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Ethics & Integrity-4: Aptitude & Foundational Values, EI

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Aptitude and foundational values for Civil Service , integrity, impartiality and non-partisanship, objectivity, dedication to public service, empathy, tolerance and compassion towards the weaker sections. Emotional intelligence-concepts, and their utilities and application in administration and governance.

Defining Aptitude

An aptitude is a component of a competency to do a certain kind of work at a certain level, which can also be considered "talent". Aptitudes may be physical or mental. Aptitude is not knowledge, understanding, learned or acquired abilities (skills) or attitude. The innate nature of aptitude is in contrast to achievement, which represents knowledge or ability that is gained.

Difference between Attitude and Aptitude

- While attitude is positive / negative / indifferent feeling towards a person, object, event or
 idea; aptitude is a competency to do certain kind of work. Both attitude and aptitude can be
 nurtured.
- While attitude is associated with character or virtues; aptitude is associated with competence.
- While attitude underpins the character, virtues and moral values; aptitude determines if the person would develop desired skills to do a task.
- While attitude is only mental; aptitude is both mental and physical.

Intellectual Aptitude

A Civil servant must have aptitudes intellectual aptitude, emotional aptitude, moral aptitude.

Foundational Values for Civil Services

Civil services are an integral part of Indian democracy. They play a great role in societal development as they have the responsibilities of both decision making and policy implementation. They are vital as they have to maintain same standards of professionalism, responsiveness and impartiality in serving successive governments. The civil servants have to abide by a common set of values which can cater to larger interests of society at large. There are some foundational principles which help instil public confidence in government machinery.

International Code of Conduct for Public Officials

UN in 1996, adopted "International Code of Conduct for Public Officials" which has the following general principles:

• A public office, as per national law is a position of trust which comes with a duty to act in public interest. This implies that ultimate loyalty of public officials is expressed via the democratic institutions of the government.



- Public officials should also make sure that all their duties and functions are as per the laws or administrative policies. They should make use of all public resources in effective and efficient manner.
- All public officials should be attentive, fair and unbiased in performance of their duties.

Further, there are 7 basic principles of public life as outlined by the **Nolan Committee** or *Committee* on *Standards in Public Life in the United Kingdom*. These comprise the most comprehensive statements of ethical standards for holders of public office. It was stated that any public official found to transgress any of these should be punished without any detailed explanation. These are selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Indian Scenario: Foundational Values:

Public servants in India develop and implement public policy within a framework of public service values. All these have a marked influence on their attitudes and actions. Civil Service in India has gradually evolved over years of tradition. The current norms are enforceable rules of conduct as typified by the *Central Civil Services (Conduct) Rules*. Analogous rules are also applicable to members of All India Services or employees of various state governments. However, these do not stand for any code of ethics in India although such codes do exist in other countries. Draft Public Services Bill, 2007 was constituted which proposed necessary steps to evolve code of ethics in India. These suggest:

Values of Public Service

The public servants are guided by the following values while discharging their duties:

- Patriotism
- Allegiance to the Constitution
- Objectivity, impartiality, honesty, diligence, courtesy and transparency
- Absolute integrity

Some more values to be followed by public officials have been given by 2nd Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC) Report.

Review of Public Service Values

Central authority reviews the adoption, adherence and implementation of Public Service Values in the departments or organisations under the Central government.

Public Services Code

The Central government promotes Public Service Values and ethical standards in various public service operations. These include:

- To discharge official duties with competence and accountability.
- To ensure effective management, professional growth and leadership development



- To not to misuse power and public position for personal financial gains.
- To bear in mind the objective that public servants are instruments of good governance and to foster socio-economic development.

