THE MACHIAVELLIAN BOSS: A BRIEF ON CORPORATE MACHIAVELLI

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ABSTRACT: CORPORATE MACHIAVELLI has over the years, been confined to the doldrums. This is not unconnected with the name 'Machiavelli' of the *"Nicolo Machiavelli-the end justifies the means"* fame which tends to pin every negativity on the name because of the 'dangerous' messages and brutish signification of the person involved. Though Nicolo's treatise was primarily on the principles of statecraft and governance, illustrating his stance with ample examples from the Greco-Roman, Euro-Gaelic and biblical histories, the principles have been extended to rulership and leadership in general and in corporate circles. The Machiavellian Prince is an eclectic personality used to typify the all-important features and attributes expected of a leader. The work is empirical, stressing the necessity of cruel actions to keep and maintain power. It has been considered as,*"...evil throughout the centuries, but as most business leaders and politicians agree Machiavelli has only defined the physics of power."*[1]**.**In defining the *'physics of power,'* the book could pass as a chiaroscuro of ideas underlined by the merger of the harsh and the tender for corporate well-being of an organization. It is a blend of the kid's glove and the sledge hammer, of the carrot and the stick, of honesty and shenanigans, to fashion out an arsenal of incisive management technique, and a distinctive philosophy of leadership. This temperament is aptly captured in the opening of V's controversial book, **The Mafia Manager,** a quotation credited to the notorious Italian Mafioso, Al Capone:*"You can get a lot more done with a kind word and a gun than with a kind word alone"*[2]The political doctrine of Machiavelli is not averse to craft and deceit as a means of achieving and maintaining power when necessary. In Machiavelli's world, good and evil are equal when one is in pursuit of power.The aim of this study is to attempt to engage the minds of bureaucrats to be able to brainstorm on the concepts and issues raised in Nicolo Machiavelli's theories as they affect the corporate world, and to encourage an open-minded approach to corporate management. Our intention is to consider the leadership stance in the workplace *vis a vis* the philosophies of Nicolo Machiavelli as expounded in his *magnus opus,* **The Prince,** and as delineated in **The Mafia Manager** written by V, an incognito author. We shall of necessity, list specific extracts from the controversial books and pass comments on their relevance or otherwise for effective service delivery and how they have impacted on the art of corporate climbing and corporate management. We shall attempt to show that the Machiavellian principle on governance and statecraft which eschew moral standpoints and emphasize *realpolitik* is extended to interpret corporate realities and to teach management skills.

KEYWORDS: Machiavellian, boss, brief corporate Machiavelli

INTRODUCTION

Though the principle of Machiavellianism have defied excoriation for more than four centuries, it still present thoughts that are interesting and debatable as they continue to throw up the problems of power *vis-à-vis* its dynamics between the ruler and the ruled. The leadership constructs that had emanated therefrom are extended to explain and understand all power relations between the Machiavellian Prince which could be substituted in the corporate world for a manager, a boss, a Chief Executive Officer, a Vice-Chancellor, a Registrar, a Director, a Head of Department/Faculty Secretary, or more still, a Supervisor at a construction site. In essence, it explains the power relations in the corporate world and in every setting where there are the superior officers and the interns.

Power relations to a large extent is underlined and driven by human relations. It is the belief in many quarters that the interface between the two brings about a strong and enduring relationship and ultimately, a fruitful synergy. However, by extension it is also believed in some quarters that distancing, deftness and uncanny dispositions of the ruler towards the ruled could be as equally effective as the 'good guy' disposition, what is known in workplace parlance as **manipulative leadership.** In simple words, it is not nice to be nice always, or it is sometimes nice not to be nice .The ultimate target is the achievement of the all-important organizational goals.

Corporate Machiavelli is one of the triadic principles[3] identified in manipulative leadership; the others being **narcissm** and **psycopathy**. A **narcissi** is a leader who is excessively obsessed with himself and his needs, not taking into consideration anything outside of himself. In management, such a person remains an overtly selfish and forceful leader who would stop at nothing to achieve his target, even to the detriments of others. He is different from a **psychopathic leader** who acts in a lineal and predictable manner because he is mentally or emotionally unstable. In recent times, corporate Machiavelli has been portrayed as an uncompromising technique and an incontrovertible part of **workforce bullying** when in actual fact, it is a **double-edged philosophy** that luxuriates in excesses but could be an important tool when carefully utilized.

