

# Passion in Perplexion

Puja Jain\*

The whole day had passed but Prof. Sneha, former Director, PUJA College, finds her *passion* to become an administrator in *perplexion*. After she had received a phone call from Mr. Navraj, Secretary, Managing Committee, PUJA College at 10a.m., she's finding her head spinning and splitting. Mr. Navraj had called her to offer once again the post of Director but this time with a higher salary package and other perquisites that she wanted. She's wondering as to why he's offering her so much now and not at that time when she used to request about all this couple of months ago. She has also not forgotten the rough tides that she had to face during her stint in PUJA college. She's in dilemma as to whether she should re-join the college or not.

Prof. Sneha, 47 years old, was an ambitious lady who had a Passion of becoming an administrator of an educational institution. She wanted to rise in her career and head an office and hence, she had created her credibility over these years with her determined and diligent approach. She had worked hard to earn points necessary for the promotion as per government rules. She had an unblemished record of teaching at Aashray College for the past 20 years. She had been the incharge of various activities and committees in the college. 'Prof. Sneha' was an acclaimed name in the area.

It was April, 2015 when her colleague, Ms. Aarti, told her about the job opening at PUJA College since she knew Prof. Sneha's ambition to become an administrator and hence, intimated her about the fact. Prof. Sneha immediately without much ado took NOC from Aashray college to apply in PUJA College. She was called for an interview somewhere in mid-June. She performed excellently. The panel was impressed by her credentials, clarity and confidence. She was, in no uncertain terms, told that if selected she would get the lumpsum salary with no other

facility. The salary was less as compared to other colleges in the area but Sneha gave her consent for this. On a day in the latter half of June, she got a call from secretary, PUJA College, congratulating her for she was selected as the Director.

Next day when she entered the staff room, Aarti embraced her and said, "Congratulations dear on your DRY PROMOTION". Everyone in the staff room laughed. Another professor said, "Very bad Ms. Aarti. Dare not mess with THE DIRECTOR SNEHA. Prof. Sneha is *very wise*. But sometimes you know..." and he giggled. "Prof. Sneha, I am sure you would get a 'chauffeur driven car' at least before your retirement! Please do call me for a ride." "If you don't get a personal peon, please let me know. I shall certainly arrange one." Baffled with the reactions and satires Prof. Sneha just walked out. She felt like a fish out of water.

From the college to her home, the sarcastic laughter and comments kept echoing in her ears. But, she took a deep sigh and decided to ponder over the decision calmly.

She stood in front of a mirror and questioned to herself "What had happened to my colleagues? Were they right in what they said? Should I not join a college which is not providing me all that the post deserves and demands? But then what was my ambition? What did I long for these years?"

Inner voice, on the other side, replied "Your Passion had been to become an administrator, to get respect in the society, to have a prestigious status."

Prof. Sneha: But the post is coming at lesser emoluments than prescribed by government norms. Had I negotiated with them perhaps I would have got it.

Inner Voice: It's not too late Prof. Sneha! You know that management was impressed by you. You are the best. Have confidence in yourself. You join for the time being and gradually build up good relations with

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**Ms. Puja Jain\***

Assistant Professor

Sri Aurobindo College of Commerce and Management  
Ludhiana, Punjab, India

the management and get what you want.

Prof. Sneha: Yeah! Great! Thanks! Certainly through my cordial liaison I shall be able to win them over.

After receiving a formal letter from the college and giving due notice to Aashray College, Prof. Sneha joined PUJA college Mr. Arvind, Chairman of PUJA college and an established rich businessman, welcomed her with the other members of committee and faculty. Mr. Arvind, while having a cup of tea in his office, without any apprehension shared with Prof. Sneha that university positions of the college were due to the dedication of teachers.

The first day went very well.

Prof. Sneha started series of meetings with Mr. Navraj to understand his perspective and personality. During the discussions, she would try to judge his likes and dislikes about the college.