The Second ARC Report has stated a comprehensive **Civil Service Code** which can be summed at three levels namely as shown below:



Thus, as per the Second ARC, an individual's commitment to the Constitution of India, many other values are also suggested in the Draft Public Service Bill. These are include; adherence to highest standards of probity, integrity and conduct; Impartiality and non-partisanship; Objectivity; Commitment to citizen's concerns, public good and public service; Empathy for the weaker sections; Accountability and ownership; Devotion to duty and exemplary behaviour.

Key Foundational Values for Civil Services

Here is a brief discussion about various foundational values and their importance in public services.

Integrity

Integrity is the elementary value for any profession. It is important for all those who exhibit strong moral and ethical principles. It deals with exhibiting fairness and honesty in all professional and personal relations. It is considered as a personal choice which is uncompromising under any kind of circumstances. It ensures correct actions and stands in stark contrast to hypocrisy. Integrity is thus considered as one of the most important virtues and has many interpretations as:

Integrity as self-integration

It establishes a formal relation to self and people integrate different facets of their personality to an



intact whole. It is mainly a matter of keeping oneself totally intact and uncorrupted.

Integrity as identity

It includes the commitment which one makes with oneself, people, relations, institutions, traditions and culture etc.

Integrity as standing for something

The self-integration and identity see integrity as a matter of personal choice. Persons with high integrity show consistent endorsements as they take a stand for something within a community. Integrity is thus considered as matter of having proper regard for one's role in the community process of deliberation over what is valuable and worth doing.

Integrity as purpose

This places moral checks on the kinds of commitments a person of integrity must honour. Thus, a person of integrity is always morally correct despite him having a substantial moral disagreement on some issues with a section of society.

Integrity as-Individual, Professional and Institutional

Integrity forms the building block of ethical conduct and competency. It can be seen at three different levels and all are essential for an individual's professional survival.

Personal integrity

It stands for showing accountability for all personal actions and conducting all personal relationships fairly and honestly.

Professional integrity

It is conducting of one's professional duties and obligations with complete honesty in conformity with the professional code of ethics.

Institutional integrity

It is a wider concept and is driven by mission-and-vision statements of an organisation, the established code of conduct and the procedures. It stands for cementing ethical conduct throughout the organisation through personal example, management practices and ethical training.

Integrity is also important to foster public interest in democracy. It is integrity which makes sure that public interest overrides personal and organisational interests. In India, integrity for public officials means the following:

D+P+V+E=Iii (individual and institutional)

Here,

- D is for democracy which stands for justice, impartiality, truth, liberty, equity, citizenship etc.
- P is for professionalism which stands for merit, impartiality, competence, quality, self-awareness, understanding, esteem, responsibility etc.
- V is for values which stands for moral, ethical, personal etc.



- E is for ethics which stands for ethical conduct, principles, duties, judgment and responsibility
- I is for integrity which stands for authentic, sincere and a genuine sense of being whole and intact.

Impartiality and Non-partisanship

Impartiality means that, regardless of a public servants personal beliefs and preferences, and personal relationships with other servants or with members of the community; he or she must impartially serve the government of the day and treat members of the public and other public servants fairly and impartially.

Impartiality implies tolerance and restraint, particularly in dealing with political or religious convictions.

Relevance in Public Service

Impartiality lies at the heart of public service and is the core of the commitments of a public servant. A public servant must be impartial and must not act on the basis of nationality, race, religion, or political point of view. His / her service must be based on the principle of non-partisanship. Non-partisanship is an essential value of the public service and is foundation for the roles and responsibilities of public servants.

However, it's a bitter truth that non-partisanship is now a days like a marital bliss, seldom achieved in public service. The civil servants often are seen conflicting with the principles of impartiality and loyalty. The Public servants are to be responsive to the needs and direction of their political masters, who have been democratically elected. The duty of loyalty many often becomes contradictory to a public servant's obligation to act impartially.

Impartiality versus Non-partisanship

Impartiality and Non-partisanship both form essential foundational values for civil services. While impartiality <u>ensures equality without any bias and prejudices in the general</u>, <u>non-partisanship ensures a</u> neutral approach in politics and a solid commitment to the government.

