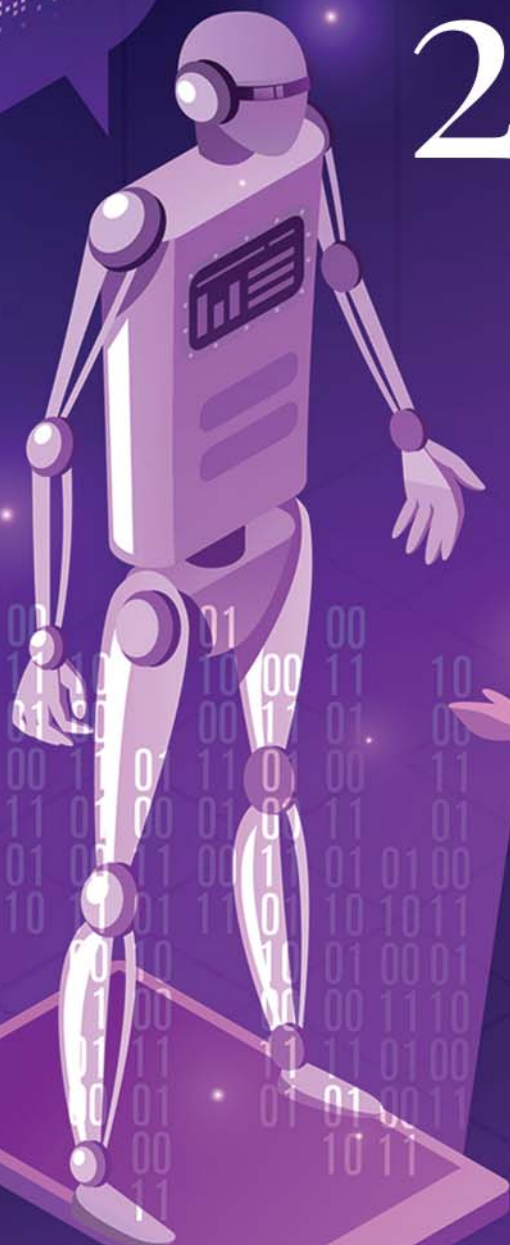


HumanCapital

REALISING BUSINESS STRATEGY THROUGH PEOPLE

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FORECASTING 2020 *& beyond*



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The Future is Now : Trends
Shaping the HR World
Sahil Nayar

EXPERT TALK

Josh Fechter
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PERSONA

A Purpose - Driven Leader
Richard Rekhy
Board Member - KPMG Dubai
(Former CEO of KPMG India)

INTERVIEW

Rising up to the Learning
Organisation Challenge
Nishchae Suri
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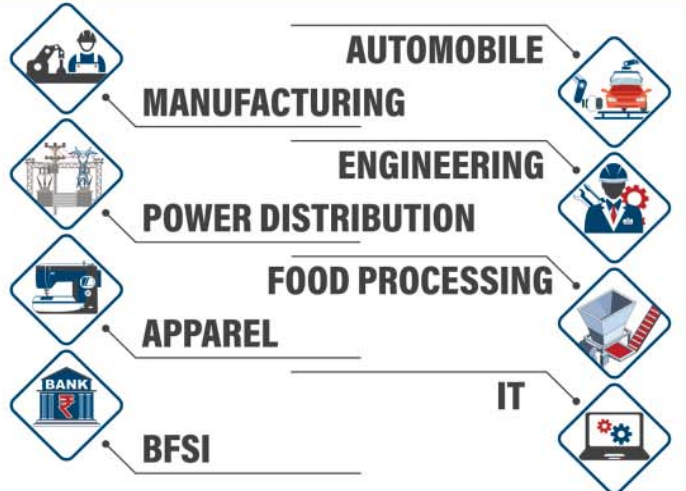
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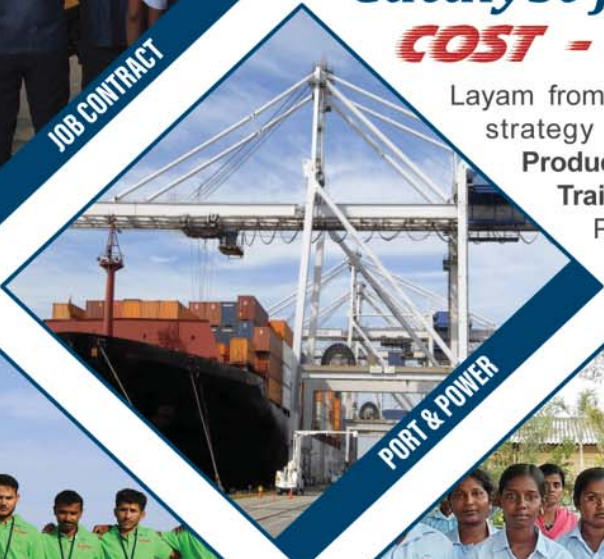
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This issue of **HUMAN CAPITAL** contains 76 pages including cover

From The Publisher's Desk



As we usher into the new year, Human Capital would like to discuss the way forward for HR in 2020 and beyond. Therefore, some very well-known names in HR representing various industry domains have been reined in to seek their views over what HR and the business could witness in the ensuing days. While Tech Tools, Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning are surely bound to enhance their foot print, the 'Human' in HR shall always be visible—be it 2020 or in the near future. While technology has bolstered productivity and has converted organisations into efficient work horses, workforce

engagement remains as a crucible that shall always warrant human intervention.

