

1. Do you think aptitude for technology assimilation is a much needed attribute for a civil servant? Substantiate your views.

Introduction

For transforming the civil service, it is imperative to move to a strategic technological assimilation system, which would look at the individual as a vital resource to be valued, motivated, developed and enabled to achieve the government's mission and objectives. Within this transformational process, it is essential to match civil servant's aptitude with the job they have to do and bridge competency gaps for current and future roles.

Body

- The world is on the brink of a new, all-encompassing revolution moving at exponential speed. We are witnessing the emergence of innovative technological trends with applications as diverse as the technologies themselves. But the impact of the technological revolution on economies and society is not preordained and can be shaped by policies at the local, national and global levels.
- In this regard, technological assimilation aspect of civil servants becomes important due to their important role as executive in modern democracies and also due to the fact that technological evolution exists in a social context and not just as a business case.
- In the evolving technological context, artificial intelligence (AI) can be used effectively to reduce poverty, improve the lives of farmers and make the lives of the differently abled simpler. Civil servants aptitude towards AI assimilation in executive structures can help in greater efficiency of work.
- Similarly, blockchain has potential applications to a wide range of issues – from cross-border data flows to the future provision of government services and natural resource management. This can help civil servants reduce property and other disputes, increase transparency and fight corruption, among other things.
- Further, technological outreach can help the civil servant in implementing structural reforms and promoting an entrepreneurial ecosystem through initiatives such as Startup India and the Atal Innovation Mission.
- Technology is a vehicle and not an end in itself which helps in providing a fast route to getting civil servants jobs done fast and cost-effectively. Fewer hours are lost on menial tasks or prolonged duties. Civil servants can save time and work more productively and cohesively, even across cities, countries, and continents.
- At the same time, it is important to get the right complementary technological systems to align with one's needs. In this regard, the introduction of cloud computing is arguably the most beneficial technological addition to the civil service. It gives employees the ability to work from

anywhere. This means there is more flexibility in civil servants' lives which goes a long way towards increasing job satisfaction.

- Technology assimilation can further be of use like helping to reduce the gender wage gap. Women can have children without sacrificing their career, allowing them to progress further in their lives both professionally and personally. In fact, both men and women can spend time with their families while working.
- Technology has also been a significant player in improving communication within the civil service. Training in the use of technology is essential in enforcing many small improvements that have substantial impacts.
- With increased training in technology, outdated practices are fading into the background. This allows civil servants to make the most of communication tools like email, video conferencing, instant messaging, and the sharing of information via the cloud. There's also an element of waste reduction with technology. It streamlines many processes that would have previously needed the excessive use of paper and ink.
- By improving the technology in the civil service, it becomes more appealing to younger workers. Graduates are expecting a technologically-advanced workplace. They have grown up in the digital age, often being completely unfamiliar with the way things used to be. This means they do their best work when given the technology they are proficient at using.

Conclusion

The Civil Service of the future will need people with a broader set of skills so that we can navigate this complex environment more effectively as we serve modern India. In line with the vision of 'New India'— we must seek to embrace technological change, grasping the opportunities it presents and fulfill the goals of civil services in India where technological assimilation would form an important component.

2. A civil servant must be an effective communicator. Why? Explain.

Introduction

“Good communication is the bridge between confusion and clarity” – Nat Turner.

A good relationship starts with a good communication. Lack of communication is often the reason for differences, lack of coordination between 2 entities. Civil servant at the forefront empowered with public resources must be an effective communicator for its effective and efficient utilization and bring transformative change in the society.

Body

Why civil servant has to be a good communicator:

- Inter-department coordination: A civil servant usually heads a department which works in coordination with other departments. A positive attitude with effective communication will help achieve timely coordination and thus help attain synergy. Lack of communication leads to inefficiency and grave mistakes. E.g.
 - Aspirational district prog requires synergy of central, state and district officers' efforts and effective communication is a key.
 - Lack of communication and coordination between intelligence agencies led to Mumbai terror attack.
- Negotiation: an important role of a civil servant is to negotiate with various stakeholders E.g. Diplomacy by foreign secretary, trade deals with private companies etc., an effective communication builds rapport and helps in achieving the goal. For instance, S. Jaishankar is known for his diplomacy skills, a reflection of his good communication skills.
- Public persuasion: a civil servant would only be as successful as the public allow him/her to be. An effective communicator will gain public trust and implement the policies and programmes with effective public participation. A civil servant has to hold awareness campaigns, seminars etc., to bring awareness among public and effective communication is a sine qua non.
 - E.g. Rohini sindhuri , an IAS officer is known for effective interaction with the public in Mandya district of Karnataka which helped in 100% open defecation free in record time.
 - Similarly, Poma Tudo, an IAS officer with her proactive meetings with tribal people of Nuapada district of Odisha has improved tribal trust and participation in administration.
- Financing: A civil servant has to secure finance through submission of reports and presentation to the financial department. The resource allocation is only as effective as the persuasive ability of the civil servant which is contingent of effective communication.
- Intra department relationship: the morale of the entire department is dependent on the civil servant. An effective communication by the one heading the department would bring clarity, commonality among the workers and hence boost the morale.
- Persuasion of Public representatives: A minister/ a elected representative is the ultimate authority in approval of projects and scheme. A good communication would help the civil servant to build rapport and sanctions development projects for his/her department.
- Handling emergency situations: For instance, a district collector during a riot/natural disaster/communal clashes, police during a hijacking situation has to be a good communicator to bring the situation under control without much losses. E.g. Ajit Doval in operation black thunder was able to successfully neutralize the threat by his good communication along with wit.
- Handling media: a bad communication brings a disaster in a country with vibrant media. A civil servant has to have a high emotional intelligence and be careful in giving statements to the media. Effective communication would help in proper dissemination of information and avoid fake news, also helps

in building social capital and trust of public on the government. E.g. A cabinet secretary of India was removed for giving adverse statement on Indian nuclear policy to the media 2 decades back.

Conclusion

Chanakya in his book Arthashastra has enlisted communication skills as one of the required qualities for a civil servant. According to him, a civil servant should know when to speak, when to stay silent, what to speak, how to listen and so on to be effective in his work. As Stephen Covey observes 'the art of communication is the language of leadership'.

NOTE: Prepare a list of civil servants who you can use in answers (Do it now, not after prelims. Those examples will stick in your mind only after repetitive reading). It would help you in essay, ethics and even in other papers if you are lucky.

3. What is tolerance? Why is it considered to be a foundational value for a civil servant? Explain.

Introduction

"I do not agree with what you have to say, but I'll defend to the death your right to say it."-Voltaire

Tolerance is respect, acceptance and appreciation for those whose opinions, practices, race religion, nationality etc. are different from one's own.

Body

Tolerance

- According to UNESCO, Tolerance is respect, acceptance and appreciation of the rich diversity of our world's cultures, our forms of expression and ways of being human. It is fostered by knowledge, openness, communication, and freedom of thought, conscience and belief. Tolerance is harmony in difference. It is not only a moral duty, it is also a political and legal requirement. Tolerance, the virtue that makes peace possible, contributes to the replacement of the culture of war by a culture of peace.
- Tolerance is not concession, condescension or indulgence. Tolerance is, above all, an active attitude prompted by recognition of the universal human rights and fundamental freedoms of others. In no circumstance can it be used to justify infringements of these fundamental values. Tolerance is to be exercised by individuals, groups and States.
- Tolerance is the responsibility that upholds human rights, pluralism (including cultural pluralism), democracy and the rule of law. It involves the rejection of dogmatism and absolutism and affirms the standards set out in international human rights instruments.

Importance

- A civil servant posted in a state other than his own if not tolerant may face problem in adapting and dedicating himself to the service of people. Tolerance as virtue is important to pursue high ideal of secularism enshrined in constitution. Intolerance would breed injustice and violence which are antidotes to a balanced development in a culturally diverse nation.
- Courage to fight for others right - Tolerance gives respect for others and hence courage to fight for their rights like fight against racial discrimination, LGBTQ community, minority etc.
- Better decision – Tolerance avoids impulsive decisions. It buys times and helps in minimizing lose and damage.
- Allows healthy debate and discussion to take place between different sections and hence outcomes are democratic.
- In times of peace, people have a chance to thrive socially, economically and emotionally. Tolerance creates a society in which people can feel valued and respected, and in which there is room for every person, each with their own ideas, thoughts and dreams.
- Without tolerance and harmony, the lasting peace of societies cannot be maintained, and loyalty for each other cannot be established.
- Tolerance allows individuality and diversity. It is more about mutual respect and the common good, and not about who is right and who is wrong

Conclusion

Historically tolerance has been the central virtue of some of the greatest empires. Be it Asoka's Dhamma or Akbar's Sul-i-kul, tolerance was a key principle. Being tolerant of each other and caring for each other is what makes us human. This is why we have believed tolerance is important and an essential aspect of a healthy, livable society. In fact, it is the only way in which a country as diverse as India (Politically, religiously, economically) can function and use each and every difference to make its people thrive rather than suffer.