Impartiality denotes that all the responsibilities of a person are carried out in a fair and just manner. It is a commitment to equality and diversity. Likewise, in politics, impartiality means acting in the general interest of the nation without any personal views coming in way of discharging duty. There are two which determine the foundation of a non-partisan public service. These are:

- Recruitment, promotions or even terminations should be completely free of any kind of political influence and done purely on merit basis.
- All public officials should perform their duties in an impartial manner.



Kenneth Kernaghan has put forth a model of political neutrality which suggests the following:

- Politics and policy are completely separate from administration. While politicians take policy decisions, it is the public officials which put them in execution.
- All public officials are recruited purely on merit basis and not depending on any political inclination or affiliation.
- Public officials do not engage in any partisan politics.
- Public officials do not express their personal views on government policies and administration.
- Public officials give correct and objective advice to their political masters.
- All policies are implemented with full zeal and enthusiasm keeping all personal biases at a side.

Despite the model, it has been rarely put to practice in its true form. Non-partisanship is an essential element of both a professional public service and responsible democratic government. A non-partisan public service is one where appointments are based on merit and free of political influence and where public servants perform their duties, and are seen to perform their duties, in a politically impartial manner.

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Objectivity

As per the Nolan Committee, <u>objectivity refers to carrying public business which includes making public appointments</u>, <u>awarding contracts and making recommendations for various rewards and benefits</u>, <u>purely on the basis of merit</u>. All these values compliment each-other. Any evaluation based on merit leads to impartial decisions and any kind of biases towards any individual, organization or authority.

As per UK Civil Services Code, objectivity is described as follows:

- Gives information and advice to government based on evidence. There is no meddling with the facts.
- All decisions are taken based on merits of the case under scan.
- Taking care of expert and professional advice.
- At the same time, all public officials should not avoid any uneasy facts and considerations.
- Carry on implementation of all policies with full zeal till the end.

Empathy

Empathy involves giving <u>due importance and value to understanding of one's thoughts, feelings and</u> concerns for others even when they are not explicitly expressed. It means trying to understand other's



feelings, perspectives, emotions, actions (reactions) etc. and thereby communicating it to the person concerned. It is the competency for emotional intelligence. There are 18 competencies in the field of emotional intelligence which can be grouped in 4 clusters as follows:

- Self-awareness
- Self-management
- Social awareness
- Relationship management

Thus, empathy represents a social awareness competency and is a person's ability to connect with others. This is vital to building and managing healthy relations. Empathy is highly important as otherwise people will only see things and situations from their own perspectives with utter disregard to others feelings. Lack of empathy often takes decision away from its purpose and generates mistrust amongst people. In public service, there are many levels of empathic situations. It ranges from understanding the content to creation and promoting the environment of mutual respect and service. This can be categorised in 5 levels:

- Understanding unspoken content: This basically involves demonstration of active listening skills; recognizing body language, facial expressions, unexpressed thoughts, concerns and feelings etc.
- Having concern for others: This involves diversity of opinion
- Expressing concern for others
- Acting as a role model
- Creating and promoting an environment of respect

Tolerance and Compassion towards weaker sections

Compassion stands for feeling of empathy for others. It is the emotion we feel for suffering experienced by others. Compassion in Latin actually stands for 'co-suffering'. It also gives rise to a desire to alleviate the suffering of others. In words of Dalai Lama, "compassion is a necessity, not a luxury, and that without it humanity cannot survive". It is considered as a process of connecting with others. It is often regarded as having an emotional facet. Even though compassion and empathy are two different things, however compassion for someone often leads to feeling of empathy for that person.

Other Values

Selflessness

Selfless service can be defined as service that puts our personal concerns behind. This is not regarding oneself when serving. Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public



interest.

