giving somewhat lesser importance to the mind base, problems will also arise. Therefore, religion – all religious beliefs and not just Buddhism teachings – is quite an important element or factor that will facilitate the achievement of a mind base.

Buddhism is something that each person must become aware of or recognize - in fact, this is not applicable only for Buddhism. I think that in all religions with regards to mind base, all religions involve creating a mind base as well as making the mind stronger and more stable together with achieving a strong a means of immunity protection. Therefore, I will not be the person wishing to impose anything that is hard or difficult for everyone to practice; but, sure, whenever I talk to someone who is interested I will tell them why I would like to invite and recommend to them to do so – especially the new generation. As I already stated, I think that the new generation believe that it (the practice of mindfulness or meditation) is an important life skill for

meeting the various new challenges that will arise in life. But what is also important, is that it will result in achieving improved state of health – that is, if you are able to achieve a good balance between exercising your physical body and your mind.

At the Bank of Thailand, we hold workshops; and I tell everyone: I feel that at the BoT both the thinking base and the action base are strong due to the BoT being a organization dealing with many policies. If we can then achieve the mind base to be strong also, the BoT will have even more energy. Whenever we hold workshops relating to the Management group's behavior, adjusting the key behavior of the organization will also increasingly include these aspects. And if you look at the principles of modern management, they are not that different from the principles of Buddhist teachings. If I have the opportunity to do so, I will find ways to invite them. People here are strong and the Buddhist group here is strong, with visiting Ajahn coming to teach us all the time.

Giving great importance to the team is, I think, the most important aspect of work. For the Management group the most important task is people management; namely: How can we help and enable our work colleagues to work to their fullest potential? Therefore, we must establish a positive ambiance and create a work ecosystem that will enable the organization's people – especially managers at the various levels – to demonstrate and achieve their respective full potential. I believe that by being a decentralized organization as well as by giving great importance to our teams, the full energy of the organization will be realized. So, we give priority to building this jigsaw that facilitates managers at the various levels of the organization to be able to carry out their management duties to the fullest of their abilities.

Secondly, once we decentralized downwards or once we increasing empower managers at the various levels, it will be essential to achieve a common understanding or a common and shared vision together, so that we can be sure that the resulting energy will drive forward in the same one direction. Thus, importance will always be given to internal communications and internal discussions regardless of the (strategic) directions together with to what sort of motivational aspects will enable us to effectively motivate and drive our people. My background is being an economist, so I always place importance on what gains or benefits will they achieve that will motivate them. It must also be what the organization as whole will gain, and then what the staff

or the Management group will also gain that will drive the organization in an energetic and active manner.

Thirdly, I am a person who likes being outcome oriented or aiming to achieve actual results. People have asked what sort of person do I classify myself as being? This is because my background is being an economist, so people think I am an academic. But I tell them that I am a practical economist, who wants to see actual successful results from my work. I am not a true economic academic, namely: I graduated with a Doctoral Degree but did not become a professor or an economist; but I preferred a working style involved with solving problems that will lead to actual results and tangible outputs. Thus, I give much importance to the outcome of my actions. In the end it is something we can all then look back to. When we see the actual outcome from when together we created the energy and moved forward in the same direction that will result in an outcome. Thus, I give a lot of importance to creating and realizing an outcome.

I think this corresponds to my being an economist, who must act cautiously and with care; namely, he must think clearly what actions should or should not be undertaken. Thus, with regards to the “straight forwardness” or “uprightness” of the BoT, it is because we adhere to the correct principles and to what we think we should or should not do. Similarly, with regards to being “far sighted”, it relates to looking ahead since it is a core duty of the BoT to look forward; namely, we need to maintain stability, and we are the organization that establishes key policies. Thus, this cannot be avoided, since in the current global situation we give priority to looking ahead together with “offering a cooperating hand” and also being “well-grounded” due to the required practicality of our actions. This is because in the end, if our actions are to have an impact in this increasingly complex global environment, we alone cannot achieve this. Further, many of our actions are involved with the structure of the economic system as a whole that itself is already complex. Hence, to achieve any actual results from our activities, we need to offer a cooperating hand and collaborate in working together with others. We need to understand them, we must coordinate our joint working activities, and we must work in a well-grounded and practical manner. Even before I was appointed to be the Governor, I think the Management group of the BoT that has specified 4 core work values; whereby the group saw the importance of such matters as well as saw the

various past issues. Sometimes, we have been seen as being an ivory tower. What we do is top view things from far above; whereby the practicality of this may not often be very clear. Hence, it was the intent of past Governors and senior Management Members to attempt to adjust the direction of the BoT, through defining the 4 core working values in order to achieve more impact from what actions we take.

Business is a people matter. Let's look at the basic principles first. To manage the business effectively, as well as to develop and grow, I think the matter of managing people cannot be avoided. To know about and understand the people within the organization, or to create working teams, you cannot avoid knowing what life is about. Namely, with regards to body and mind, how can you be able to manage the internal matters within the organization or understand the employees and various work colleagues? Further, with regards to many of the principles in the conduct of business you cannot avoid many of the principles of Buddhism - whether it relates to consciousness which is a basic component; or with regards to the core precepts, it is related to not taking unfair advantage of those around us or the staff or business partners. Having an adherence to those things we have talked about is also an important issue. The matter of how can we empower others in undertaking their responsibilities is an important component in *iddhipāda*.

All these in *iddhipāda*, Five Strengths and Noble Eightfold Path are related to living a meaningful life, because these are the principles of life. The principles of the layman all agree that working is a key part of living and having a life. Thus the principles of dharma and the principles of life can both be used in working; and it is not necessary to have a special set of principles for work or to separate out some principles. However, I may not be able to prioritize dharma; since Buddhist teachings incorporate deep and specific meanings, depending upon the actual stage of each type of the problems being faced.

For example, for the central bank, faith and trust are very important matters for us. How can we create faith and trust on the part of our staff in the work we do, especially those actions that will not have an direct results on the people – such as, it may not result in a bonus payment or such similar results. However, the work we do often faces much opposition or resistance, or relate to the benefits to be gained, or faces both criticism from those who are against it as well as compliments from those who

like it. With regards to the work of the central bank, how can we create faith and trust on the part of our staff in what we do so that it will enable us to achieve positive result. Hence, you will see that Buddhism consists of Buddhist teachings on the reality of life in many respect. It makes living a life have a meaning, and leads to a life that can coexist happily as well as has outcomes. This is like the principles of business and organizational management; namely, how to make the organization meaningful or to make its various constituents coexist in a meaningful way, as well as able to create energy for everyone within the organization?

This, as I said earlier just now, can be called adopting and adapting the basic concepts of Buddhism in the management and administration of an organization so as to create energy and drive, isn't this right? However, whenever you reach the point when employees think they are being taken advantage of or when customers also believe that they are being taken advantage of in exploiting them to buy and make use of something that is not necessary for them, then, I think, it is a matter of the religious precepts; whereby things are not as they should be in terms of there being excessive exploitation. It is more of a matter of adopting and adapting the principles in a wider sense. If you look at the thinking of new businesses in the world – especially after the global financial crisis in 2008 – 2009, the issue of having a sustainable business model is being given increasing importance. With regards to the issue of sustainability – which goes beyond the matter of CSR – the view is that many of our current social problems are the end result of the way some businesses have been conducted that have caused quite serious social impacts – such as, the financial crises that occurred in many countries resulted from business models that did not incorporate aspects of CSR as they should have. Then, the more recent thinking about businesses is based on the principles of sustainability. Namely, businesses need to help create sustainability for the society as a whole; as well as many organizations and many businesses should participate and help in upgrading society together with helping to solve social issues or problems. There have been much discussions on such new thinking in the West. As such, we have clearly witnessed many changes in the capital markets sector where there are many investment funds that will invest only those businesses that have past various criteria relating to sustainability – such as, not exploiting the environment, not taking advantage of local communities. We see that the IUU (Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing)

will raise the issue of slave labor; the capital markets will not accept their shares for trading and investors will also not invest in them as well as supermarkets will not buy their products. Further, those businesses that have been involved with creating significant levels of pollution will be considered to be required to actively participate in solving the problem rather than just create more such problems. This is because, I think that, many businesses are beginning to realize that the Government sector alone cannot effectively resolve all such issues or problems. The business sectors and the large multinational companies have given greater as well as more and more importance to such issues given the extensive business network that they have. Hence, the positive actions towards society together with the increased participation by businesses in solving major social issues and in improving social standards are both becoming much more important. However, we must accept the fact that in developing countries and in Asia, such thinking is still new and only in the initial stages. But you will see that many of the newer generation of business managers have begun to look more towards the importance of sustainability. This may be partly because of the pressure given by investors and business partners, who want to see various companies increasingly incorporate matters relating to sustainability, to not be a social problem and to play an active part in solving associated problems. On the other hand, it is also their own recognition of the issues and wish to be a part in helping to resolve such social problems.

Recently, businesses must change and the principles are really not that new; namely, strategic risks have become increasingly important. Thus, for any business that still clings to the same old methods of conducting their business and has the characteristics of exploiting society, taking advantage of customers, and exploiting the environment, such actions have become key strategic risks. If a business does not have an effective business management plan or does not think carefully about such matters – and especially in this current era of fast-paced social media or other pervasive news media - then the results will come back to haunt it very quickly.

I agree that it is increasingly difficult to adopt and adapt business matters together with positive moral aspects. This may be why I have opted to leave the business sector and have become more interested in work relating to establishing policy and work that is more related to public service. The Bank of Thailand is a sort of public

service; and prior to this assignment I worked with many foundations relating to development activities that are more public service oriented.

There must be a balance between business and in adopting and adopting for use the real principles of Buddhism within the economic sector. Capitalism is proven that it is a system which enables people to make use of their full potential relative to socialism or communist or whatever that does not achieve sustainability. History has shown us that they are not able to improve people's quality of life. Capitalism is a system that is able to facilitate the improvement of the people's quality of life; although even capitalism must have many several other components and not just business operators only. There must regulators who are equally strong and there must be consumers who are also strong. In Thailand, consumers are improving but not still as strong as consumers in many other countries, who state that they are willing to pay more to those (businesses) who do not cause problems for society. As such, this is the strength and power of consumers. Thus, to create an effective capitalist system - one that is sustainable and has a positive ecosystem - so that that the capitalist system will be able to undertake the duties of capitalism in a fully efficient manner. Namely, it can help improve the people's quality of life as well as be able to facilitate people to achieve professional specialization and receive corresponding compensation. As such, it is not possible to avoid morality being an important part in the established rules and regulations as well as a component of the established ecosystem that will then lead to sustainability.