Justification

Geometrics of power by every ramification has for centuries, been a grand chess-play of tact, brilliance and chicaneries tinted with all forms of cerebration, manipulations, brutality and finesse. Even in primitive times when man was mainly preoccupied with meeting the basics of life, the alpha instinct had been present throughout history, to emphasize that there was no space for a vacuum in power. Power relations since Beowulf (Old English epic) or Shaka (South African Zulu epic) had always come with cut-throat desperation, maneuvers and capitulations even in those era of warrior-heroes. What is being referred to today as the *'physics of power'* is as old as man, and as deep and challenging as it ever was. Leadership concepts therefore, predates the person of Nicolo Machiavelli. A cross-disciplinary scholar, he had left no one in doubt that he came at a time when there was the need to widen the scope of studies on power. He became the *enfant terrible* of his time because of his unifocal view on power, holding power as the end-target that must be achieved *'by all means possible'.* This did not go down well with the theological society. He was widely

condemned for directly encouraging crime and criminalities to achieve the target. However, a second look at his seminal treatise reveals its relevance to the contemporary terms on power. It shows that to a great extent, his context and understanding of power is true and applicable to the corporate space. Our version of reality (VOR) therefore, is to open a debate on leadership concepts as revealed by Machiavelli. It is to prove the expansiveness of his theory on power and to, at the same time, assert that though Nicolo might have misrepresented power, he obviously had not misrepresented power entirely, as there are a sizeable number of truism and veracious assertions on power in his theory. Hence, it takes an independent mind to decipher the double-edge nature and to affirm, re-affirm and discard aspects of the theory as the case may be and, as regards the corporate space. Though his theory cannot be taken as the default positions on power, a sweeping condemnation of Nicolo and his book would be a great disservice to one of the greatest study of the alpha impulse in generations. This work therefore, justifies his theory on leadership as a double-edged philosophy and a veritable tool for excellence. But the user needs to stake a balance between excesses and good craftsmanship.

To understand a Machiavellian boss, it is important to note the nuances between a boss and a leader within the context of goal-setting and goal-getting.

THE BOSS AND THE LEADER

Who is a Boss?

A boss or a 'big boss' is, as delineated in local parlance, **'a big man'** even if such a person has a diminutive frame. He is a man or a woman (gender not of utmost relevance in this respect), who is **'up there'** and gives orders to the people **'down there'**, orders which they are duty-bound to carry out without questioning. He is the superior, the god or demigod whose dictates must be carried out whether rational or irrational, whether agreeable of disagreeable, and would have to force his will down the throats of his subalterns if need be. Because of his maximum nature no one dares reason with him or advise him on any issue. He makes his decisions alone and sees to it that they are executed to the letter As a result of his uncompromising disposition, a boss has the tendencies to breed **disgruntled employees** who care less about the common goal of an organization, [4] thus proliferating disharmony, dishonesty, and reluctance to proffer alternative ways to achieving the much needed organizational goals.

As it is also pertinent to his nature to secure his domain through fear and intimidation, he earns the respect of others not by **commanding** but by **demanding** it through the infrastructures of **fear and oppression** which include encouraging **backbiting, victimization** as well as the traditional **divide-and-rule** tactics to secure his fortress.

Who is a Leader?

A leader is also 'a boss' who emphasizes and accommodates his subalterns in his agenda. He is the opposite of the boss as he is not a unilateral or a maximum personality but **a front-runner and a team-player**. He encourages members of his workforce to make suggestions and discuss matters of organizational concerns with them, thus fostering the all-important **participatory spirit,** and cultivating wealth of advice to make use of for the overall improvement of the organization. He also

shows ample   interest in their well-being unlike the boss whose only concern is productivity and meeting set goals. By so doing, his subalterns would come to see and respect his genuineness of purpose and would equally take the enterprise of organizational goal as their primary interest. A leader is therefore, **a boss** or a **top honcho 'with a human face,'** who forms an enduring relationship with his workforce, and who because of his management tactics, has come to **command** rather than **demand** respect.