4. Can a person having no or little legal acumen be a good public servant? Examine.**Introduction**

Legal acumen refers to skills in making correct decisions and judgments in the field of law. Public servants are those professionals who want to achieve the public good above all else in their work.

Body

Public servant's prime goal is to bring justice in society. This requires awareness of rights and duties of people. For this, awareness of relevant laws is necessary. Further legal acumen enables one to propose necessary correction in laws to align it with

principle of natural justice. Legal acumen also enables one to unearth scams and corruption cases, hurting public interest the most.

- Gandhiji fought legal battles in South Africa to win rights for Indians and Africans there. He also, using his legal acumen, successfully bargained for partial debt right-off of poor indigo farmers.
- Legal acumen of Moti Lal Nehru and others made 'Nehru report' possible which showed that Indians capable of legislating for themselves. The report fulfilled many aspirations of Indians, thus serving public interest.
- Due to the legal acumen of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, he headed the drafting committee in the constituent assembly. This enabled him to serve people and uplift the downtrodden through liberating provisions of Indian constitution.
- Sanjiv Chaturvedi, because of his aptitude in following money trails, unearthed many corruption cases.
- Harish Salve, due to his legal acumen, defended Kulbhushan Yadav at International Court of Justice, serving the interest of people of India.

However, legal acumen is not necessary criterion for public service. Neither is legal acumen guarantee for welfare of people. Public service is more driven by values and emotional intelligence. Empathy, compassion, dedication and spirit of public service are prime drivers of public service.

- Many, Prime Ministers, including the current one, do not have background in law. Still due to leadership ability and dedication towards nations, they are headed the largest democracy in the world.
- Reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Mother Teresa, and present social workers like Kailash Satyarthi are driven by empathy and compassion for people.
- Subash Palekar is doing extraordinary work in the field of "Zero Budget Natural farming", having potential to alleviate the distress form crores of farmers.
- Prashant Nair has earned fame due to initiatives like 'Operation Sulaimani', 'Compassionate Kozhikode' etc. His success in public service is due to compassion and spirit of public service, rather than legal acumen.
- Public service of Ajit Doval is due to extra-ordinary courage and emotional intelligence he displayed throughout his career.

Conclusion

Legal acumen do helps in developing ability to leally fight injustice. This is the reason why basic knowledge of IPC and CrPC is imparter to trainee civil servants during the

course of their training. However public service is driven and sustained by foundational values like empathy, compassion, tolerance, courage among others. These values must be imbibed first. Legal acumen can bring additional ability to serve people.

5. A good civil servant knows how to develop networks and maintain healthy relations with his batch-mates. How does this attribute help him in discharging his duties effectively? Examine.

Introduction

A good civil servant is one who is able to act as per civil service and constitutional values of empathy, compassion, tolerance, dedication, impartiality etc.

Networks in civil service may refer to contacts and communication channels with various stakeholders like colleagues, ministers, NGO's civil societies, corporates and citizens.

A healthy relation with batch-mates means maintaining good personal and professional relations, however without conflict of interest.

Body

How networks and maintaining healthy relations with batch-mates help a civil servant in discharging his duties effectively –

- Governance involves all stake holders in society. A good Network of a civil servant will help in bringing all stakeholders together and hence solve the problems of society. For instance 'Operation Sulaimani' initiated by Prashant Nair, brought together NGO's and chain of hotels to serve the poor and hungry in the state.
- In any disaster like situation, for example Uttarakhand flood of 2013, there is need of interstate and inter-district coordination. In such a scenario, networks and healthy relations with batch-mates and colleagues will help in effective disaster management.
- In intelligence services networks and healthy relations are most valuable resources. Ajit Doval and other officers have successfully handled many insurgencies due to their networks.
- At international level network of Indian Foreign Service officers will help in giving out Indian point of view on various issues like Kashmir, UNSC, climate change, refugee crisis etc. Also in emergency like situation, evacuation of Indians can be done swiftly – eg: Operation Raahat in Yemen.

However, it is extremely important that networks and relations are developed for discharging one's duties and public servant. They must not result into cronyism, politico-bureaucratic-corporate nexus, nepotism or corruption of any form. A good civil servant must work with objectivity and impartiality, keeping public good as the highest priority.

Conclusion

Human component cannot be removed from the process of governance. Hence networks and maintaining healthy relations with batch-mates is important to develop human resource and social capital for effective governance.