When we talked about the various trends or forms of social development, we included such concepts as socialism, capitalism and also popular-ism. Namely, if we are to achieve any impact, from a wide perspective, the form of development should give more weight to morality. But this is an aspect to which we currently give too little importance; and it may need to be given more weight. Incorporating morality or Buddhist teachings – or maybe Christian, Islam, Muslim teachings – is an important component in specifying the various rules and regulations in coexisting together and in the mutual treatment towards others within society.

Hence, I think, the concept of sustainability is a concept within industrial nations – especially in Europe – where much is spoken about it. This is especially so in large corporations that increasingly recognize this issue. Many such aspects, that we

say are still new for Thailand and still have yet to put into practice, have become basic matters and already put into practiced in many other countries – such as, laws on trade competition, whereby it is not always possible for the big fish to swallow up smaller fish. In Thailand, we believe that since I have invested in my business till it has become a big business, why should I then not be able to restrict other parties in the same business? However, this is a basic fundamental capitalism issue in developed countries, where there are anti-trust laws or competition laws that prevent the big fish from swallowing up smaller fish. Such matters are principles on how to incorporate morality as an important component of the capitalist system so that capitalism is able to effectively address the basic fundamental needs in improving the people’s quality of life. Since, in the end, we all want the people’s standard of living to be better. Further, at least we see in many other countries - as well as in Thailand - whenever capitalism leads to increased (social) inequality, it will not be sustainable; and there will be problems – such as, now we have many, many (social) problems. We may say that we have political problems, but they are mostly the result economic inequality despite being problems resulting from the current (economic) system.

### **3.2 In-depth research of Siam Hand Co., Ltd.**

Siam Hands has been found over 30 years ago by Mr. Adisorn Puangchompu and Mrs. Amara Puangchompoo. The company produces and markets T-shirt under brand name “Tang Mo” or water melon. Their main factory is located on Samphran, Nakhon Pathom.

In this study, the researcher interviewed four executives. Date and time of each interview is presented on Appendix 5. The company is mainly run by Managing Director, Ms. Amara, while Mr. Adisorn, the President, spends his time basically on strategic direction and future growth of the company.

### **3.2.1 Mr. Adisorn Puangchompu, President**

**Interview date : July 22, 2016**

Mr. Adisorn manages Siam Hand Co., Ltd. And markets through both retail, around 4,000 retail outlets, and wholesale channels. The wholesales customers typically come and buy from him in cash and transports the products by themselves. When asked what management style he uses (i.e.: how he delegates work, makes use of teams and how he looking after his people), He said: he wants his people to feel happy working with him. Therefore, his company provides free board and lodging and free meals to the staffs. This is clearly a case of applying the Buddhist teaching of *brahmavihāra* especially the loving kindness and compassion or loving-kindness (*mettā*) and compassion (*karuṇā*).

Mr. Adisorn continued saying that his workforce operates in team of 8-10 persons instead of working individually in the production line in the same way of another factory. This practice allows and promotes synergy and team working in this high competitive market.

One key criteria he uses in choosing his employee is to see if they love their mother or not, since he believes that whoever loves their mother has a positive attitude. He may not ask the applicants directly that ‘how much you love your mother?’ He usually asks them whether they help their mother, and father, to look after the younger siblings. Do you send money to mother to use in the family. By this way, he can find out their inner attitude. He said hiring this kind of person should be done because such persons have an inner attitude of giving.

When asked what Buddhist principles he has applied in his management activities, he said: the principle of giving or rather of making merit. For example, we raise vegetable and fruits in the garden – watermelon and limes – or whatever they wish to plant. He continued that another criteria is that his employees do not drink. He asks them out right when they apply for work: do you drink or smoke? If yes, they he tells them to go home and stop drinking, and smoking, first and then they can reapply to work. It is like applying the concept of the 5 precepts of moral behavior.

It was like when he was to be ordained as a monk. He was told to eat only 2 meals a day before when wearing white being ordained, and then only one meal a day once ordained as a monk. He did not resist to these requirements and willingly

conformed to that way of life; as he wanted to become part of the community of monks, so he had to observe its concepts and way of life. In this regard, he believes that if the person really want to behave and does not drink and smoke, it can be done. He views that these two bad habits do not encourage unity among team member.

Mr. Adisorn always considers his employees as his brother and sister. Therefore, he has strong intention to take care them.

### **3.2.2 Mrs. Amara Puangchompoo, Managing Director**

**Interview date : August 15 and September 9, 2016**

Mrs. Amara started off by saying that today society has changed from what it was before. Today people are more self-centered and more materialistic; and they wish to acquire as much wealth as they can and are so focused about money. As such, Buddhism is playing an increasingly important role in management practices

She also shared her view regarding a business management theory so called Marketing Mix (4Ps) in relation to Buddhist practice at Siam Hands as follows:

**Product** : We are honest with our customers in offering quality products such as the yarn and material to the design printing. Hence, for over 30 years, we have achieved great customer loyalty. Thus, our corporate philosophy is to treat consumers in an equitable manner and be fully committed to provide only good products.

**Price** : At Tangmo we follow the Buddhist concepts and adopt very reasonable pricing policy – not expensive at all, so that even college students can afford our products. This is because we do not market in department stores or discount stores for which we have to provide high margin for them. We do not take advantage of consumers.

Tangmo has a one price policy with no volume discount – even if a customer wants to buy a big bulk purchase –since that customer may then dump the end-consumer price, which is not fair to the smaller whole customers. Further, Tangmo is the only operator that has a policy taking back unsold products. It is a tough policy for us, but we believe that we do not want to cause a burden for our wholesale customers. Although some categories of clothing will not be bought back or the company will buy back only within a specific number of months after they were purchase – such as

clothing relating to special festivals or seasonal clothing items. In this regard, customers will exchange the unsold items for new products.

**Place** : At Tangmo, we have tried various types of sales outlets – such as, department stores, discount stores, etc. We then chose to sell in our own shops. We found that department or discount stores are not the ideal place for us to do business – although they offer high volume but also low profits and may not be sustained in the long term. Eventually, we chose to sell through our own outlets and rely on ourselves. Hence, for us, our positioning, how we operate our business and our future are all determined by ‘Place’; whereby we do not rely on others but only on ourselves.

According to marketing mix principle, or 4P, the fourth P is Promotion. For us, we rarely focus on this area since we tend to consider ‘People’ is our fourth ‘P’ instead of Promotion. However, as for **Promotion**, Tangmo uses some promotional activities such as advertising (based on a soft or emotional selling concept, rather than hard product advertising) in in-flight magazines, etc.

As for **People**, this is a key success factor for Tangmo – and not price, not product or not place. As such, to this day, our corporate culture is to operate as a family-style business, with all family members all share any benefits together and work together to sustain the company’s operations. This mental attitude of caring for each other here starts from the very beginning – the design of the factory that looks more like a home for the workers – who, because they are so poor, needs to leave their own home and immediate families members, who they love, to find work in Bangkok. We treat our workers like family members and respect – like calling everyone Pi (elder brother or sister) or Nong (younger brother or sister) or by the names; hence the feeling of unity and personal attachment to the company is also high, as if everyone is related to everyone. It is not something we teach them; but they happily adopt this prevailing corporate culture by themselves once they come to work here. We only have a few rules: namely, do not steal, do not lie, do not drink and do not smoke.

For us and our people, this corporate culture is very important, as it enable us to live and work together in a positive and happy environment – with mutual love and kindness. All our people feel they are special and are being treated in a special manner. For example, in building our factory, we use the space facing outside with a beautiful view of the Nakorn Chaisri river and countryside through the windows as a

production line and rooms for employees, while placing the export sales room on the inside of the facility with no view. This is because local and overseas buyers are here only for 2 - 3 hours at a time, while our employees are here all day and all the time, so they deserve to have a room with a view.

She tells the employees to be proud of their work – as from their outputs the company was able to help local communities to make merit in building some temples, and even products relating to Khun Thongdaeng, the favorite pet dog of the late HM King Bhumibol, and even products destined for Phufa shop, an initiative of HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn.

Some people believe that this concept is counterproductive and production output will not be high, since all the windows looking at the beautiful view distract and make workers not to be able to fully concentrate on the work at hand. For instance, production factories in Taiwan have the production lines on the inside of the facility and use neutral grey wall so as to facilitate full concentration by the workers.

We treat our people with dignity – such as, whatever we offer to our visiting clients to eat, we also make the same food available for our people. We hold birthday parties at the end of every month hiring food stalls that the employees like to cater for the people here.

There is a total of 700 employees. We treat all of them well – providing an employee canteen that gives them for 3 meals a day for free. This is within the concept of giving to others for their benefit (*dāna dānamaya puñña-kiriya-vatthu*). This then allows them to save money (about baht 2,000 – 3,000 per month) to send home – which is considered part of the corporate culture here. Ms. Amara talks to employees and stresses that she looks after their personal welfare; so they then should look after the best interest of the company though working hard and being productive.

Mrs. Amara says she has practiced meditation since studying for her BA degree, and still chanted prayers everyday. Her present outlook and attitude is like this because she practices mediation due to the concept of *sacca dhamma*, the true *dhamma*, of Gotama Buddha, which can only be achieved through practicing mediation – and not from just reading books about Buddhism.

When asked what she has achieved from having done some mediation, she replied: *hiri & ottappa* which is achieved by itself or feeling ashamed for having

committed a sin or fear of committing other sins. And gaining an insight into *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anattā* in observing that nothing is permanent and then finally feeling *suññatā*. Her teachers tell her she should to meditate up to the point of being able to feel *suññatā*.