Lolly Daskal, President and CEO, 'Lead from within,' once enumerated the following differences between a boss and a leader, what I would term **the 10 commandments of corporate climbing:**

Commandments of Boss-Leader Technique:
-        A boss drives others; a leader coaches them forward to their best performance;
-        A boss instills fear; a leader inspires enthusiasm;
-        A boss blames others; a leader works to repair the damage and understands what happens so it won't happen again;
-        A boss thinks in terms of him or herself; a leader thinks in terms of we;
-        A boss knows how it is done; a leader shows how it is done;
-        A boss depends on his or her authority; a leader depends, along with the entire team, on mutual accountability and trust;
-        A boss uses people; a leader is interested in helping them grow and develop;
-        A boss takes credit; a leader gives credit to others;
-        A boss is a commander; a leader is more concerned with asking and listening;
-        The boss says 'Go!'; The leader says 'Let's go!' [5]
In all, the alpha-margin spirit is minimized by the leader and put to good use for the benefit of the organization. According to John C. Maxwell, the   conception of leadership in developing countries emphasizes power, position, and privilege, while in the developed world, service is emphasized.[6]   This could also be taken as the thin line between a boss   `and a leader

ETHICS IN CORPORATE MACHIAVELLI
Nicolo Machiavelli was born in Florence on 3rd May 1469. From 1494 to 1512 he held an official post at Florence which included diplomatic missions to various European courts. He was imprisoned in Florence for a treasonable offence in 1512, later exiled and returned to San Casciano from where he wrote **The Prince** in 1517. He died in Florence on 22nd June 1527.

Machiavellianism has been defined as the acquisition and maintenance of power **by all means necessary**. It is a die-hard philosophy that encourages the use of marginal means to cling to power. Though the theory has been viewed as evil testament over the centuries especially as it is averse to the doctrines of religion, leaders and politicians in certain quarters have come to reckon with it as a mechanism that vividly explains the workings of power. In **The Prince,** Machiavelli justified the use of deceit and chicaneries over morality to maintain power thus separating power from morals and portraying good and evils as equal in the contest for power.

In the corporate world the theory has been interpreted with nuances. Its relevance and vast applicability could be applied to corroborate altruistic statements like *'...to make an omelette, you have to break eggs'* or *'... you need to blast rocks to get to water.'* In many respect, it is akin to George Orwell's principle of **catastrophic gradualism** but goes a step further by especially stressing 'the usefulness of cruelty,' and the need to possess both the human and the beast in the behavioral trait of a leader. In short, it is what one is able to achieve that matters by whatever means, i.e. **the end justifies the means.**

In all, there is a Yoruba proverb that translates thus: "*Life is struggle"* or *"Life is a theatre of war."* Contest is an unavoidable part of existence and the struggle for power is the foundation of **Social Darwinism.** Between the ruler and the ruled, between the boss and the subalterns, there is a contest which is either liminal, sub-liminal or pronounced, and which determines the achievement of organizational goals. Corporate Machiavelli therefore becomes a necessary topic to note in management technique and what matters is the ability to determine which part of it is relevant, useful and apt for different occasions. It is necessary to note that the theory is not a tapestry of negativities as widely peddled over the centuries, and that there are positives that could be taken away from it. The **universal truth** presented therein could be subjected to individual thinking and independent applications in order to make it relevant and effective and to address contemporary realities.

On Maintaining Friendship with Subalterns

Friendly dispositions and cordial working environment is specified and exalted as an all-important infrastructure in workplace relationship. It is important because it goes a long way in determining the success or otherwise of a leader, a ruler, a Chief Executive and everyone in the position of authority. It also determines the overall success of an organization. Amiability and smooth interactions between a superior officer and his lieutenants facilitates the achievement of excellent and enviable results in an organization. This is underscored in the Machiavellian ethics in many ways, as an indispensable implement of success in every organization. Lack of this in an organization leads to disloyalty, hatred, dishonesty, backbiting and bad office politicking. It encourages a rancid culture whereby all negativities are allowed to fester and ultimately, explode and destroy the organization. The acquisition and maintenance of this should therefore be the primary preoccupation of a leader who wants to ensure maximum and effective delivery.
According to Machiavelli, :