On one Monday morning Mr. Navraj, while looking at the college gate through the window of his office, started grumbling. "Do you know Prof. Sneha why the former Director was chucked out?" Raising his voice in rage, he continued "Oh! for the simple reason that she was too employee friendly. She believed in impression management. Come what may she would never spoil her amiable image among her subordinates' eyes. Disgusting, eh!" "She would never, despite my instructions, take any strict action against teachers who would come late to the college." "Discipline means discipline – at any cost." "We belong to teacher fraternity and if we ourselves are not disciplined what we can teach our students." "Every Monday I would see Ms. Lata and Ms. Promila coming late and that too by 10 to 15 minutes –How ridiculous!" Prof. Sneha got the idea of her first move to impress him. She thought she had understood Mr. Navraj by now to an extent and that she would hopefully impress him by taking any action that would bring in the teachers a strict sense of punctuality.

She prepared a proposal for the installation of a biometric machine for the attendance. She took the proposal to Mr. Navraj and along with it a note carrying details of actions proposed to be taken in case

of late coming by teachers. With beaming eyes, she said "Sir, I feel this shall curb the menace of late coming." Mr. Navraj appreciated her for the effort and kept the proposal and note in his drawer.

Next day, before lunch, a faculty meeting was convened by Mr. Navraj, where he acquainted faculty about the new attendance mechanism. He also told them, "This idea of biometric attendance system had been brought in by Prof. Sneha and I appreciate her for this. I am glad that she has started taking interest in the college. Though it was very difficult for me to convince the Chairman but the note containing benefits prepared by her was so impressive that he eventually gave his assent." "I hope teachers will accept this positive stride." Prof. Sneha also nodded her head in consonance. While walking out of the meeting room, she felt victorious and that too on her first move! She thought it was the right moment to begin the drive towards increase in her emoluments. "I think I deserve an incentive for this, isn't it sir?" They both laughed and proceeded towards dining area.

The week ended with all smooth workings. Days passed by and with each passing day desires and efforts of Prof. Sneha towards accomplishment of her individual interests got more and more resilient. She would not leave any stone unturned by which she could prove her mettle. She initiated new systems in the college and would submit a note on the same for the prior approval to Mr. Navraj. Time and again she would request the secretary for hike in emoluments and every time Mr. Navraj would smile and nod his head.

Two months later, one Monday brought a clumsy morning for Prof. Sneha. Ms. Lata and Ms. Promila were late again! They knew the new system and hence, to condone the punishment they went inside Prof. Sneha's room. Ms. Lata and Ms. Promila were the senior most teachers of the college, and elder in age too. Obsessed with her desire to impress Mr. Navraj and making the attendance system a success, Prof. Sneha, at first ignored them by pretending to be on a phone call. "Oh my God! These ladies would not go until I speak to them", she murmured to herself. "Yes madams, now tell me why you are here. If you are

expecting any kind of favour, forget it. I have a long experience of working in a college where I had seen a number of teachers like you who never bothered about the systems of the institution. They are so much slaves of their bad habits that they can't change for the better." Ms. Lata tried to speak something but Prof. Sneha snubbed her since she had made up her mind to set the example. On Ms. Promila's repeated effort to justify herself for the delay, Prof. Sneha raised her voice and shouted at them "Leave my room and office clerk would come to you get your signatures on the office memo to be prepared in this case. You people needed such intervention."

The senior duo felt so embarrassed that they could not even move from there. They had never experienced such an insult. Voice of Prof. Sneha was so loud that teachers sitting in the adjoining staff – room could hear and understand the scene. They all got up and marched towards the Director's office. "Excuse us Sneha madam", one teacher started, "We heard what all you said but we feel that the way you've behaved with these elderly teachers is not right. Nobody had ever spoken to them in such a rude manner."

Prof. Sneha (in a furious tone): Now will you teach me what to do? Should I learn from you the way to behave?

Teacher: Of course madam. Everything was going so smooth until you joined. We had worked together, we had laughed together and that too without compromising with the quality of our work as a team. We had produced remarkable results. We had worked as a family. History and records are a testimony to it.

Prof. Sneha: So you feel whatever you have achieved is the end. That's the issue with many institutions; once they reach a height they become complacent.

Teacher 1: I have never said that. We all have always marched forward but by keeping human limitations and capacities in consideration. We have introduced and accepted changes over the years. But have always tried to strike a balance between work and needs of people.

Prof. Sneha: Former Director spoiled you all. You all are like that. If I excuse anybody today, others will

make it a habit of barging into my office every morning requesting me the same every.....