They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

Efficiency and Effectiveness – because people pay for them

The community pays for the resources that Public servants use. The community expects Public servants to make best use of these resources. This means that Public servants must work efficiently and effectively, avoid waste, extravagance and improper use of the community's resources, and maintain high standards of professionalism, probity, and performance.

Procedural Fairness - No biased and discriminatory decisions

Procedural fairness denotes that decisions of Public servants must be reasonable, fair, just, and transparent. This means that the reasons for the decisions must be explained. It also means that decisions must be made without bias or the apprehension of bias, that they must be based on the evidence available, and that anyone who is adversely affected by the decision has the opportunity to provide their views.

Avoidance of Conflict of Interest

To ensure that the community perceives the Public servants as impartial, effective, and fair, it is necessary that the personal and financial interests of the Public servants do not come into conflict, or appear to come into conflict with their official duties and responsibilities.

Accountability to Law and Government

The Public servant is accountable for upholding the law and adhering to the policies and guidelines of the government. The Public servant is accountable for ensuring that the programmes, schemes, and projects of the government are delivered effectively, impartially, and courteously. Finally, Public servants are accountable for maintaining clear records of the reasons explaining the decisions that



they take and implement.

Responsiveness – sensitive to government policy and public expectations

While Public servants must be impartial and fair in serving the government and delivering services to the public, they must also do their best to familiarize themselves with the policies and aspirations of the government of the day and ensure that it receives frank, professional, timely, and comprehensive advice that is relevant to these policies. Responsiveness also means that service delivery is professional and sensitive to the diversity of the community.

Avoidance of Discrimination

Impartiality, fairness, efficiency, and effectiveness in the Public service depend on objectivity in personnel decisions. This means that Public servants must avoid discrimination on the basis of gender, caste, race, linguistic or cultural background, or disability in personnel decisions and in their relationship with colleagues. It also means that Public servants must treat all their colleagues, and members of the public, with courtesy.

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence is a set of organized skills that allows people to process emotionally relevant information professionally and accurately. Emotional intelligence overlaps with standard measures organized by the Big Five personality traits viz. openness to experience, conscientiousness, extroversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism.

Emotional intelligence has three conceptual models as follows:

El as an ability

Salovey and Mayer, who had coined the term 'emotional intelligence', described it as a form of intelligence which involves the ability to monitor one's thoughts, feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and finally to make use of the thinking to guide one's thinking and action. EI was originally said to be a composite of four emotional reasoning abilities, namely:

- Appraisal and expression of emotion
- Regulation of emotion
- Utilisation of emotion

However, it was further expanded to include:

- Ability to perceive emotions
- Ability to use emotions to facilitate thought
- Ability to understand emotions
- Ability to manage emotions

El as a set of competencies



EI is also seen as a set of competencies such as influence and self-confidence. EI provides one to develop potential to learn and develop emotional competencies which are essential in leadership effectiveness. All these competencies are organized in four clusters. These are:

- Self-awareness
- Self-management
- Social awareness
- Relationship management

As per Bar-On's model of 'emotional and social intelligence' which is comprised of five primary components:

- Interpersonal skills
- Intrapersonal skills
- Adaptability
- Stress management
- General mood

El as a trait

EI is also treated as a personality trait. Traits are predispositions of behaviour and thought which are lasting. Some examples of traits in their model include self-esteem, emotion expression and social awareness. The term 'trait emotional self-efficacy' was given by Petrides and Furnham. Trait EI which includes emotion-related behavioural dispositions and self-perceived abilities stands in contrast to EI which includes actual emotion-related abilities.

Developing a Definition

Emotional intelligence is thus a combination of intelligence and emotions while using emotions as being a source of information that help one to make sense of social environment. EI is a set of organised skills that makes people process emotionally relevant information professionally and accurately. It is thus noted that emotional intelligence overlaps with standard measures organized by Big Five personality traits: openness to experience, conscientiousness, extroversion, agreeableness and neuroticism. EI is said to have four branches, namely:

Perceiving emotion

It refers to non-verbal reception and expression of emotion. Expression of emotions was a form of communication in all animal species. It is the basic capacity of correct perception of emotions which acts as a vital starting point for more advanced study of emotions.