"It is far better to earn the confidence of the people than to rely on fortresses"[7]*(p.4.)*
To get to the stage where the interns develop **confidence** in their leaders, some forms of friendship and amiability become inevitable. It is important to get the support of the interns in achieving the organizational goals **willingly** if it could be afforded. Service willingly given in an amiable environment has proven to be beneficial and long lasting with positive results. Alternatively, services given under duress may, in the interim, serve a similar purpose but with the underlying threat of sabotage. An unhappy lieutenant is a keg of gunpowder looking for opportunities to explode:

"Therefore, one who becomes a prince …ought to keep them(people) friendly, and this he can easily do seeing they only ask not to be oppressed by him."[8] *Ibid.(p. 28)*

In an enterprise that involves the services of a multitude, it is inadvisable to create a fortress distancing the superior from his subalterns since the interaction is more of a team work where everyone is expected to contribute innumerable quota to achieve the organizational goals. For this reason, the best fortress is:

"…not to be hated by the people, because, although you may hold the   fortresses, yet they will not save you if the people hate you."[9]*Ibid. p.54*

An organization is a chain which can be easily broken by rancor, disagreeability and lack of trust among the workforce as by nature, it is participatory. It is an amalgam of efforts from all parties. A leader therefore has to develop the ability to convince his lieutenants through friendly and agreeable disposition to make them give their **maximum effort**. According to V.:

"Even the lowest soldier in your family has influence on somebody. To get the maximum effort from all of them, show them respect" [10]*(p.62)*

On The Need to Assert Authority

The Machiavellian principle emphasizes the aggressive assertion of strength to keep an organization together. It encourages strong and unmitigated assertion of power in an environment where friendship is misinterpreted. As part of the workplace culture, a superior officer should not jettison the use of force in such a situation in order to keep the organization going in an environment where the act of friendship is misinterpreted for weakness:

"…because how one lives is so far distant from how one ought to live, that he who neglects what is done for what ought to be done, sooner effects his ruin than his preservation; for a man who wishes to act entirely up to his professions of virtue soon meets with what destroys him among so much that is evil. "[11]

Corroborating this, V states that:

"Most people see kindness as a weakness; because of this they welcome being told what to do in direct, forceful terms. They respect strength [12]

In an obvious sublimation of the expression of strength in the workplace, he reinforces this dictum with a caveat that a superior should:

"Treat (his) soldiers roughly and they will follow your orders willingly"[13]

Note that this assumption is based on the belief that men are prone to generally misinterpret kindness for weakness, and that a leader may have to be aggressive and uncompromising when the need arises. It may be argued that this declaration is an over-generalization of human nature as it is expected that kindness should naturally begets kindness. The corporate space is not always about a show of strength but about disposing acute intelligence to address challenges as they surface. The assumption of misinterpretation therefore, may not hold in most cases given the right environment. Nevertheless, assertion of authority and strength should be preserved in the weaponry of a leader and used as demanded.

On The Need to Instil Fear

*"Shortly before he went to prison for income tax evasion, Al Capone explained to an interviewer how he kept the Chicago Outfit running efficiently: 'People who respect nothing dread fear. It is upon fear, therefore, that I have built my organization. But understand me correctly, please. Those who work with me are afraid of nothing. Those who work for me are kept faithful, **not so much because of their pay as because they know what might be done with them if they broke faith**.' "*[14] In Fyodor Dostoevsky's literary work **Crime and Punishment**, the consequential, **cause-and-effect** nature of retribution is captured and transposed into a story. In any human society, the penal code is set out either in plain or tacit language (in which case, it is understood, not written) such that for every crime there is a punishment and a lesson for would-be transgressors:

"Punish one, teach a hundred."[15] In this wise, fear becomes the main infrastructure that restrains the subalterns from committing crimes that would ultimately lead to punishment. In nature, this element of fear is embedded in the transcendental equation, where, in common parlance, it is said that: *"The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom."* *'God of Love'* in the same breath, is, portrayed as *'God of fear,'* the One deserving to be feared. There is also the existential concept of fear, the *'fear of the unknown'* which is at the base of human nature.