Teacher 2 (interrupted in between): Sorry to say madam, our former Director was very participative and cooperative. I don't know what charisma she possessed but we always offered our services willingly. We had worked under her stewardship even beyond our usual working hours whenever needed. She also would accommodate us in our hour of need. The changes that she introduced had our participation but the decisions you took had considered none of ours' perspective. We have to implement those changes but you never bothered about the practical hassles involved in implementation. Many systems seem good on papers but their real benefits certainly may not outweigh the efforts and cost involved. A number of times we tried to come to your office so that we could discuss and share our problems but everytime we would find you either having a meeting with Navraj sir writing notes highlighting the benefits of new systems or busy figuring out something with the office clerk. We approached clerk so that he could take an appointment from you but he mockingly said: "Madam is still confused as to what is going to be her package. Every now and then she asks me about government norms, salary and perks being given to Directors in other colleges of the city etc... You know *big boss has big problem*. Why will she bother about you and me..."

Teacher 3: This new attendance system was also your idea, isn't it? Navraj sir told this in the meeting.

Teacher 2: Madam, do you know anything about Lata madam and Promila madam? What kind of persons are they?

Prof. Sneha: Yes of course, they are chronic habitual late comers.

Teacher 3: That's all you needed to know about them? Madam, these two veteran teachers commute daily from a nearby town and look at their age. They had spent all their effective years of life serving the college. Director and management could easily count on them. We have seen them not even bothering about their family and health for the college or colleagues. We all

look forward to them in case of any problem – official or personal. They are sorted humans we have. You should have inquired about them before making a bitter opinion. By the way, who told you that they are chronic late comers?

Prof. Sneha: I had learnt this from Navraj sir and he was upset about their habit.

Teachers looked at one another and their gestures reflected as if they have unanimously agreed upon an opinion.

“Oh now we understand. Madam, either you are a poor judge of human beings or you never made an effort to look on the other side of coin.” “Just think why didn’t Navraj sir introduce this attendance system himself? Didn’t he have the knowledge of such systems?”

The conversation got interrupted when Mr. Navraj opened the door and without sensing as to what was going on, he called Prof. Sneha to his office.

Disciplinary action was taken against Ms. Lata and Ms. Promila. And college life continued chasing the new routine and systems. Three months passed by. Resentment from teachers, especially Ms. Lata and Ms. Promila, aggravated over these months. Neither Prof. Sneha’s relation with staff improved nor her salary. Frustrated with the outcomes of these months or actually no outcome, Prof. Sneha, one day, presented her resignation.

She went back to her former college. She tried to talk to people there wanting them to listen to her story but in vain. While crossing the corridor one day, she overheard a few teachers chatting in the staffroom. “How can Prof. Sneha be such a big fool? Or may be really an innocent one? She made all her earnest efforts in bringing new systems. But she could not read Mr. Navraj’s personality. I have a friend working in PUJA college and she had told me a number of times about how much Mr. Navraj believes in impression management. Prof. Sneha would scratch her head to bring something new and Mr. Navraj would present this to chairman WITH HIS NAME. He was not bothered about staff but was focused for his ‘job’. Poor

Prof. Sneha never realized that Mr. Navraj was making fool out of her. He had clearly understood that Prof. Sneha would never go to chairman and discuss the matters.” “This is how politics works.”

The conversation acted as a big jolt for Prof. Sneha. Sweat ran through her body profusely. She was standing there ...immoveable. It was on the ringing of college bell that she came back to her senses. She could just utter to herself “If I had known about the personalities of people working, culture prevailing and politics and systems functioning there, hopefully I would have handled the situation in a better manner!”

The pain, that this stint of her professional life had brought, made her work like a *solitary reaper*. All her academic years and books couldnot teach her those lessons which she learnt in this case of her progression. Four months had passed and gradually she was able to recover from the *turmoil and betrayal* she went through. She started getting affiliation from colleagues in staff room and recognition from students in class room.