This is why she does not feel attach to things; and this often changes your attitude – for instance, when people leave the company or retire from the company they feel they have a right to receive some ‘rightful compensation’, but she prefers to call this ‘gratitude money’ that the company should thank that person for giving most of your life to the company. As such, if you look at it in this manner, then you do not feel that the payments should be this or that much as you then think it is your right. On the other hand, if you look at it as a ‘gratitude money’ from the company at its discretion, then you do not have a preset idea of how much it should be. It is up to the company. For her, such an outlook is important.

People say that doing business, you have to fight with the feeling of *kilesa* i.e. *lobha* (greed), *dosa* (hatred) and *moha* (delusion) and of not wanting to give anything away to others. But once you practice mediation you will became undetach from or you can let go of such feelings through achieving a sense of mindfulness of your emotions and feelings which can then be better controlled.

She added that when she was asked what kind of mediation she has practiced *vipassanā* or *samatha* It starts from *samatha* till one day it evolves into *vipassanā*, at which point you will gain insight and realization about the birth and death of things and enables you to let go and not feel any attached to things. Thus, businessmen who practice mediation will be able to let go.

When asked if she chanted prayers, she said yes and also sometimes meditate – mostly in the mornings. And then sometimes, steal away to meditate somewhere for a couple weeks, since this takes time to make advancement in this matter. She occasionally visit Luang Poo Thong at Wat Phrathatsrijomtong, Chiang Mai), whom she considers as her genuine teacher in this matter. She practices rise & fall method as well as others including attending Goenka’s program. She said: you will attain the state of Dhamma as taught by the Gotama Buddha and then will realize why you can overcome suffering. You will be in a state of feeling *anicca* or a feeling of impermanence. Then you will always not act in a careless or risky manner. Practicing

meditation makes you realize a genuine sense of *sacca dhamma* – and being in control of your wants and desires and a feeling of being able to develop your mindfulness.

### **3.2.3 Mrs. Petsang Nukong, HR Manager**

**Interview date : September 17, 2016**

Mrs. Petchasang explained that there are 700 employees. The sewing team comprises of 8-10 people and must produce finished clothing pieces according to their team target. Every member of the team can help each other to achieve their set targeted outputs. They all rely on each other and help each other out.

The sewing team could earn a lot of money, as this is where the highest skills are required. The price per complete clothing piece is determined by the production unit, since for each type of clothing the pay per piece is not the same depending upon the difficulty of the various production process and total timing involved. But on average each team earns approximately the same. This is because if the finished clothing piece is difficult it involves a lot of production process and then the pay is per piece is higher but the output volume is lower; but if the finished clothing piece is easy to produce, the pay per piece is lower and the total target output volume is higher. So on average each team member can earn approximately Baht 20,000 per month. Each team is cohesive and works well together. They often do not want any changes to their members – for example, even if 2 of their members fall ill, the remaining 10 will help each other out to achieve and meet the assigned team target output. They all look out for and take care of each other. All workers do not have to punch time cards, as they all know and agree among each other what time to start and to finish. While some other work groups; mainly on the back office support; do, but on all then employees seem not to mind this.

When asked what Buddhist principles and concepts are applied in this company, Mrs. Petchsang said: love and kindness towards each other – especially from Mr. Adisorn and Mrs. Amara towards the workers in treating them as a member of one family and always teaching them rather than instructing or micro managing them. This then instills a great feeling of gratitude and loyalty on the part of the employees towards

them. Thus, instead of a retirement package, the company pays them what is called a ‘gratitude money’ when they are old and retire from the company.

While they work here, there are various welfare benefits – i.e.: free meals 3 times a day every day, although on Sundays only a morning meal is provided as employees often go out to relax or to go to a temple all day afterwards. Apart from free meals, medical services is provide free in accordance with the social security program and also a free days, annual outings to merit making or to the beach. Everyone may go together or sometimes the outing is split into 2 groups during the year, going to different places. Some people may go to both events that each last about 3 days.

During the year, the company will invite monks to come to preach at the company several time a year. And a major merit making is also held on the company’s birthday, involving 200 monks coming to the company to allow all employees to give food to the monks here. Sometimes some 50 – 60 senior forest monks also come to the factory. Also every year twice a year, Tangmo offers to sponsor a rope offering ceremony for 2 employees each during New year and Songkran festival in their home towns, giving them 1,000 T-Shirts to give away to those in their home town who joins in and donate money to the temple (for example donate 100 Baht and get one Tangmo T- shirt). The employees pre-register to participate in this yearly program.

Asked how the company discipline anyone who commits a wrongdoing, Mrs. Petchsang says: yes, mostly by first being given a serious warning - personally by Mr. Adisorn – such as, sneaking off to smoke. But such wrongdoings do not occur often. There have also be cases where an employee is dismissed if it is a very serious wrongdoing; some of these (one case : 3 times) may even return to work after a while. This is because Mr. Adisorn forgives them for their past misbehavior and allows them another opportunity, according to another Buddhist principle of forgiveness, once they realize that they have committed a serious wrongdoing and are genuinely willing to correct their bad behavior and mend their ways.

Sometimes, before lunch meals, Mrs. Amara will talk via public address for 15 – 20 minutes about *dhamma* principles, how to live and how to behave; how to spend money wisely or how not to tempted by bad or immoral behavior, since being in debt will result in a lot of suffering instead of being able to save and send money to their parents they have to pay high interests from whatever money they earn. Or she teaches

them not to gamble by buying lottery, as most people buying lotteries never wins. Most of the employees – more than 90% are from Northeastern region - like to listen to these *dhamma* talks.

Mr. Adisorn also always teaches them that when they visit their homes – on New Year or Songkran – they should talk about family loyalty and always display gratitude to their parents rather than boast about how much they earn or how skillful they now are at work. Each person will also be given 20 – 50 pieces T-shirt to give to their immediate family as gifts, so they need not spend any money to buy any gifts.

### **3.2.4 Miss Wimolta Sudpan, Production Manager**

**Interview date : September 17, 2016**

As far as it is known, unlike here at Siam Hands, in other factories where work is assigned and undertaken not in teams, payment is made on an individual basis rather than on a team basis. Here payment is made on the total amount of finished clothing pieces completed by each team with the total payment being received as a team payment and divided equally among the team members. The team members all pitch in to help the team achieve work assignment even if a team member is sick. Thus, all members need to know all the various production steps, so they can help each other, if necessary, in order to achieve a completely finished clothing piece as planned.

Hence, in our method there is no need for a team leader, as each team member knows what needs to be performed by the team as a whole. Teams consist of 8 to 10 persons per team depending on the type of finished clothing piece to be produced. There are 22 teams in all. Some teams may change their members, while some do not. If the team works well together, then there is no need to change the team members. But if there are some team members who have personal, family or other good reasons to take leave or come to work late too often, then the management will step in to make changes to achieve a cohesive team work; as we try to understand and find a working solution for the individual members and also for the whole team. This is like applying the concept of love, kindness and compassion.

The official working hours are 8:00 am – 6:00 pm, but if there is OT (over time) required then the work will stop at 8:00pm; but it is up to the respective team as

to when they are ready to start or stop working each day, since the team payment is made on the basis of the total number of finished clothing pieces the team have produced – for example, some teams may be willing to start work at 6:00 am or only take 10 minutes or so for a lunch break.

The employees have a clear objectives and goals in their life namely: to own a house and a car, to send their children to school and then to university to obtain a degree. Secondly, if they have savings, they will buy land for their future security as most of them come from a poor background from north eastern region. They wish to establish personal security and build a house for their parents and to buy personal jewelry, so that they may look good to others – personal face - whenever they participate in any local traditional ceremonies when they return home.

Asked if any Buddhist principle and concepts are applied by Mr. Adisorn and Mrs. Amara as part of their management practices here, Miss Vimoltha said: Both Mr. Adisorn and Mrs. Amara are persons with good moral ethics. Mrs. Amara is a good role model for the employees in terms of being a person who gives to others. Mr. Adisorn is a role model for living very modestly and not living in an excessive manner, as well as for not drinking, not smoking and not gambling or not womanizing together with having a secure and happy life livelihood.

Mrs. Amara also takes employees to participate in various merit making ceremonies every year – such as at Wat Phra Bat Huai Thom, Li District, Lamphun. In this regard the employees here are lucky to have such opportunities.

When asked if any of the employee practice meditation (like Mrs. Amara does on a daily basis), Miss Vimoltha said: Some do practice meditation on Saturdays at a meditation center located nearby in the Krisda housing estate. Also, on Sundays they go to a nearby temple.

The principle of love and kindness to the employees is very much applied here by Mr. Adisorn and Mrs. Amara – such as: monks are invited to preach to the employees here, gifts are given to and celebrations take place for the employees on the Company's birthdays, or before they return to their home and parents every year for the Songkran holidays. It is most likely that here are no other factories where the owners take such a personal an interest in and take care of their employees like their family

members this way – even providing and paying for medical and hospital services (e.g.: acupuncture and operations) in the event of sickness.

Miss Vimoltha says when interviewing applicants, they are asked if and how they look after their immediate families. If they say they do, it means they care and need to work, so as to look after their families or help send their sibling to school. As such, this is their main goal in life, which then helps give them drive in their life and work.

Miss Vimoltha believes that both Mr. Adisorn and Mrs. Amara want all the employees to work here for a long time and that their families feel happy and secure, so that the employees will have no big personal worries or urgent obligations to meet so as to be distracted from their work and their aim of being able to send money to help their families back home.

Training is given here at the factory to new workers who work at the retail outlets (such as those at the PTT gas stations), so they know the products and how to undertake their assigned duties. They are paid a fixed salary plus commission of sales revenues and also welfare benefits. Here are about 100+ employees work at the outlets located in about 77 outlets at the PTT gas stations, with each location having 2 – 3 employee or 3 – 4 for the larger outlets.

### **3.3 Focus group discussion (Saturday, October 1, 2016):**

From the discussion of 2:30 hours, it can be summarized four main points which are as elaborated below: Buddhist teachings currently adopted, method of applying Buddhist teachings, benefit of applying Buddhist teachings and caution when applying Buddhism.

#### **3.3.1 Buddhist teachings currently practice:**

Nine participants mainly consider four Buddhist teachings are currently adopted in their organizations and believe that they are widely implemented as well. These are 4 Immeasurables which comprised loving-kindness (*mettā*), compassion (*karuṇā*), empathetic joy (*muditā*) and equanimity (*upekkhā*).