The element of fear in an environment ensures probity and discourages inappropriate tendencies, such that compliance and adherence to etiquette are maximally observed. In the workplace, contending issues often arise as to whether a leader should be feared or loved. While some people would readily submit that a leader should be loved rather than feared, it is our belief that a leader should be accorded both the elements of fear and love; for love in itself, engender a form of fear of transgression against the loved one. In other words, if a lieutenant loves his boss he would fear and respect him. This is different from fear, driven as a result of harsh repercussion, the example of which is found in a crimogenic organization, as expressed in the opening quote from Al Capone, the mafia godfather. The extension of this temperament could however, be found in the workplace as *'regulations or codes of conduct'* specifying the do's and don'ts of the workforce in an organization. Machiavelli believes that it is impossible for a leader to combine both the elements of fear and love. Listen to him:

"Upon this a question arises: whether it be better to be loved than feared or feared than loved? It may be answered that one should wish to be both, but, because it is difficult to unite them in one person, it is much safer to be feared than loved, when, of the two, either must be dispensed with. Because this is to be asserted in general of men, that they are ungrateful, fickle, false, cowardly, covetous, and as long as you succeed they are yours entirely; they will offer you their blood, property, life, and children, as is said above, when the need is far distant; but when it approaches they turn against you.[16]*".p.43*

You will agree with me that this is an over-generalization; a cynical, harsh, gross, sweeping and disproportionate representation of human nature that may not hold in the corporate space. Despite

the excremental image of men conjured by Machiavelli, we believe that honorable men exist, and that it is indeed possible to combine fear and love, which is what an ideal leader should aspire to have for effective management. Contemporary corporate practice also affirms that it is possible to combine business with empathy as management performance is measured by empathy and social responsibility.[17] Even Machiavelli admits unknowingly that it is necessary for a leader to combine both elements as he states that:

*"Nevertheless a prince ought to inspire fear in such a way that, **if he does not win love,** (emphasis mine) he avoids hatred;"* [18]

In other words, it is possible for a prince to win love.

An organization driven by fear is akin to a skyscraper made of cardboards. Ultimately, it shall be blown off by the winds. The Machiavellian Prince makes use of fear that ensures compliance, but with unavoidable hatred or *'forced love'* because the malcontent is left with no option than to *'love'*. It is more assuring to build an empire on confidence, trust, love and participation as only these features foster the **institutional spirit** needed for the growth of the corporate organization.

On Leveraging and Dynamism

A good leader should be dynamic, vigorous, energetic, and more importantly, focused. He should be proactive and be able to proffer solutions to challenges as they arise. Note that we say *'challenges'* and not *'problems'*, for while the former sees the obstacle as surmountable, the latter sees the obstacle as surmounting, thus going under.

In corporate Machiavelli, skills, expertise, native intelligence and the knowledge of human nature are all combined to steer the ship of an organization. This explains why the theory of Machiavellianism has found its foothold in diverse disciplines like philosophy, religion, psychology, sociology, and the corporate world.

With respect to human nature, the theory is particularly direct and unsparing:

"You must know there are two ways of contesting, the one by the law, the other by force; the first method is proper to men, the second to beasts; but because the first is frequently not sufficient, it is necessary to have recourse to the second. Therefore it is necessary for a prince to understand how to avail himself of the beast and the man.[19]"

Human nature is made up of the polished and the rugged, the nice and the brutish. A shrewd manager of men in the corporate circle must learn to know the time to use these features to achieve his goals. In his interaction he shall unavoidably come across different shades of interns with positive and antagonistic impulses, and should be able to apply the right medicines for different ailments. He is like a pendulum that should swing to the right direction as demanded by different occasions. In the event of his failure to provide appropriate solutions to different challenges, his personality, and in the extreme case, his position, is compromised. Thus, a good leader should know when to be a leader and when to be a boss, when to be nice and when to be harsh, and should be able to use these proclivities effectively. However, in political Machiavelli, because it is viewed as a constant contest between two interests, brutality, genocide and other forms of political chicaneries are encouraged

as weapons against the opposition Nevertheless, corporate personalities should be able to strike a balance in leveraging between the man and the beast; They should be able to "*learn how not to be good, and to use this knowledge and not use it, according to the necessity of the case.*[20]" They should learn to meander through the turbulent waters without rocking the boat.