It was on one *fine morning* that she got a call from secretary, PUJA College, wanting her to **re-join** PUJA college and that too on HER TERMS AND CONDITIONS. The entire phase of tumult ran over her mind. She’s in dilemma now. On one hand were her ambitions, status needs and emoluments that she had strived for. Now the management was offering her whatever she would ask for. But on the other hand there were many questions of which the answers were not clear.

Perhaps doubt is now not about emoluments but about something else.

Should she trust the management, especially, Mr. Navraj? How will she deal with Mr. Navraj? How will she face the staff members there for whom she never bothered and who were so much against her that they did not even give her a warm send off? How will she get the work done from them? How will she gain their trust and cooperation?

### Questions for Discussion:

1. What dilemma was Prof. Sneha clutched with? If you were Prof. Sneha, what would have been your

move now? Should you accept the offer or decline it? Give reasons to justify your response.

2. Bring to light various organizational/individual problems or gaps that created havoc.
3. Where did Prof. Sneha go wrong? Why did Prof. Sneha, despite being an intelligent professional, failed in carrying out her duties as an administrator in an amiable manner?
4. If Prof. Sneha re-joins, what should be her strategy? What steps should she take or what factors should she keep in mind while planning her moves in such a manner that the bitterness of past fades away?
5. Do you think people like Prof. Sneha are fit for the post of an administrator? Is she emotionally mature?
6. Do you feel that an administrator should be sensitive as to how an organization behaves? How can studying the elements of an organization culture affect the functioning of any administrator?
7. Extract portions/sentences from the case which depict respective Organisational Behaviour/HRM constructs. (This question to be asked if the case is taken up at the end of semester.) (or else the case can be taken up at the beginning of semester to introduce the constructs/terms that will be covered up in the subject/syllabus as a whole).

### Teaching notes of case study “Passion in Perplexion”

#### *Objective and intended readers of the case:*

- The case titled “**Passion in perplexion**” is intended to be taught to management students on the first day of their specialization class of Human resource management (organization behavior). This case can be a useful instrument in introducing various concepts. Students will get an outline of the terms that they shall study in the curriculum. Studying this case will provide acquaintance to students about the constructs. They can be familiarized with the concepts.

- On the contrary, teacher can use it at the end of all classes pertaining to organizational behavior in order to recapitulate the concepts studied by them throughout. Students can identify the concepts highlighted in the case and try to analyse the situation in the halo of these constructs.
- Present case study depicts a real life-like scenario in an educational institution. Some students pursuing management courses may aspire to make their career in educational institutes. And hence, this case can help them understand few of the organisational issues that might arise in their professional life. Yet the constructs intended to be discussed are not restricted to educational institutions alone and therefore, can be replicated to any type of organization. The author has tried to preserve the basic fragrance and objectives of a case study.

#### **Hints to answers of questions:**

1. **What dilemma was Prof. Sneha clutched with? If you were Prof. Sneha, what would have been your move now? Should you accept the offer or decline it? Give reasons to justify your response.**

Ans: Prof. Sneha was not able to decide whether she should re-join PUJA college or not. Before taking either of the decisions she should do the pros/cons analysis.

#### ➤ **Arguments in favour of re-joining:**

- The important reason for her deciding in favour is her ‘*Passion to become an administrator*’.
- Destiny is giving her another opportunity and that too ‘*on her terms and conditions*.’
- Moreover, Prof. Sneha had been the incharge of many activities and that too in a college where colleagues are tough to handle. They will not hesitate in throwing sarcastic remarks. On the contrary, employees of PUJA College were more dedicated and cooperative. They were achievement oriented.
- The only gap Prof. Sneha needs to fill- in is her own temperament and tactics.

➤ Now, since she knows about culture and personality of organizational members, it will be perhaps easier for her to adapt. She can now easily re-establish herself.

● **Arguments against re-joining:**

- She had worked as incharge of activities in Aashray College. Culture of PUJA College is quite different from Aashray College.
- She had **re-joined** Aashray College and now if she leaves this college once again then it might be impossible for her to come back.
- In PUJA College, she had portrayed herself as an anti-employee administrator who is more inclined towards fulfillment of her personal objectives.
- If she joins again, she will have to re-establish herself with altogether changed personality and behavior. This is easier said than done.
- Moreover, what about Mr. Navraj? She cannot change him. Now after knowing about his reality, it will be difficult for her to have cordial relation with him.