The second Buddhist teachings they are mentioned is Five Precepts. The third one is *iddhipāda* or the four bases of power which are intention (*chanda*), effort

(*virīya*), consciousness (*citta*) and investigation (*vīmaṃsā*). The last and not least is the Noble Eightfold Path.

During discussion, panelist shared their views and addressing key words such as honesty, self-consciousness/mindfulness/self-control, doing good, perseverance/industrious, taking middle path and not acting in extreme manner.

### **3.3.2 Method of applying Buddhist teachings :**

The key challenge for top Thai business leaders is how to apply and incorporate the ‘softer side’ and yet also continue to maintain the degree of business passion to achieve stated goals – through determining the respective KPIs (key performance indicator) for both aspects of management practices/goals . For example, KPIs involving number of customer complaint or compliment received can be one useful KPIs to measure concern for customers satisfactions versus only pure achieved sales revenue.

Buddhist teachings should be used as a set of tools/catalysts in the overall business management practices – to instill a thinking of others more of mutual win-win - rather than an absolute ends in itself - may be the answer to achieve a balanced approach.

Perhaps a viable combination of Buddhist teachings + applicable modern management systems structure need to be determined to achieve this more win-win ‘balanced’ approach to management.

It is interesting to mention that, for the middle path, panelists expressed their views such as treating other fairly; avoid being too greedy and self - centered; achieving a ‘win –win’ result with mutually satisfactory outcomes for all involved parties; being transparent and honest and open; not taking advantage of others – as would not like to be taken advantage of also; aiming to achieve a win-win results (or mutual benefits) for all stakeholders; being free of conflicts in making decisions based on CG (corporate governance) practices; and reflecting on problems/issues – thinking though rather than immediate reactions.

Despite the current accepted modern management techniques/practices are based on ‘western culture/values’, yet such key practices can be ‘connected’ to and implemented together with the key Buddhist teachings – such as happiness for self and

others, self-satisfaction ; sometime, we apply such Buddhist teaching subconsciously – as part of Asian/Buddhist DNA upbringing. Workplace is a 2nd home or professional family; thus work community is 2nd family – thus need to achieve happiness and satisfactions for all (as with the 1st home or personal family).

### **3.3.3 Benefit of applying Buddhist teachings :**

Meditation and focus studies of Buddhist teachings help think though how to apply Buddhist teaching to management practices for mutual win-win in companies. Some companies allows (unpaid extra) leave for middle and top managers to take 'mediation' leave.

Understanding of self and values is important in achieving positive business management practices – can lead to understanding/adopting/adapting the applicable and benefits of implementing Buddhist teachings.

One panelist stated that such Buddhist teachings are an integral part of his company's corporate values and cultures and are embedded by including relevant and applicable photos that represent such Buddhist teachings drawings in the company's staff handbook on corporate values and cultures.

### **3.3.4 Caution when applying Buddhism :**

Sometimes a negative side effective is that, in applying/implementing such 'moderate Buddhist teachings or the 'soft side of management, there is an accompanying loss or reduces in the degree of the hard skills – aggressive/driven mindset or passion to achieve the agreed goals.

Adopting Buddhist teachings throughout the organization is very challenging – as the respective groups within the organizations have varying (depending on personal requirements/situations; need a 'top down approach'/role model is a key part to achieve this.

Also from some experiences of participants, differing generations have different expectations from their jobs – e.g.: older generation wishes to see continued legacy operations/activities (i.e.: minimal changes); while younger generation wants to see more and faster changes and are more money oriented.

Therefore, with these conflicting aspects within an organization, much patience and long term vision/approach, on the part of top management, is needed to achieve this. Challenge: how to incorporate the expectations of such divergent groups within the same organization.

Such fair and moderate practices towards others - through acting by example or 'tone from the top' is vital to instill such positive corporate values – critical success factor (CSF) to achieve long term stable platform for ongoing sustainable business development and growth (vs immediate short term and unstable gains).

Mutual trust and loyalty (to persons/organizations) are key to applying Buddhist teaching concepts in the organizations.

### **3.4 Conclusion remark**

According to the above content, personal opinion and direct experience of interviewees and focus group's participant are elaborated. It has been found that numbers of Buddhist teachings are already applied. In this regard, most of interviewees are also practicing meditation in their daily life which helps them more effective of applying Buddhist teachings in their organization.

## CHAPTER IV

# Model of Buddhist teachings to be applied for business management

From information gathering, it has been found that numbers of Buddhist Teachings can be applied in business management.

Refer to Appendix 6 for which number of Buddhist teachings are summarized, the summary table clearly presents two distinct groups of Buddhist Teachings i.e. theory-based teaching and action-based teaching.

The theory-based teachings refer to the principle under Buddhist context such as Four Noble Truth, Noble Eightfold Path, Five Strengths and *saddhamma* (*pariyatti*, *paṭipatti* and *paṭivedha*). These are mainly basic beliefs and principles of Buddhism for which Buddhist devotees typically follow the teaching with contemplative thinking and understanding without any particular action.

On the other hand, the action-based teachings refer to the teachings which involve real action. In this regard, it is right to say that the theory-based teachings can be considered as the solid foundation, of Buddhist application, while the action-based teachings are the action and result of the theory-based teachings.

The summary table displays the theory and action-based teaching on the column with details of each teaching in each column such as *brahmavihāra*, *iddhipāda*, Five Precepts, etc.

The far left column presents source of information which are ten interviewees, focus group discussion and Siam Hands' interview with four executives.

The name of interviewees, as displayed in this table, are withheld and presented interviewee 1-10 in order to avoid bias from the reader since all ten in-depth interviewees are well known business executives who have years of good track record of top level business management with high performance organization. The displayed mark represents the teaching for which interviewees and focus group did mention during the sessions. In addition, the table reflects the teaching which was addressed by the two or more of respondent only.

## 4.1 Applying Buddhist teachings to business management

Conversation and teaching of Gotama Buddha to Sigala according to Sigalovada Sutta<sup>1</sup> is a good example of how persons relates with people around them. Business organization can also be considered as a part of society which means it cannot separate itself from the society. It is right to say that doing business is not a ‘value free’ activity since business needs supportive condition for another part of society in order to be successful and sustainable. Profit should be treated only as a surplus of revenue over cost of goods sold.

### 4.1.1 Applying Four Noble Truth

According to the theory-based teachings columns on Appendix 6, the respondents mostly address the Four Noble Truth which comprises of *dukkha*, *samudaya*, *nirodha* and *magga*. **Mr. Supol** shared his view that in Western style management, you do a real root cause analysis, which upon really reading about it appears much more superficial and shallow. Comparatively, root cause analysis at most is like only the surface of the Four Noble Truths.

**Mr. Amaret** considered that the Four Noble Truth is the core concept of Buddhism which relates everything in our life. While another meaning of *dukkha* is that everything or everyone that is born will die since there is no permanence. *samudaya* is the source of *dukkha* or desires, *kilesa* or lust and delusions, whereby if a person does not possess *kilesa* that person will not feel any *dukkha*.

**Dr. Ronnachit** said that initially you have *samudaya*, followed by *magga* and then *nirodha* – namely, the reason occurs first, which then results in *dukkha* – that includes physical *dukkha* and emotional *dukkha*; whereby emotional *dukkha* is a feeling you create inside yourself, while physical *dukkha* is external felt by your body when it comes in contact with external situations. Then you have *magga*. It is best to extinguish *dukkha* so as to completely be rid of the feeling of *dukkha*; while *magga* is positive thinking, actions and speech, together with living in a positive manner together with being industrious and having mindfulness and *samādhi*.

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<sup>1</sup> D III 180, Maurice Walshe, **The Long Discourses of the Buddha : A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya**, (Somerville: Wisdom Publications, 1995), p. 461.

*Tilakkhaṇa* or three marks of existence<sup>2</sup>, and the Noble Eightfold Path are two of the key concepts in Buddhism and also mentioned by several respondents. **Dr. Ronnachit** advised that since you understand that it is inevitable or impermanence (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*) and non-self (*anattā*). Hence, you will not be misled or react without being careful.

On Western management practice, change management is one of the topics which can effectively draw attention from top executive. **Dr. Ajva** also touches on this subject and clearly explains that *anicca* (uncertainty or impermanence) makes us realize that there is always change in this world. All things change and as such we talk about the Management of Change. You must accept that change is part of everyday life. Once you have accepted this, then you will be able to manage it more successfully.

In addition, **Mr. Amaret** said that in seeing the three marks of existence inside ourselves, it indicates that we are ready to advance to towards the full achievement of *dhamma* or the ability to let go of all things. This is the whole point of practicing *dhamma* – whether it is just learning the theories or concepts or learning to practice *dhamma* to be able to let go of everything.

#### 4.1.2 Applying *brahmavihāra*

On the action-based teachings, *brahmavihāra* is considered the most common Buddhist teaching for which the interviewees are applying to their current business management. Loving-kindness (*mettā*) and Compassion (*karuṇā*), as the main guidance which are clearly stated to all of interviewees. Generally speaking Empathetic joy (*muditā*) and Equanimity (*upekkhā*) are not really mentioned or emphasized, during information gathering, although some may regularly applies *upekkhā*. This concept of the *brahmavihāra* is directly applicable to the negotiations process according to

With regards to showing ‘Empathetic joy’ (*muditā*) over the success or happiness of others, **Mr. Sanan** is often seen as always having a positive attitude towards and a feeling of happiness for others. Whenever he shows *muditā* to someone, it means a great deal to him/ her and it inspires him/ her. In doing so is a great

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<sup>2</sup> Maurice Walshe, *The long discourses of the Buddha : A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya*, (Somerville: Wisdom Publications, 1995), p. 30.

opportunity to give recognition to and to motivate others in their moment of happiness. It is also to boost morale by expressing genuine joy to them – in person or via a letter.

**Mr. Supol** thinks we are influenced by the immediate circumstances and we may make different decisions at differing times. If we make decisions at a time when we are feeling fearful, worried, anxious, wary, excited or something unusual as well as allowing our emotions to dominate our thinking, then it will not be a good decision. IN this regard, he believes that Buddhism enables us to be mentally calm, namely: *upekkhā*..