On Time Management

Time is money. It is of essence for every corporate manager. It is not just about being prompt to work and working all through the clock; it is about management, how you manage your time to achieve coveted goals within a budgeted frame. In this wise, a hard-worker may not necessarily be a good time manager as he is unable to achieve set goals within set time-frames. In corporate Machiavelli, V advised the leader and his lieutenants to *"Work smarter, not harder.*[21]"and to invest in time:

"The best thing to invest in your business is your time. To schedule, plan, and use time effectively, know your turf and know your objectives. Assess the obstacles and opportunities, then devise your strategies.[22]"

It is believed that he who fails to plan plans to fail. Good administration and achievement of set goals are based on good planning. A manager should plan his schedule on a day-to-day basis, and review them from time to ascertain the extent so far covered. By so doing, he should be able to know how far he has gone and what needed to be done. That is the way to *'work smarter'*. Another way is to read voraciously to get acquainted with new developments in the profession. It is often said that there is no difference between a man who does not read and a man who cannot read, as both of them are *'illiterates'*. It is therefore important to read and research on new developments so as not to be rendered irrelevant. More importantly, go digital. By so doing, you will be working *'smarter'*, and not necessarily *'harder'* like sweating and jogging on the same spot, or like a virus infested computer that has refused to boot.

On Recruiting and Rewarding Lieutenants

Nicolo Machiavelli states that:

"You must… reward diligent, hardworking, loyal employees, so in special cases an outstanding worker may be raised above the maximum…[23]"

For any organization to thrive and grow in leaps and bounds, a strong reward system should be put in place to reward excellence. This gives the individual worker the impetus to contribute more and to release all his energies towards ensuring the survival of the organization. It also infuses competitiveness and healthy rivalry into the system. An apathetic system that does not recognize or reward top fliers would end up with lethargic officers who are only marking time and working for self-interest rather than organizational goals. This attitude is bound to be counter-productive to the organization.

In recruiting his lieutenants, a manager should discourage patronage by recruiting them through the backdoor. Fraternities, religious affiliations and familial bonds should be jettisoned for excellence and good performance. By so doing, the organization would end up recruiting best hands who are

ready to contribute their quota rather than those who are content with drawing their paychecks on a regular basis. To get it right from inception is to form the basis for purposeful and participatory partnership between the leader and his subalterns. That is the basis of team spirit, of interest and sustainable contribution to a common goal.

Going back to the issue of reward system, this could come in form of direct financial raise, promotion, or through the institution of time-honored awards that may not necessarily have monetary attachment but would enhance the profile of the individuals concerned within the organization. This would encourage such beneficiaries to do more for the organization. Apart from pecuniary and time-honored rewards, a manager ought to master the trademark signatures and attitudes to imbibe to keep the workforce together. These lieutenants are his team, and in a team, everybody works for everybody. Despite the emphasis on some distancing norms in the Machiavellian philosophies, running an organization is a team game that requires the support and cooperation of the leader and his workforce. It is important therefore to know how to keep the team together with your attitudes and demeanors as a leader. First, quoting Machiavelli:

"Most of your soldiers will have little idea of their own worth. You…must give them the idea they are worth something…They must want to do the jobs given them, and they must be able to feel proud of themselves once they have done them.[24]*"*

He goes further to write:
"Anyone in your organization is always in the right if opposed by an outsider. Even if your soldier is wrong, he is right; that can be straightened out between the two of you later.[25]*"*

This is a strong point in corporate Machiavelli and a viable way for the leader to keep his team together by shielding them from any form of public criticism and public embarrassment. In this vein, the lieutenant who is defended publicly and shielded from shame despite his mistakes would become indebted to the leader even if he does not express it. A good leader bears responsibilities for all mistakes in his unit, even though such mistakes were committed by his lieutenants, and only admonish the erring officer privately, to guide against future occurrence.