**2. Bring to light various organizational/individual problems or gaps that created havoc.**

- Communication gap – Between Chairman and Prof. Sneha. Between faculty members and Sneha.
- Preference to individual interest: Both Prof. Sneha and Mr. Navraj were focused more on their individual benefits.
- Lack of understanding of Organisation behaviour: Prof. Sneha did not make an effort to understand the perception, personality and culture of the new college before taking decisions.
- Politics: Mr. Navraj wanted to get his work done but through Prof. Sneha. He didn't want to face any resentment from subordinates and hence, launched new systems by using Prof. Sneha as tool. Similarly, Prof. Sneha wanted to impress Mr. Navraj without caring for subordinates.
- Putting together all bits, there seem to be a problem with the leadership styles followed by

protagonist. An efficient leader would understand the culture and people before making any decision. Also, he would subordinate the individual interest to organizational interest.

**3. Where did Prof. Sneha go wrong? Why did Prof. Sneha, despite being an intelligent professional, failed in carrying out her duties as an administrator in an amiable manner?**

She failed to study the organization's behavioral pattern and hence, couldnot adopt a leadership style which could suit the needs of individuals and organization. Due to her personal objectives, the style that she adopted was pro-boss and not pro-employee. She couldnot strike a balance between the two.

**4. If Prof. Sneha re-joins, then what should be her strategy? What steps should she take or what factors should she keep in mind while planning her moves in such a manner that the bitterness of past fades away?**

After having understood Mr. Navraj and faculty members, she should start involving members of faculty in the major decisions. Not only this, she should make herself approachable and allow healthy discussions on matters concerning the institution. She should strike a balance between the management and faculty members. She should also try to make her available for the interaction over personal matters to the extent feasible. She should not get inclined towards the either totally.

**5. Do you think people like Prof. Sneha are fit for the post of an administrator? Is she emotionally mature?**

**Arguments in favour:**

Any person who wants to be successful must have a Passion or longing for that work. Prof. Sneha is an ambitious professional. Her first failure doesnot mean that she is not fit for the post of an administrator. Rather, she is an emotionally mature lady who normally took decisions after analyzing pros and cons. She has understood the personality and culture of PUJA College and now she can handle the situations

in a better manner. After all, she had headed various activities in her previous college very well.

### Arguments against:

Though the post of Director was new for her, but she had handled various activities in Aashray College. She should have known by now as to how different people behave differently. Her inclination towards her personal motives shows her self-centered approach. How can it be assured that in future she will be able to subordinate her individual interest in case of conflicting goals? Had she been emotionally mature, she would not believe and react to Mr. Navraj's opinion for Ms. Lata and Ms. Promila. Also, she could not stop the aggravating problem of non-cooperation from her subordinates. If she was emotionally mature, she would have handled and corrected the situations calmly instead of just resigning.

### 6. Do you feel that an administrator should be sensitive as to how an organization behaves? How can studying the elements of an organization culture affect the functioning of any administrator?

Yes, certainly understanding how individuals and groups behave in an organization is of utmost importance for any administrator to become efficient and acceptable.

### 7. Extract portions/sentences from the case which depict respective Organisational Behaviour/HRM constructs. (This question to be asked if the case is taken up at the end of semester.) (or else the case can be taken up at the beginning of semester to introduce the constructs/terms that will be covered up in the subject/syllabus as a whole).

Following is the list (may not be exhaustive) of constructs highlighted in the case:

#### ➤ Leadership –

**A. Democratic vs Autocratic** – It was former director's style of leading which was in contrast with Prof. Sneha. Democratic leader (former Director) got acceptance and loyalty as compared to Autocratic leader (Prof. Sneha).

**Lines from the case** - I don't know what charisma she possessed but we always offered our services willingly. We had worked under her stewardship even beyond our usual working hours whenever needed. She also would accommodate us in our hour of need. The changes that she introduced had our participation but the decisions you took had considered none of ours' perspective. We have to implement those changes but you never bothered about the practical hassles involved in implementation. Many systems seem good on papers but their real benefits certainly may not outweigh the efforts and cost involved.