#### 4.1.3 Applying Noble Eightfold Path

In his own words, **Mr. Supachai** relates Buddhist teachings of Five Strengths, **Noble Eightfold Path** and Five Precepts that in every business or in every social context, you need to have this Faith or Belief and best endeavors and efforts; yet you will not be able to achieve success if you also do not have Mindfulness, followed by Concentration. Once you have this Concentration, Wisdom will then follow. Additionally, a guideline is offered based on the concept of *sammā ditṭhi* that is based on the Five Precepts.

**Dr. Veerathai** also shared his interesting view on applying the Buddhist teachings that all these *iddhipāda*, Five Strengths and **Noble Eightfold Path** are related to living a meaningful life, because these are the principles of life. The principles of the layman all agree that working is a key part of living and having a life. Thus the principles of *dhamma* and the principles of life can both be used in working; and it is not necessary to have a special set of principles for work or to separate out some principles.

#### 4.1.4 Applying *sappurisa dhamma*

*Sappurisa dhamma*, or Qualities of a good man, is one of teachings which is raised by five interviewees.

**Mr. Sanan** said he has practiced this concept of *sappurisa dhamma* all along. It is vital especially if you are expanding your business overseas. This is what he always tries to teach others to understand the local culture, customs, and languages. If you do not follow these, you will never succeed in approaching and connecting with

them. As such, his key success is by stretching out into the local communities, and establishing a solid connection with local people.

**Mr. Boonyarith** expresses his view that said that with regards to making profits, the concept of *sappurisa dhamma* can in fact be applied and it is also a positive aspect. In this regards, you have to ask yourself what is the overall objective of your business. Namely, do you want to make a living in only the short term or on a longer and sustainable basis? It is better to achieve a small profit but on a sustained long term basis while accumulating extensive experience and expertise. This way, it becomes a barrier of entry for any new players in the market place.

The concept of *sappurisa dhamma* is also applicable to marketing according **Mr. Suppachai** who thinks that it is more applicable than the 4 Ps which is the key principles of Western marketing management. For example, knowing the reasons means knowing the reasons for undertaking a business – i.e.: demand; and what would be the outcome of these reasons; you also need to know your own self. I think is the core concept of marketing – much better and more effective than the Western marketing concepts.

#### 4.1.5 Applying *aparihāniyā dhammā*

One Buddhist teaching which is not mentioned by interviewee by name but their views and behavior reflect regular practice on this teaching. The *aparihāniyā dhammā* (Seven Conditions of Welfare) is mentioned by several interviewees.

**Dr. Veerathai** has strong belief that giving great importance to the team is the most important aspect of work. For the Management group the most important task is people management; namely: How can we help and enable our work colleagues to work to their fullest potential? Therefore, we must establish a positive ambiance and create a work ecosystem that will enable the organization's people – especially managers at the various levels – to demonstrate and achieve their respective full potential.

**Mr. Supol** said that he allows the Kiatnakin Bank's staff the opportunity (to also practice *dhamma* and join many types of activities); and hope that once it learns more then it may able to adopt and adapt the concepts for use. One type is that we sponsor the Young Buddhist Association of Thailand (YBAT), because they already

have programs for every month, although he cannot remember how many activities. Additionally, we promote and support the establishment of a (Buddhism) club for those who are interested to become active members. The club will often invite monks or guest speakers etc. to come and participate in the club events; or even recommend organizations or groups to whom the bank should give its support.

**Mr. Suppachai** also takes an active role according to *aparīhāṇiyā dhammā*. He said we hold merit making ceremonies in every company every year - even in the Sofitel Hotel that is managed by Westerners, whom I invite to join in the merit making to learn about offering food to the monks whether they understand it or not. It is a way to explain to them Buddhist practices; and I also give them relevant books to read on the subject. Even at the golf course, we hold the annual *kathina* ceremony, offering food and robes to the monks.

#### 4.1.6 Applying *iddhipāda*

Seven of in-depth interviewees, advised *iddhipāda* or Four Bases of Power is important to business management. It is an interesting to mention that two top executives express their views that advised *iddhipāda* can be considered in comparison with PDCA (Plan, Do, Check, Act).

**Mr. Somprasong** shared his view on applying *iddhipāda* which is the equivalent of modern management practice so called Plan Do Check Act (PDCA) – in other words, this is the flow or cycle of business activities. **Dr. Ajva** said that, according to the Westerners, to achieve successful outcomes, you need to have a goal; then you clearly determine the role and also define the process to be undertaken to achieve the goal. As such, this is the equivalent to the concept of PDCA, - or Plan, Do, Check, Act. He also provided his critical analysis that while *iddhipāda* relates to what we need to do to achieve success, *brahmavihāra* relates to the principles of management and administration.

It is an interesting to mention that **Mr. Amaret** considered *iddhipāda* is an essential element for achievement of *dhamma* and is important because if you do not apply this concept, then you cannot even begin the process of achieving *dhamma*. **Dr. Prasarn** shared his interesting argument regarding inactive behavior and *iddhipāda* that you must have *chanda*, *virīya*, *citta* and *vīmaṃsā*.

To say that people are inert or uninterested is not correct; but people have to look at and examine the downside risk. It is not the entire progress or being reactive alone; but rather it is clear that you understand there are various degrees or types of action; and some people achieve an imbalance in their actions.

#### 4.1.7 Applying Five Precepts

Although most of interviewees do not clearly mention that they are practicing **Buddhist Five Precepts** - abstaining from harming others, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying and intoxication, it is understandable from interviewing that the precepts are mandatory or basic requirement to all Buddhist. This kind of thinking reflects the strong belief among Buddhist that doing good deeds is natural which means everyone should do without any doubt and question since it is about good thing in life.

**Mr. Boonyarith** considered that possessing 5 moral precepts makes us careful and act with perseverance, always being aware and mindful of our actions. **Dr. Ajva** commented that Buddhist teachings instruct us how to live within society and to be a good person, possessing the 5 basic Buddhist moral behaviors or Five Precepts.

Five Precepts are considered as the basic and mandatory for all Buddhist to practice. In this regard, **Dr. Veerathai** said that it is not like reading a book that tells you there are 5 Moral Precepts and you must act in accordance with these 5 Precepts; but you must be truly aware of or recognize that once you have crossed over or breached that Precept then what impact will occur.

#### 4.1.8 Applying *bhāvanā*

Mediation, or *bhāvanā*, has been practiced regularly by some of interviewees. **Dr. Veerathai** said that I made use of my knowledge, focusing on my *satipaṭṭhāna*. I believe this is truly important in many aspects of life. It makes you understand what is life and that life is your body (or being) as well as your mind (or feelings). Previously, I did think it was necessary to sit and meditate every day, but subsequently I became aware that this was like a necessity of life. It is just like when I said that just as we need to exercise our physical body - as such we also need to exercise our mind or to undertake the practice of mindfulness.

**Mr. Suppachai** said that Gotama Buddha taught us to practice Concentration as part of the four postures by walking, sitting, standing and lying down. He also mentioned that sitting posture is a basic posture in practicing *ānāpānasati*<sup>3</sup> or mindfulness of breathing.

**Dr. Ronnachit** has now practiced mediation for over 30 years. He currently mediates every morning after controlling and focusing on his breathing. In the past when he had more available time, he used to sit and mediate daily for 2 – 3 hours.

#### 4.1.9 Applying *paññā*

Working in business world requires ‘wisdom’ or *paññā* in order to understand what is going on. According to Buddhist teachings *paññā* comprises of 3 stages; namely: *sutamayā paññā* - the knowledge and wisdom gained from knowing or reading or based on the knowledge gained from others telling you; *cintāmayā paññā* - the knowledge and wisdom gained by using your intellect or mind to think and reflect; which will then lead to *bhāvanā-maya-paññā*.

**Dr. Ajva** shared his opinion view during in-depth interview that you need to put them into practice in order to gain a true and genuine understanding. Namely: know and remember, understand, and then achieve true understanding. **Mr. Supol** : Buddhism talks about 3 levels of knowledge: Level 1: Through listening to other – or Ajahn tells you what things are, then it is like that; Level 2: Ajahn tells you what things are, but you try to be clever by arguing till you cannot argue anymore; and you so accept and believe what Ajahn has told you. But it is still Ajahn’s own idea. However, it is only when you put it into practice and apply it yourself, then it becomes your own knowledge. Myself, I am at Level 2; I listen a lot and read a lot, but it is still knowledge gained from others. If I forget the information, then it is totally lost; but if I apply the knowledge myself, then I will never forget it.

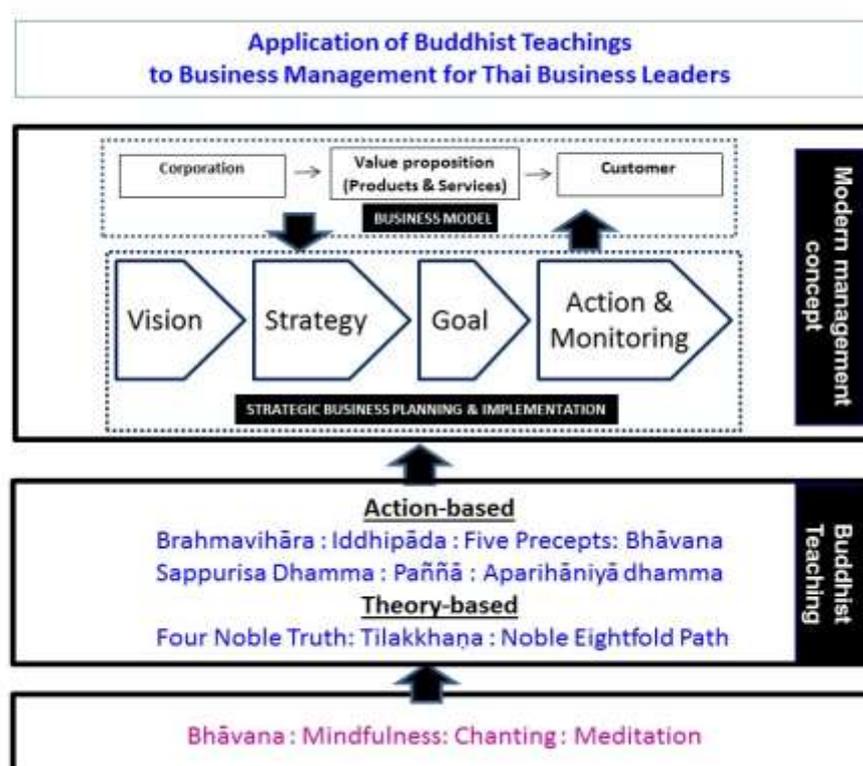
In addition, most of interviewees express their opinion that all above teachings closely relate. The key issue is how ones can apply the teaching in response to the right time and on right situation. In another words, Buddhism also lets us to

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<sup>3</sup> M III 79, Bhikkhu Ñanamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi, **The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha : A New Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya**, (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1995), p. 941

realize what is happening to us. What are the 'must have' and what are 'nice to have' things in life. For example, if we live our lives according to the Five Precepts -- abstaining from harming others, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying and intoxication -- we can understand their consequences. Realization is important in this regard. We can prioritize things in our daily life and it will change our behaviour in the long term. It will also help us to curb unhealthy behavior.