Lastly, a shrewd manager should be able to identify the potentials of his officers and their areas of strength. He should thereafter, proceed to give them schedules based on their areas of expertise and give them specific instructions on the assignments. He should have a nose for who could do what, give time frames and tell them in clear terms the reward attached to the assignment, if any. It is not advisable for any leader to attempt to hide information on expected reward as this attitude would breed distrust:

"Give clear-cut specific directions to your lieutenants and make clear what their reward will be for success…Make your soldiers and lieutenants your children.[26]*"*

On Building Loyalty and Trust

Good leadership thrives on good advice. Naturally, a leader has his circles, caucuses that surround him and advise him on sundry matters. In corporate Machiavelli, the choice of people that constitute these circles, what is known in some quarters as the *'inner caucus'* is very important as it serves to define the wisdom and overall intelligence of the leader. According to Machiavelli, the choice of the *'inner cabinet'* is germane because it provides insight into the thrust and the disposition of the leader [27]

For a leader to be successful, he has to build a team of honest people around him who would offer him good advice. These people, who are loyalists, have to possess the liberty of speaking the truth while the leader should encourage and respect their opinions on policies and matters affecting the organization. He should, from time to time, bring them up to speed with his policies. However, even in this affair, a leader is cautioned on the kind of advice to adopt, as he is expected to subject every advice to scrutiny, weighing the pros and cons. According to Machiavelli, bad advice do emanate from good friends. This is where the idea of a *consigliere* comes in; a senior adviser, an experienced person who stands at a distance from the cabinet, and who is able to assess situations clinically and objectively, and give constructive advice based on his observations. His convictions and advice are mostly devoid of bias because of his closeness and his faraway-ness to the leader as a personal friend, and as someone unattached as he is not in the eye of the storm. According to V:

"You can get bad advice from good friends, very bad advice from very good friends. In contrast, the advice you get from your consigliere usually will be very good advice...[28]"

The *consigliere* concept gains inroad into Corporate Machiavelli through the organized crime world, the mafia, but has over time been used as an effective tool for constructive criticism.

CONCLUSION

A **Machiavellian leader** is eclectic, dynamic, and reacts to workplace challenges as situations demand. He is a changing personality and a shrewd doctor who administers different drugs for different ailments, at times, moving from the liminal to the extreme. He minimizes the alpha-margin gap to achieve closeness with his subordinates for effective service delivery. At the same time, he makes his stands known and enforces his authority whenever the needs arise. He can therefore be nice and harsh, timid and blunt, friendly and uncompromising at the same time, and, as situations demand.

Conversely, a Machiavellian boss is true to type, first, as a Machiavelli, then, as a boss. He is a Machiavelli because he does not mind achieving his goals **'by any means necessary.'** He is a boss because he is never in the mood to consider smooth, amiable and vibrant options to achieve his goals, even when the situation demands them. He is a closed system whose primary intention is far from considering the nature and temperament of his subordinates, and who he cannot do without. No other person is included in his world. Outside him, it is him.

In the corporate space, it is important to study and know the limits and limitations of both leadership styles, and to note that achieving lofty heights in management requires **at times,** but not **all the**

time, the marriage of opposites. It is the merger between the two elements that would strike a balance and guide against loss of equilibrium. This is called moderation; staying within the reasonable limit.

We have been able to argue that the name **Machiavelli** is not all about evil significations; that there are positives to be deduced from his philosophies, especially, as it relates to the corporate world. By defining the physics of power, Nicolo Machiavelli has stimulated frank, blunt and altruistic approaches to addressing challenges in the corporate space in general, and the concept of leadership in particular.

Machiavelli was particularly brash and uncompromising in his observations on human nature. It takes an independent mind to read through the lines and observe that life is not made up of absolutes. In all, Corporate Machiavelli has grown in leaps and bounds and even gone a step higher than its political counterpart, as it has been able to marry severity and accommodation, restrictions and elasticity maximally, to evolve a set of principles and an alternative concept of leadership that ensures a vibrant corporate practice.

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