Facilitating emotion

Emotions are used to facilitate thought by encouraging rational thinking. They encourage thinking towards something striking. Thus, emotions are essential for creativity.



Understanding emotion

A lot is conveyed via emotions. While happy emotions express excitement towards others, anger is a signal for danger and is harmful to others. Thus, emotions are usually linked to special reactions for every action. It is the understanding of these emotional messages which is essential for survival of our species.

Regulating or managing emotion

There is always a comfort zone of everyone within which it is possible to regulate one's own and others' emotions. This can be done for personal or other social ends. This implies that all emotional self-regulation varies with person and situation.

Utilities of Emotional Intelligence

The Emotional Competence Framework was formed by 'The Consortium for Research on Emotional Intelligence in Organizations'. The Framework has listed many utilities based on social and emotional competencies of a person. All these are important for ensuring success at work.

Personal Competence

Self-awareness

- **Emotional awareness:** This deals with knowledge of one's emotions and their effects. People having this competency are more aware of their feelings and performance.
- Accurate self-assessment: This involves being aware of one's strengths and weaknesses.

 One is open to feedbacks, new viewpoints, etc.
- Self-confidence: This relates to complete affirmation of one's worth and abilities. They are
 usually more confident and are able to make sound decisions despite any uncertainties or
 pressures.

Self-regulation

- **Self-control:** This involves management of all disruptive emotions and impulses. People who are able to control themselves are more calm, positive and focussed.
- **Trustworthiness:** This comes after one has displayed standards of honesty and integrity. Trustworthy people are ethically strong, authentic and reliable. They are brave to admit their mistakes and are known to stand for tough and even unpopular decisions for larger good.
- **Conscientiousness:** This stands for taking responsibility for personal performance. People who have this competency are able to meet commitments and honour promises. They are highly organized and careful at work.
- **Adaptability:** This involves flexible attitude towards change. People with this competency find it easy to handle changing routines, multiple roles and even shifting priorities.
- Innovativeness: This involves getting easy with and open to new information and ideas.



People who possess this are able to gather new ideas from multiple sources, set challenging roles and are able to take calculated risks. They evolve original solutions to various problems.

Self-motivation

- Achievement drive: This means striving to achieve a mark of excellence. People with this
 competence draw fresh ideas from many sources, are highly result-oriented, set quite
 challenging roles for themselves and constantly work towards improving their performance.
- **Commitment:** This means aligning oneself with the goals of group or an organization. These people are willing to make personal or group sacrifices to meet a larger organizational goal. They are active in seeking opportunities to fulfil the group's mission.
- **Initiative**: This signifies the readiness on part of a person to act on opportunities. People who have this competency are able to seize opportunities and don't hesitate to bend the rules when it becomes necessary to get the work done.
- **Optimism:** This means persistence in pursuance of goals despite all hurdles. Optimistic people are able to deal with any kind of setbacks and obstacles with ease. They always live in a hope of success rather under a fear of failure. They see all setbacks as manageable circumstances and not big obstacles.

Social Competence

Social awareness

- **Empathy:** This means sensing feelings and emotions of others and taking an active interest in their perceptions and perspectives. Such people are very responsive to emotional cues and listen to everything well.
- Service orientation: This involves anticipating, recognising and meeting the needs of the
 customers. Thus, it caters to matching products and services according to needs of the
 customers to maximise customer satisfaction and loyalty.
- **Developing others:** This means gauging what others need in order to boost their confidence. People who develop others often acknowledge and reward other's strengths, accomplishments and development.
- Leveraging diversity: This means cultivating opportunities through diverse people. People
 who leverage diversity are able to connect with diverse people, understand diverse
 worldviews and have sensitivity to group differences.
- Political awareness: This deals with reading a group's emotional currents and power
 relationships. People who possess this competency are able to read power relations accurately
 and are able to detect crucial social networks. They are able to monitor situations and other
 organizational realities with ease.