#### 4.2 Model of applying Buddhist teachings to business management



**Figure 2: Application of Buddhist Teachings to business management**

Refer to the above diagram, operating under the current modern management concept requires knowledge of business modeling and strategic business planning & implementation. Some of Buddhist teachings, which are addressed in this paper, are also presented in the middle box of the drawing. From this study, these

teachings, or Buddhist principles, have to be implemented as basic requirement for successful business operations. In another word, listed items in the top and middle box should be mandatory of any business.

According to Gotama Buddha, to obtain enlightenment, ones should go through *sikkhā*<sup>4</sup>, or Threefold Training, which comprises of virtue (*sīla-sikkhā*), mind (*citta-sikkhā*) and wisdom (*paññā-sikkhā*). In this regard, it is a good starting point for business leader to adopt and practice Buddhist teachings in their business management, as shown in ‘Buddhist teaching’ box above, or virtue (*sīla-sikkhā*) under Threefold Training’s term. Then, what they really need next is mind (*citta-sikkhā*) or mindfulness which can help them through business issue with calm and stable judgment.

Although all of the interviewees are practicing Buddhist teachings in their business management and also practice mindfulness every day, not all of them regularly practice mediation. Due to time limitation, four interviewees do not meditate but practice mindfulness every day. Another two interviewees do not meditate but may recite prayers occasionally. The rest of four, of in-depth interviewees, who meditate on daily basis, indicate that it is necessary to practice mediation every day in order to effectively focus and manage their daily life and work. In addition, it is the very same recommendation from another two panelist of focus group discussion and one from Siam Hands who say meditation is the critical part of effective business management, in another word – critical success factor, and also personal life.

Mindfulness, which is part of the Noble Eightfold Path, is the foundation for enlightening people. From Right Mindfulness, one can gain Right Concentration (or right meditation). When we have Right Concentration, we can truly focus and can achieve what we plan to. In this regard, it is right to say that, in order to be effectively manage in business activity ones should regularly practice mindfulness which mainly refers to mediation but can also include chanting as well. Therefore, it can be concluded that mediation, either Concentration or Insight, is an important part of application of Buddhist teachings to business management for business leaders. In this research some of interviewees practice mediation regularly such as:

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<sup>4</sup> A I 235, Bhikkhu Bodhi, **The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha : A Translation of the Aṅguttara Nikāya**, (Somerville: Wisdom Publications, 2012), p. 320.

**Dr. Ajva** practices mediation as taught by Goenka and Phra Ajahn Surasakdi (Wat Mahaeyong, Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya).

**Mr. Suppachai**, if time allows, will sit and meditate in the mornings for about 5 minutes after having chanting for about 25 – 30 minutes.

**Dr. Veerathai** recites prayers and meditate every day in the morning for about half an hour as well as in the evening.

### **4.3 Communication of Buddhist teachings in organization**

During this research project, the researcher found that while everyone believe that Buddhist teachings can be applied for business management, not everyone agree to communicate to their people or if they communicate they tend not to use Buddhist terminology, which is based on Pali, for fear of not understand and refuse to listen and accept the message.

**Mr. Somprasong** explained that he typically communicates with his people, on this subject, to have the right view and right attitude, through being positive about yourself, about the company and also about your work colleagues. This leads to thinking, studying and reading, which will then lead you to the appropriate or right concept that is based on the correct thinking. He uses this approach of explanation instead of Pali word of *sammā diṭṭhi* and *sammā sankappa* for better and effective communication.

His approach can be considered similar in some respect to practice which **Dr. Ronnachit** is doing at his working place. Dr. Ronnachit said that when staffs observe his behavior or how the way he negotiated, they often asked him questions about it. So, he takes the opportunity to subtly embed in his replies references to Buddhist principles. This is better than telling or teaching them outright or in a direct manner, since not everyone will be able to understand or be receptive. In addition, Buddhist principles is also applied in defining the corporate values as being attentive and committed, being sincere, being trusting etc.

**Mr. Suppachai**, who oversees overseas businesses, has applied many of Buddhist principles in his work whenever he has the opportunity to talk with the local Management Team as well as the sales team and not only with the management group

- regardless of what staff level is involved. He said every chance I get, I try to insert some of these principles or concepts in my discussions, regardless of whether I am visiting in Laos, Cambodia, or Vietnam. Sometimes, I speak openly and mention directly what principles Gotama Buddha has taught us.

#### **4.4 Caution of applying Buddhist teachings**

All of interviewee and focus group's participants say that it is the right thing to apply Buddhist teachings to business management. There is also no disadvantage of doing so.

However, some participants also address words of caution. They are afraid that it may distract and deviate their executive and employee from company's assignment and also agreeable target (and objectives). Some believe that it will reduce enthusiasm of key persons who take care for top line revenue and protect bottom line performance.

In contrast, some respondents said that it works another way around. If the persons really practice *dhamma*, they will have clear objective and move forward with all they have according to *iddhipāda* and under moral principles of Five Precept.

In this regard, **Mr. Boonyarith** said that people who believe in and always act with good moral behavior do so not for their own self - interests or gains or for the sake of becoming famous; they do so for the sake of helping others. **Dr. Prasarn** also mentioned an interesting argument regarding applying Buddhist teachings that we talk a lot about managing risks – in modern terms it is being prudent. However, in spirit, being prudent is being careful. You may say that this makes people inert but it is not so. If you are too adventurous, then it is not being prudent; and it will lead to dangerous outcomes. This thinking is also in the *dhamma* teachings. I think that many things depend on the interpretation being made.

#### **4.5 Conclusion remark**

In this chapter, discussion on applying Buddhist teachings to business management is mentioned. Information from data gathering reflects numbers of Buddhist teachings are implemented for business management such as *aparihāniyā dhammā*, Brahmavihāra, Four Noble Truth, Noble Eightfold Path, *sappurisa dhamma*,

*etc.* In addition, Figure 2 clearly demonstrates linkage of Buddhist teachings to be applied for business management. Although, it seems to be that applying Buddhist teachings will provide benefit to organization, some caution and concern are discussed in order to look into the matter in well round manner.

## CHAPTER V

### Recommendation on how to apply Buddhist teachings to business organization

Prior information and discussion of Chapter 3 and 4 clearly demonstrate what and how Buddhist teachings can be applied to management of business organization. With analysis and consideration of benefit and caution of implementing the teachings, it can be concluded that there are two categories of applying Buddhist teachings to business organization which are:

#### 5.1 Applying to Thai business leaders

In this category, the issue is already discussed lengthy and involved several Buddhist teachings such as *brahmavihāra*, *iddhipāda*, Five Precepts, *bhāvana*, *sappurisa dhamma*, Four Noble Truth, Three marks of existence, Noble Eightfold Path, etc. The prior discussion is concluded that Thai business leaders should practice *bhāvana*, besides employing Buddhist teachings as their guiding practice, in order to effectively apply these teachings for themselves.

#### 5.2 Applying to business organization

Besides applying the teachings with themselves, Thai business leaders should find the way to disseminate and cascade Buddhist teachings in their organizations accordingly. It is not only what they believe what is good for themselves, they will have an opportunity to do the good thing for the others in the organization as well. However, in order to communicate and persuade others to move along the Buddhist path, there should be a proper procedure as shown in below diagram and following explanation. This 9-action point can be termed in short as **PRACTICAL**:



**Figure 3: Applying Buddhist teachings to business Organization**

### **1) Encouraging principle-centered practice**

Applying Buddhist teachings will be highly effective if the company is a principle-centered practice organization.

In this regard, people, in the organization, are expected to behave according to agreed principles which will result in behavior that is predictable and manageable. If there are too many exceptions, the principles will become meaningless and people will start to ignore them. Working according to principles can help to promote practicing Buddhist teachings since people who adhere to principles usually behave with discipline and respect for others, and contribute as team members.

Principles are not only rules and regulations, they also cover unwritten rules and norms such as the way people treat each other. To give just one small example, in the canteen of a major manufacturer, each table has a bowl containing a small white towel. Although there is no sign, everyone is aware that cleanliness matters, and that they should clean the table when they are finished to make it ready for the next diners.

### **2) Respect to others**

Respect means listen to the others no matter how great the difference of opinion between speaker and listener might be. Respect means honoring others and

treating them the same way we expect others to treat us. Respect starts in the mind and is displayed through verbal and body language. People who show respect to others usually behave with politeness and calm manner, which encourages ethical practice in the organization.

Since there are people in the organization who belong to another religion, Thai business leaders, who practice Buddhism, have to respect them as well. However, this does not mean that they should not promote Buddhism. In a matter of fact, they should do so as follows:

1. Proactively promote Buddhism and address the Buddhist teachings as deem necessary and appropriately. It is acceptable to openly talk about Buddhism as long as it does not offend others. It should be also delivered with humbleness and politeness. In addition, the leaders has to weather that it is suitable to mention Buddhist teachings in particular situation carefully as well.

2. Avoid using Buddhist terminology when communicating in the organization in order to allow comfortability among employees who belong to different religion.