### B. Boss – centered leadership vs Employee – centered leadership:

Both Prof. Sneha and

Mr. Navraj had worked to please their respective bosses without bothering about their subordinates' needs.

### Lines from the case –

- Obsessed with her desire to impress Mr. Navraj and making the attendance system a success, Prof. Sneha, at first ignored them by pretending to be on a phone call.
- You know *big boss has big problem*. Why will she bother about you and me.
- Prof. Sneha would scratch her head to bring something new and Mr. Navraj would present this to chairman WITH HIS NAME. He was not bothered about staff but was focused for his 'job'.
- **Ulterior transaction:** Mr. Navraj had an ulterior motive while he acquainted the staff members about the fact that new attendance system was an idea floated by Prof. Sneha. On one hand, Prof. Sneha felt that he was appreciating her but on the other hand he was serving his own interest. He actually wanted to save his face from the staff.

**Lines from the case** – Next day, before lunch, a faculty meeting was convened by Mr. Navraj, where he acquainted faculty about the new attendance mechanism. He also told them, "This idea of biometric attendance system had been brought in by Prof. Sneha and I appreciate her

for this. I am glad that she has started taking interest in the college.

- **Politics / Impression management:** Mr. Navraj himself believed in impression management and this was perhaps the reason for the former director being chucked out. Actually former director had an amiable relation with the staff and staff was very close to her. They liked her very much. Mr. Navraj however, would have wished the same liking from the staff for himself. It was possible only if she goes. For the same reason, he presented Prof. Sneha in front of them (in the meeting for new attendance system) as pivot for the system. Despite all efforts and good work in terms of new systems, he did not pushed Sneha's case favourably in front of Chairman. Had he done that Prof. Sneha would have got what she deserved and then she would not had to leave the college. His politics doesn't end here. He had understood Sneha's philosophy of working *for boss*. And that's the reason he had asked her to re-join.

#### Lines from the case -

1. Poor Prof. Sneha never realized that Mr. Navraj was making fool out of her. He had understood that Prof. Sneha would never go to chairman and discuss the matters." "This is how politics work.
2. Prof. Sneha got the idea of her first move to impress him.
3. Obsessed with her desire to impress Mr. Navraj and making the attendance system a success, she, at first ignored them by pretending to be on a phone call.
4. I have a friend working in PUJAcollge and she had told me a number of times about how much Mr. Navraj believes in impression management. Prof. Sneha would scratch her head to bring something new and Mr. Navraj would present this to chairman WITH HIS NAME. He was not bothered about staff but was focused for his 'job'.
5. "Oh now we understand. Madam, either you are a poor judge of human beings or you never made

an effort to look at the other side of coin." "Just think why didn't Navraj sir introduce this system himself? Didn't he have the knowledge of such systems?"

- **Personality and Perception:** – Both Prof. Sneha and Mr. Navraj had such traits whereby they would just think of themselves, without bothering about their people. Both were ambitious. Both believed in impression management. Both are highly self-monitors(personality trait normally associated with impression management). Prof. Sneha perceived Mr. Navraj to be a strict discipline loving person and hence, made moves accordingly. But, unfortunately she could not understand his personality as a professional.

Mr. Navraj was high on self-monitoring trait of personality. He took all care and steps to avoid any kind of unpleasant relation. Be it relation with staff, Chairman and even Sneha to the extent possible. He made earnest efforts to create good image of himself; atleast on the face.

Colleagues of Aashray College had perceived Prof. Sneha to be intelligent and wise and hence, their expectations from her were high. Satires and informal chat in the staff room depicted that they were disappointed from Prof. Sneha. She blindly believed Mr. Navraj. She looked at the staff from the Mr. Navraj's eyes and made perceptions accordingly. She should have made an effort to learn about what was others' perspective regarding Ms. Lata and Ms. Promila.

#### Lines from the case:

1. "Oh now we understand. Madam, either you are a poor judge of human beings or you never made an effort to look at the other side of coin." "Just think why didn't Mr. Navraj sir introduce this system himself? Didn't he have the knowledge of such systems?"
2. Former Director had spoiled you all. You all are like that. If I excuse anybody today, others will make it a habit of barging in my office every morning requesting me the same.

