



Welcome to Servant-Leadership at MSOE's
March 2024 Roundtable

This Month's Topic Is:
**"Conceptualization and
Foresight"**

Schedule

Time	Activity
12:00 pm	General announcements, greeting, allow groups to eat, talk and get to know each other. Suggested "Get to Know You" questions for each team member: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rose – What's something great that's happened to you this week? • Rose thorn – What's been troubling for you this week? • Rose bud – What are you looking forward to?
12:15 pm	Read the excerpt below and consider the following questions in your discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are you actively conceptualizing about (or would like to)? • How do you apply foresight to guide the path you take?
12:30 pm	Wrap up discussion with (option to have a group member draw/write summary on the board)
12:35 pm	Large group discussion
12:48 pm	Pause to reflect on one aspect you would like to focus on personally
12:50 pm	Closing of roundtable (may stay after for further discussion if desired)

Reading Excerpt to Consider

Conceptualization is the skill to dream Big Dreams. Servant-leaders seek to nurture their abilities to "dream great dreams." But what does this actually mean? The ability to look at a problem (or an organization) from a conceptualizing perspective means that one must think beyond day-to-day realities. While we must focus on day-to-day realities, we should be able to look beyond them and see beyond what is there today. As children we do this intrinsically. As we grow up, we tend to lose this ability to dream big. History shows that leaders who dreamt big made a difference. Martin Luther King had a dream and that changed the US society. Mahatma Gandhi had a dream that made India achieve independence through non-violence. Nelson Mandela had a dream that changed Africa. Walt Disney had a dream that made Disney Land a preferred place for everyone. Herb Kelleher dreamt of an airline (Southwest) that will give its customers more for less. Let me quote Herb "One of the things that people, I think, didn't understand is that we started out saying we're going to give you more for less, not less for less. We're going to give you new airplanes, not old airplanes. We're going to give you the best on-time performance. We're going to give you the people who are most hospitable.". This was a crazy dream way back in 1971, in one of the most competitive and difficult industries to be in.

Chasing dreams at any cost, without boundaries can be dangerous. Servant-leaders must seek a delicate balance between conceptualization and day-to-day focus. That is where the second skill of Foresight comes on. Foresight is the ability to learn from our past experiences, our current realities and the possible consequences of our actions in future. This is what defines the boundaries of what an organization will do to go after the big dream that they have/had. Several organizations with big dreams flounder and fall through the crack, because they chase their dreams, not paying attention to boundaries. The cases of Enron, or Exxon, or Satyam or Kingfisher Airlines are classic examples of chasing big dreams without foresight. Successful organizations use their foresight to channel the process of chasing the dreams within certain boundaries. Walt Disney did it with their set of values. So did Southwest Airlines. The story of Tata as a group is an interesting study of this aspect too. Let me quote Ratan Tata "Business, as I have seen it, places one great demand on you: it needs you to self-impose a framework of ethics, values, fairness and objectivity on yourself at all times." Integrity is the top value at Tata Group and that makes them one of the most respected business houses of all times

- Dr. Madana Kumar (Servant Leadership Evangelist and Chief Consultant at Leadyne)