3. Include a key word such as integrity, ethics, or morality, in corporate values and/or culture statement in order to positively reinforce the right mindset among employees. This kind of positive words are generic and can be communicated effectively to any group of employee both in domestic and oversea operations.

### **3) Action-based program on Buddhism**

Promoting Buddhist related activity and encouraging employee to participate these activities are the things all Buddhist including corporate employee should do regularly. Thai business leaders can take active role on below example of activity:

1. Support Buddhist club, in the organization, which can be one of the party to promote Buddhism in the long term. If there is no Buddhist club, the leaders can initiate and support establishment one. In this regard, from the interview, it is found that Bank of Thailand (BoT)'s Buddhist Club is quite active with numbers of Buddhist related activity.

2. Allowing, or supporting, employee to participate in meditation retreat (*bhāvana*) at meditation center is one of activities Thai business leaders should emphasize. This kind of activity will allow peace of mind for employees who will feel better to themselves not to mention happiness in the work place. The practice is adopted by some of interviewee's organization such as Kiatnakin Bank and S&P Syndicate Public Co., Ltd.

Regular practice meditation (*bhāvana*) can provide them with pleasant feeling which can be categorized into *kāyika sukha*<sup>1</sup> (bodily pleasant feeling or bodily happiness) and also *cetasika sukha* (mental pleasant feeling, joy, *somanassa* or mental happiness) at the same time.

*kāyika sukha* and *cetasika sukha* are considered to be result of *ekaggata* or unification of mind/one pointedness<sup>2</sup>. *Ekaggata* is the mental factor that brings into to focus the consciousness and the mental factors. It means that the mental factors that would arise at a particular moment have to be fixed on one particular object. In another fact it leads us to focus on one object until we satisfy with our expectation.

Therefore, in term of managing others, providing a platform for both forms of *sukha* (happiness) is a crucial element of successful business operation for which organization should encourage.

3. Inviting monk to preach at the organization in order to allow employee better understanding Buddhist teaching in more detail not just reciting prayers only. Kiatnakin Bank and Siam Hands Co., Ltd are quite active on this activity.

4. Holding merit making in relation to company's important day and also Buddhist day. It is important to address that the merit making should be simple and truly Buddhist practice without incorporation of another discipline to be included.

5. Supporting employees on their merit making is activity which organization should encourage its employee to do the good thing according to Buddhist practice. Example of this activity are:

- Ordination as a Buddhist monk – Lion Corporation (Thailand) Ltd. supports and practices on this activity.

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<sup>1</sup> A I 81, Bhikkhu Bodhi, **The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha : A Translation of the Aṅguttara Nikāya**, (Somerville: Wisdom Publications, 2012), p. 171

<sup>2</sup>Bhikkhu Nanamoli, **A Pali-English Glossary of Buddhist Technical Terms**, (Kandy: BPS, 2007), p. 30

- Supporting employee for making merit by providing financial support or material to be used - Siam Hands Co., Ltd. supports and practices on this activity.

#### **4) Encouraging compassion & equanimity among others**

Compassion, *mettā*, can be interpreted as sympathy for those less fortunate than others. However, sympathizing with someone does not mean that one has to help the person for no reason. Supporting the needy is the right thing to do but there must be limitations as well. This means while encouraging compassion, *mettā*, Thai business leaders also need to practice equanimity, *upekkhā*, as well. Otherwise, people will rely on others forever and will not develop the willingness to solve problems themselves. Encouraging compassion, *mettā*, and equanimity, *upekkhā*, will result in synergy and teamwork which will produce sustainable business performance in the long term.

#### **5) Building working team of capable and ethical members**

The leaders should dedicate corporate resources to building team of employees who will keep the organization on the right track. It is crucial to have a next generation in place with the same ethical mindset which is the practice of *kalyamitta* in Buddhism. In this regard, talent and successor identification and development are ones of priorities for the leaders.

#### **6) Integrity practice in the organization**

Ethics is the fundamental condition with which all human beings should comply. People are all aware of morality and its general or specific applications. By addressing the moral elements of different issues and conditions, an organization can create ethical guidelines or codes of conduct for members to adopt.

Thus, it is extremely important that Thai business leaders, in particular, place ethics at the heart of their own principles at all times. No matter what they do, ethics should always be there as a major part of the corporate equation. Besides, they have to ensure that an ethical climate and cultural norms are already in place. All executives must be accountable as well.

An organization and the people who work for it can demonstrate their ethical behavior through integrity, which is the quality of being honest, fair and keeping

promises. A corporation needs to emphasize proper attitudes and willingness to always do good things in company-wide activities.

It is also right to say that Buddhist teachings and ethical practice are the same, at least in the perception of general public, which means doing good things all the time. Therefore, ensuring of ethical practice in the organization is considered to be a crucial factor of applying Buddhist teachings for Thai business leaders.

### **7) Having right corporate cultures & values**

Practicing Buddhist teachings in the organization has to be implemented through corporate values and cultures.

Corporate values are a set of shared beliefs that reflect what the organization holds in highest regard. They cannot be drawn up quickly and people cannot simply be told to follow them. They emerge over time and people absorb the message by following the example of their leaders and peers. The CEO and the board of directors can initiate and announce a set of values, but the workforce will want to see clear proof that others, especially the top people, are behaving in line with those values.

Great companies always clearly define their corporate values. They also ensure that values are seriously reinforced through various activities. Values are not just slogans on a notice board. They are embedded in the organization's culture, reflecting the way people behave, and helping to create the conditions for ethical leadership. By doing so, there will be proper condition to apply Buddhist teachings in the organization.

### **8) Authority to manage**

In case that the leaders were the Chief Executive Officer, or number one person of the organization, they will have authority to perform according to company's policy for which is naturally about good thing, right behavior and in line with Buddhist practice. However, if they are not at the number one's position of the organization, they should be proactively find the way to locate themselves to where the authority is. Therefore, they will have proper authority to apply Buddhist teachings with their respective business organization. For example, they can be member or Chairman of sub-committee such as Human Resource sub-committee, Culture sub-committee, etc.

### 9) Leading with role modelling

At the first place, the business leaders have to behave according to what they preach which mean they have to seriously behave and perform as a role model for member of the organization. The leaders must behave as a role model by not compromising in any difficult situation that could lead to unethical behavior. Any behavior which can create doubt to people in the organization that the leaders do not behave morally according to the Buddhist teachings they have to think carefully before making a move or stop.

### 5.3 Suggestion for future research

Due to limitation of this research, it was unable to cover every aspect in related to Buddhist teachings and business management. Therefore, it is recommended to carry out future research as follows:

1. How meditation can be benefit and enhance people capability of working under business environment? The future study should find out in detail of frequency of meditation, length of daily meditation, type of mediation (i.e. *samatha* or *vipassanā bhāvana*), meditation technique, etc.
2. More in-depth study of organization which is implementing Buddhist teachings in their business operations in order further understand and learn from actual experience of successful and difficulty in the organization.
3. In-depth study of organization should focus on particular industry in order to really understand implication of applying Buddhist teachings to business operations. Suggestion of future study may be on service industry, manufacturing, trading, retailing, etc.
4. How Board of Directors applies Buddhist teachings for their organizations' success?
5. Effective methodology and approach communication of Buddhist teachings in the organization.

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### **Appendix 1 : Questions for Interview**

1. With rapidly changing economic and business condition, what do you consider as the top three challenges facing your organization and business community today and the next ten years?
2. What do you see your organization in the next 10 – 20 years? Please elaborate the roadmap that will bring your organization there?
3. “Values and Cultures” are beliefs and reflections of the ways people behave in the organization. Can you please share with us your view to embed “Values and Cultures” in the organization?
4. Do you regularly practice Buddhism?
5. Can you share your understanding of Buddhist teachings in your own words?
6. What are Buddhist teachings you consider the most important to your daily life?
7. What kind of practice are you doing on daily basis (such as chanting, meditation, etc.?)
8. Do you practice Concentration and/ or In-sight meditation?
9. Do you apply Buddhism for your daily business management?
10. What are Buddhist teachings you consider the most important to your daily business life?
11. Are you applying Buddhist teachings; such as Buddhist Four Immeasurables, *suppurisa dhamma*, etc.; to your organization and your business management?
12. Please explain how do you apply Buddhist teachings in your business management?
13. What is benefit of applying Buddhist teachings to your business management?
14. What should be cautioned when applying Buddhism for your management approach?
15. How can you engage your management team for applying Buddhist teachings to business management?

## Appendix 2

### List of interviewee

#### In-depth interview:

1. Dr. Ajva Taulananda, Vice Chairman, Charoen Pokphand Group.
2. Mr. Amaret Sila-On, Advisor, S&P Syndicate Public Co., Ltd.
3. Mr. Boonyarith Mahamontri, President, Lion Corporation (Thailand) Ltd.
4. Dr. Prasarn Trairatvorakul, Former Governor, Bank of Thailand.
5. Dr. Ronnachit Mahattanapreut, Senior Vice President - Finance and Administration, Central Plaza Hotel Public Company Limited.
6. Mr. Sanan Angubolkul, Chairman & President, Srithai Superware Plc.
7. Mr. Somprasong Boonyachai      Former Chief Executive Officer, Intouch Group (Shin Corporation Plc.)
8. Mr. Supachai Verapuchong, Deputy Managing Director, Thai Nakorn Patana Co.,Ltd.
9. Mr. Supol Wattanavekin, Chairman, Kiatnakin Bank Plc.
10. Dr. Veerathai Santiprabhob, Governor, Bank of Thailand.