- **Communication gap and informal communication:** Communication gap between Chairman and Prof. Sneha:

**Lines from the case** - He had understood that Prof. Sneha would never go to chairman and discuss the matters.

Communication gap between Prof. Sneha and staff:

**Lines from the case** - The changes that she introduced had our participation but the decisions you took had considered none of ours' perspective. We have to implement those changes but you never bothered about the practical hassles involved in implementation. Many systems seem good on papers but their real benefits certainly may not outweigh the efforts and cost involved. A number of times we tried to come to your office so that we could discuss and share our problems but everytime we would find you either having a meeting with Mr. Navraj sir or writing notes highlighting the benefits of new systems or busy figuring out something with the office clerk.

- **Informal Communication:**  
Chats going on in the staffroom have served a source of information which made Prof. Sneha ponder upon her decision everytime.

**Lines from the case** - While crossing the corridor one day, she overheard few teachers chatting in the staffroom. "How can Prof. Sneha be such a big fool? Or may be really an innocent one? She made all her earnest efforts in bringing new systems. But she couldnot read Mr. Navraj's personality. I have a friend working in PUJA college and she had told me a number of times about how much Mr. Navraj believes in impression management. Prof. Sneha would scratch her head to bring something new and Mr. Navraj would present this to chairman WITH HIS NAME. He was not bothered about staff but was focused for his 'job'. Poor Prof. Sneha never realized that Mr. Navraj was making fool out of her. He had clearly understood that Prof. Sneha would never go to chairman and discuss the

matters." "This is how politics work." The conversation acted as a big jolt for Prof. Sneha.

- **Understanding work groups – group behavior:**  
**Lines from the case** -

- Teacher: I have never said that. We all have always marched forward but by keeping human limitations and capacities in consideration. We have introduced and accepted changes over these past years. But have always tried to strike a balance between work and people needs.
- Teacher 2: Madam, do you know anything about Ms. Lata madam and Ms. Promila madam? What kind of persons are they?

Prof. Sneha: Yes of course, they are chronic habitual late comers.

Teacher 3: That's all you needed to know about them? Madam, these two veteran teachers commute daily from a nearby town and look at their age. They had spent all their effective years of life serving the college. Director and management could resiliently count on them. We have seen them sacrificing their family and health for the college or colleagues. We all look forward to them in case of any problem – official or personal. They are sorted humans we have. You should have inquired about them before making a bitter opinion.

- **Individual interest vs Organizational interest:**  
**Lines from the case** -

1. She thought it's the right moment to begin the drive towards increase in her emoluments. "I think I deserve an incentive for this, isn't it sir?"
2. Obsessed with her desire to impress Mr. Navraj and making the attendance system a success, she, at first ignored them by pretending to be on a phone call.
3. We approached clerk so that he could take an appointment from you but he mockingly said: "Madam is still confused as to what is going to be her package. Every now and then she asks me about government norms, salary and perks being given to Directors in other colleges of the city

etc...You know *big boss has big problem*. Why will she bother about you and me...”

4. He was not bothered about staff but was focused for his ‘job’.

➤ **Emotional awareness:**

**Lines from the case -**

She stood in front of a mirror and questioned to herself “What had happened to my colleagues? Were they right in what they said? Should I not join a college which is not providing me all that the post deserves and demands? What was my ambition? What did I long for these years.”

Inner voice, on the other side, replied “Your Passion had been to become an administrator, to get respect in the society, to have a prestigious status.”

Prof. Sneha: But the post is coming at lesser emoluments than prescribed by government norms. Had I negotiated with them perhaps I would have got it.

Inner Voice: It’s not too late Prof. Sneha! You know that management was impressed by you. You are the best. Have confidence in yourself. You join for the time being and gradually build up good relation with the management and get what you want.

Prof. Sneha: Yeah! Great! Thanks! Certainly through my cordial liaison I shall be able to win them over.

➤ **Participative management:**

**Lines from the case -**

The changes that she introduced had our participation but the decisions you took had considered none of ours’ perspective. We have to implement those changes but you never bothered about the practical hassles involved in implementation.