Social skills

- **Influence:** This stands for wielding of effective tactics for persuasion. All people who have influence are highly appealing to their listeners. They are able to build consensus and support using different strategies. They even plan dramatic events to make a point.
- **Communication:** This means sending across clear and convincing messages. People who are good communicators usually deal with difficult situations with ease. They are good listeners too and are able to listen well, seek consensus and are open to sharing information.
- Leadership: This stands for inspiring and guiding various groups and people. Good leaders are able to arouse enthusiasm, guide the performance of others and try to model the change they expect to see in others.
- Change catalyst: This stands for both initiating and managing change. People who act as change catalyst, recognize the need for change and change the status quo of knowledge. They are better known as champions of change.
- **Conflict management:** This involves negotiation and resolution of disagreements. Such people are able to handle difficult people and tense situations diplomatically. They are able to bring out any disagreements in the open and help deescalate them.
- Building bonds: This means nurturing instrumental relationships. People who build bonds
 are able to cultivate and maintain extensive informal networks.
- Collaboration and cooperation: This means working with others towards a shared goal. People with these competencies are able to strike a balance on task with special attention to relationships. They are able to build mutually beneficial relationships. They help others collaborate, share plans, information and resources. This helps in promoting a friendly and cooperative climate.
- **Team capabilities:** This involves creation of group synergy in pursuance of collective goals. People with this competence are able to model team qualities like respect, helpfulness and cooperation. This helps in drawing all group members into active and enthusiastic participation.

Importance of Emotional Intelligence in Bureaucracy

The study of emotions in bureaucracy can be seen from the period of Max Weber. He said complete neutrality and absence of emotions for rational administration. But the recent has shown that rationality and emotions are not separate compartments in the brain rather they are interwoven.

People working in key bureaucratic positions are constantly being assailed by the emotional demands



placed on them by their peers, and members of the community.

Emotions, as a phenomenon mediates the social process in the working of bureaucracy. Political and bureaucratic leadership are influenced, shaped and constrained by emotional expression and aids in their personal and leadership development.

Emotional intelligence and a Bureaucratic Leader

Social responsibility

When a leader cares about others, he is not a centre of attention and keeps everyone in the loop by making their intentions known.

Stress tolerance

To stay focused, stress should be managed and it involves own reactions to stress or the reactions of others to the stress.

Impulse control

Independent people evaluate the alternatives and initiate the workby taking appropriate action by executing the right options. People who manage their impulses avoid being distracted and losing control of the situation.

Optimism

Optimistic people have a target that they're aiming toward. These people are confident in their ability to carry out the required actions and meet the target by looking for successful solutions to problems.

At any stage of bureaucracy, today's leaders need to win the hearts and minds of their followers. He needs the following competencies.

- People want to feel involved in planning the interventions or tasks that they're assigned to carry out.
- Good leaders are sensitive to and can read even minor objections to ideas and requests. After good leaders recognize objections, they can easily deal with them, either by overcoming objections or by making slight adjustments to the plan.
- Make the team feel like an important part of the team.
- Good leaders know and use their skills to get everyone on board with whatever decision he

The following are the emotional intelligence skills that are required for a bureaucracy to be successful in the long run.

Assertiveness

Being assertive means asking the right questions in the right way when you don't know the answer to a problem to the team.



Interpersonal relationships

Interpersonal relationship skills help leaders cultivate the relations they need with others.

Impulse control

Being patient helps the leader not to interrupt others and allowshearing out their views.

Happiness

Happiness draws people and they prefer working with leaders who are happy, but they tend to hide from those leaders with less than friendly dispositions.

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