#### Siam Hands Co., Ltd.

- |                            |                         |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Mr. Adisorn Puangchompu | President.              |
| 2. Mrs. Amara Puangchompoo | Managing Director.      |
| 3. Mrs. Petsang Nukong     | Human Resource Manager. |
| 4. Ms. Wimolta Sudpan      | Production Manager.     |

## **Appendix 3**

### **Focus Group's Participants**

1. Mr. Adisorn Apasuthirat, Managing Director, Novatec Healthcare Co., Ltd.
2. Mr. Adul Pattanaphum, Senior Vice President, Navakij Insurance Plc
3. Mr. Kavira Fukiat, Vice President, Phillip Life Assurance Public Company Limited.
4. Mr. Khunawut Thumpomkul, President, Home Product Center Public Company Limited.
5. Mr. Kriengsak Sukhanaphorn, Senior Vice President - Administration Department, Eastern Sugar & Cane Public Co.,Ltd.
6. Mr. Pongsak Prukngampun, Managing Director, Au Samchaiyont Limited Partnership.
7. Mr. Surakait Kasemsuwan, Manufacturing Director, Moh Mee Co., Ltd.
8. Mr. Surasak Surapongrukcharoen, Director & Asst. Managing Director, Witcorp Product Co.,Ltd
9. Mr. Theerawat Kuslangoorawat, Senior Vice President - MISThaicom PCL.

## Appendix 4

### Focus Group's Questionnaire

1. Do you regularly practice Buddhism?

.....

2. Can you share your understanding of Buddhist teachings in your own words?

.....

.....

3. What are Buddhist teachings you consider the most important to your daily life?

.....

.....

4. What kind of practice are you doing on daily basis (such as chanting, meditation, etc.?)

.....

.....

5. Do you practice Concentration (สมถะภาวนา) and/ or In-sight meditation (วิปัสสนาภาวนา)?

.....

.....

6. Do you apply Buddhism for your daily business management?

.....

.....

7. What are Buddhist teachings you consider the most important to your daily business life?

.....  
.....

8. Are you applying Buddhist teachings; such as Buddhist Four Immeasurables (พรหมวิหาร 4), *suppurisa dhamma* (สัพปุริสธรรม7), etc.; to your organization and your business management?

.....  
.....

9. Please explain how do you apply Buddhist teachings in your business management?

.....  
.....

10. What is benefit of applying Buddhist teachings to your business management?

.....  
.....

11. What should be cautioned when applying Buddhism for your management approach?

.....  
.....

12. How can you engage your management team for applying Buddhist teachings to business management?

.....  
.....

### Appendix 5 : Record of Interview

No.	Name		Interview Date	Time	Duration (hours)
1	Dr.	Ajva Taulananda	18 May 2015	2:03 PM	1:25
2	Mr.	Amaret Sila-On	8 June 2015	2:00 PM	1:20
3	Mr.	Boonyarith Mahamontri	12 May 2015	1:45PM	1:30
4	Dr.	Prasarn Trairatvorakul	22 June 2015	4:45 PM	1:00
5	Dr.	Ronnachit Mahattanapreut	15 July 2016	12:10 PM	1:20
6	Mr.	Sanan Angubolkul	10 June 2015	12:20 PM	2:10
7	Mr.	Somprasong Boonyachai	9 June 2015	1:45 PM	1:30
8	Mr.	Supachai Verapuchong	17 May 2015	11:20 AM	1:30
9	Mr.	Supol Wattanavekin	8 July 2015	2:45 PM	1:00
10	Dr.	Veerathai Santiprabhob	25 July 2016	4:45 PM	1:00

1	Mr.	Adisorn Puangchompu	22 July 2016	3:15 PM	2:00
2	Mrs.	Amara Puangchompoo	15 August 2016	2:00 PM	1:20
3	Mrs.	Amara Puangchompoo	9 September 2016	1:45PM	1:30
4	Mrs.	Petsang Nukong	17 September 2016	2:20 PM	1:00
5	Ms.	Wimolta Sudpan	17 September 2016	3:30 PM	1:00

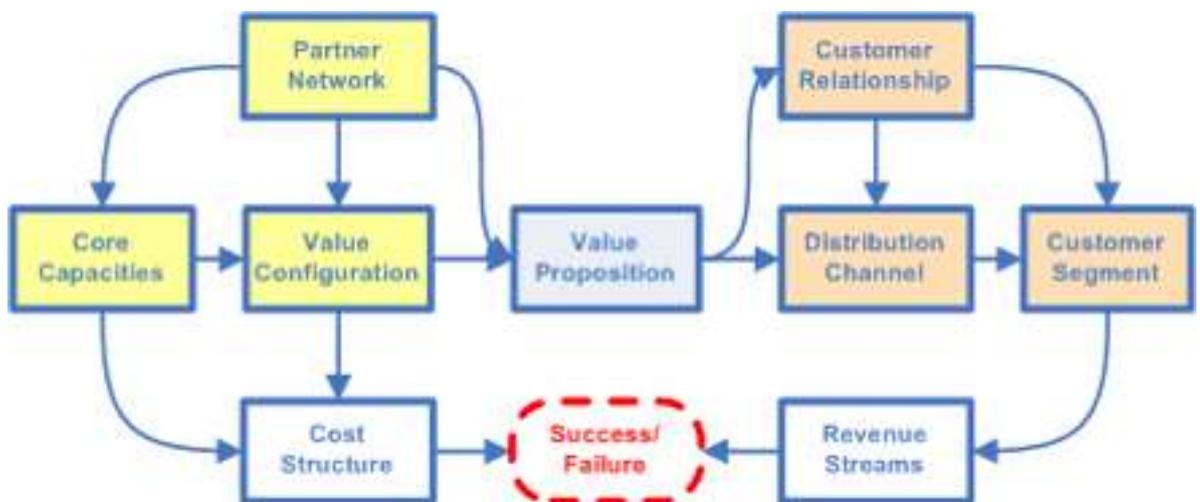
## Appendix 6

### Summary of Buddhist Teachings from Research Program

Source of information		Action-based teachings							Theory-based teachings					
		Brahmavihāra	Icchāpāda	Five Precepts	Bhāvana (Meditation)	Satipaṭṭhāna	Sappurisa Dhamma	Paññā (Wisdom)	Four Noble Truth	Tilakkhaṇa	Noble Eightfold Path	Five Strengths	Five hindrances	Saddhamma
Interviewee	1	+	+	+	+		+	+	+	+				
Interviewee	2		+		+				+	+				+
Interviewee	3	+		+				+						
Interviewee	4	+	+											
Interviewee	5	+	+		+	+	+		+	+				+
Interviewee	6	+					+							
Interviewee	7	+	+	+		+		+	+		+			
Interviewee	8	+	+	+	+		+		+		+	+	+	
Interviewee	9	+			+			+	+				+	
Interviewee	10		+	+	+	+					+	+		
Focus Group		+	+	+							+			
Siam Hands		+		+						+				

## Appendix 7

### Alexander Osterwalder's Business Model<sup>3</sup>

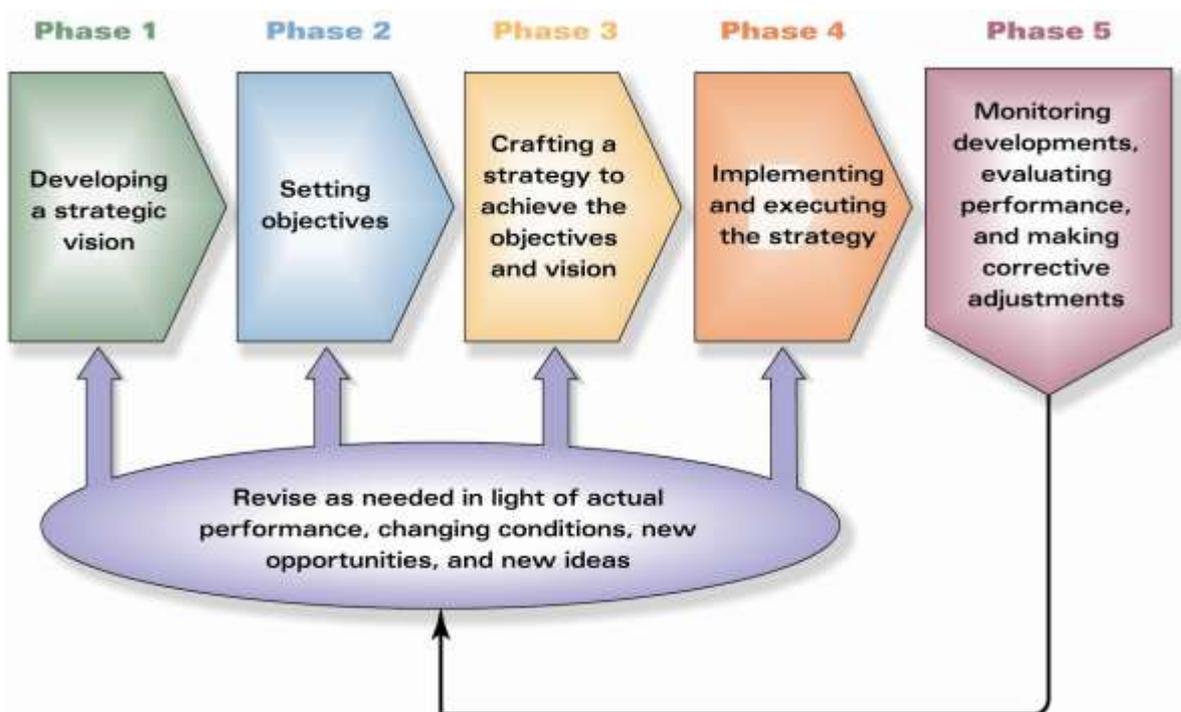


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<sup>3</sup>Alexander Osterwalder and Yves Pigneur, **Business Model Generation**, (Hoboken: Wiley, 2010), p.14-19.

## Appendix 8

### Strategic Business Planning<sup>4</sup>



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<sup>4</sup>Arthur A. Thompson Jr., A. J. Strickland III and John E. Gamble, **Crafting and Executing Strategy: The Quest for Competitive Advantage - Concepts and Cases**, 14th Edition, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2005), p. 18.

## **BIOGRAPHY**

Mr. Sorayuth Vathanavisuth

### **Education:**

Bachelor Degree in Business Administration, Thammasat University

Master of Business Administration (with certification in Decision Support Systems),  
Southern New Hampshire University, New Hampshire, USA

### **Professional Experience:**

Chief Executive Officer - Thailand Management Association (TMA).

Vice President – Electronic Living, Samart Corporation Pcl.

Country Manager & Regional Director-Indo China – Consumer Product – Household  
Division, Eastman Kodak.

Video Display Group Manager, Philips Electronics.