➤ **Organizational culture:**

**Lines from the case -**

**Culture at Aashray College:** Aarti embraced her and said, “Congratulations dear on your DRY PROMOTION”. Everyone in the staff room laughed. Another professor said, “Very bad Ms. Aarti. Dare not

mess with THE DIRECTOR PROF. SNEHA. Prof. Sneha is *very wise*. But sometimes you know...” and he giggled. “Prof. Sneha, I am sure you would get a ‘chauffer driven car’ atleast before your retirement! Please do call me for a ride.” “If you don’t get a personal peon, please let me know. I shall certainly arrange one.” Baffled with the reactions and satires Prof. Sneha just walked out. She felt like a fish out of water.

**Culture at PUJA College:**

- Teachers sitting there at once got up from their seats and marched towards Director’s office. Keeping hand on Ms. Promila’s shoulder, one teacher started “Excuse us Sneha madam but we feel that the way you’ve behaved with these elderly teachers is not right.”
- Teacher: Of course madam. Everything was going so smooth until you joined. We had worked together, we had laughed together and that too without compromising with the quality of our work as a team. We had produced remarkable results.
- Teacher: I have never said that. We all have always marched forward but by keeping human limitations and capacities in consideration. We have introduced and accepted changes over these past years. But have always tried to strike a balance between work and people needs.
- Another teacher(interrupted in between): Sorry to say madam, our former Director was very participative and cooperative. I don’t know what charisma she possessed but we would offer our services willingly. We had worked under her stewardship even beyond our usual working hours whenever needed. But then she would also accommodate us in our hour of need. The changes that she introduced had our participation but the decisions you took had considered none of ours’ perspective.
- Teacher 3: That’s all you needed to know about them? Madam, these two veteran teachers commute daily from a nearby town and look at their age. They had spent all their effective years

of life serving the college. Even Director would count on them. We have seen them not bothering about their family or even their health. We all juniors look forward to them in case of any problem – official or personal.

- **Self – Efficacy:** Prof. Sneha had belief in her capabilities and perhaps this was the reason giving her an impetus to become an administrator.

### Lines from the case-

- Inner Voice: It's not too late Prof. Sneha! You know that management was impressed by you. You are the best. Have confidence in yourself. You join for the time being and gradually build up good relation with the management and get what you want.

Prof. Sneha: Yeah! Great! Thanks! Certainly through my cordial liaison I shall be able to win them over.

- While walking out of the meeting room, she felt victorious and that too on her first move! She thought it's the right moment to begin the drive towards increase in her emoluments. "I think I deserve an incentive for this, isn't it sir?"
- **Socialisation / orientation:** Prof. Sneha should have learnt about people, teams and culture of the organization that prevailed at the time she joined. Perhaps the process of socialization would have given her a better picture of the organizational behavior.

### Lines from the case –

"If I had known about the personalities of people

working, culture prevailing and politics and systems functioning there, hopefully I would have handled the situation in a better manner."

### ➤ **Organizational commitment:**

#### Lines from the case-

- Mr. Arvind, while having a cup of tea in his office, without any apprehension shared with

Prof. Sneha that university positions of the college are due to the dedication of teachers.

- I don't know what charisma she possessed but we would offer our services willingly. We had worked under her stewardship even beyond our usual working hours whenever needed.

### ➤ **Dry promotion:**

**Lines from the case** - She was, in no uncertain terms, told about the lumpsum salary that she would get with no other facility. She gave her consent for this. On a day in the latter half of June, she got a call from secretary, PUJA college, congratulating her for she was selected as Director. Next day when she entered the staff room, Aarti embraced her and said, "Congratulations dear on your DRY PROMOTION". Everyone in the staff room laughed. Another professor said, "Very bad Ms. Aarti. Dare not mess with THE DIRECTOR PROF. SNEHA. Prof. Sneha is *very wise*. But sometimes you know..." and he giggled. "Prof. Sneha, I am sure you would get a 'chauffer driven car' atleast before your retirement! Please do call me for a ride." "If you don't get a personal peon, please let me know. I shall certainly arrange one."

<sup>1</sup>It is a fictional case study. It has no connection with any real person or organization living or dead. Any resemblance is co-incidental. Author has no intention to quote any person's or organisation's experience in real. The purpose of this case study is purely academic in nature so that students can view the parts of the entire story from different perspectives and then analyse the situation.