In an exclusive interaction with Human Capital, Nishchae Suri, President—Asia Pacific, Middle East and Africa, EdCast, lays out the present and future opportunities for learning, and the ways in which L&D initiatives designed as learner-led can be aligned to make an impact. In Industry Practice, Srinivasa Rao, Director of Talent and Culture at Pullman & Novotel Aerocity, an Accor Group company, accentuates the ways in which Diversity and Inclusion initiatives have been brought into effect in the organisation. Thereby, he introduces newer avenues that the other players in the hospitality industry can suitably adapt.

The Case Study opens a Pandora's box on office politics and is an eye-opener for HR and organisations to emerge out of their cocoons and create an ambient work atmosphere and a high-performing culture. In Persona, Richard Rekhy, Board Member of KPMG Dubai and the former CEO of KPMG in India, highlights the fact that he became a servant leader of his own choice. He further exemplifies the game-changing impact the concept of 'servant leader' can bring about for the leadership and the organisation.

Carpe Diem!

Neha Jain
Managing Partner

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Succession Planning: Desirable But Difficult

Replacing formal succession planning by limited continuity planning may be a practical way forward when work organisations are morphing owing to the shift in technology.

BY GAUTAM BRAHMA

Most people agree that succession planning is one of those things that benefit an organisation. Hence, there must be a valid reason for the same being done so rarely! Actually, there are several reasons why succession planning is devilishly complex. Let us look at some of them.

Firstly, succession planning means different things to different people. For some, it means planning the succession for all the people above a certain level in the company's corporate hierarchy. A common practice is to include everyone in the C-suite as also the business heads. For the others, the target set covers all 'critical' people. The criteria for establishing criticality then emerges as a point of debate. The usual resolution to such a dilemma is to lower the rank threshold above which all executives are candidates for succession planning. This significantly widens the target set, and the magnitude of the task involved.

Having settled on the target group, the next challenge is the identification of potential successors. Some organisations focus on potential successors only from their employee pool. That puts a limit on choice, and may not even be an optimal solution for the organisation. It may not always be practical to identify and groom a

successor to someone who has a multifunctional skill set. It may be better to hire a person doing a similar job in another organisation. Consider, for instance, someone heading the administration of security, civil & electrical maintenance, cafeteria services, transport, travel bookings, and housekeeping with a team of people, each heading one or more of these responsibilities. It would be a challenge to prepare any one of those direct reportees to manage all the other activities, especially where those activities have been outsourced, and involve significant vendor management and contract administration. It would be easier to hire a person from another organisation who has been handling all or most of these sub-functions.

Exit of potential successors

Also, since it is often not known when the succession will happen, people who are being prepared for that role may become restless, and use their new skills to negotiate a better option elsewhere. The exit of potential successors is a real threat. The uncertainty around the date of succession also interferes with the identification of successors from outside the organisation. Those identified may get promoted, and

become unaffordable, or develop roots in one geography, because their progeny have entered a crucial stage on the academic front. For such reasons, the identification of successors inside and outside the organisation needs to be a continuous process and not a onetime task. In other words, more work for HR!

“Since it is often not known when the succession will happen, people who are being prepared for that role may become restless, and use their new skills to negotiate a better option elsewhere.”

Thirdly, irrespective of whether the successors are identified internally or otherwise, there is the related problem of settling on the number of candidates who should be identified and groomed. Merely choosing one makes it easier to plan the preparation, but given the risks mentioned above, organisations often settle on two or even more potential successors for each role. And that throws up a different set of issues. For one, the candidates may get a sense of entitlement to a position that is possibly a few years ahead. And this may affect their behaviour negatively. More importantly, if and when the succession happens in reality, the successors not chosen may become disgruntled and leave. The famous case involving Jack Welch, the former CEO of GE, is still fresh in the minds of many HR managers. When Immelt was named as the successor, the other two being groomed as potential successors left immediately. One can only wish that a sound succession plan had been drawn up to groom their successors! This particular problem can be minimised by keeping succession planning a confidential activity, but that is very hard to do. It is hard to give special

treatment to a set of people, to equip them for a higher role, without them and the others becoming certain that the higher role is going to be theirs in time.

Succession planning for leadership roles

Some organisations are of the view that senior positions above a threshold do not require special domain knowledge, but a generic set of leadership qualities and managerial skills. In other words, people playing one of those roles can easily learn to be equally effective in a role, which is slightly different. Such organisations identify people a level below the target set, choose the ones with potential, and groom them all in a set of generic skills. These covenanted A-listers can then be expected to easily take on any of the roles above them. This is a bit like looking for a key not where it was lost, but where there is more light. This is because important senior positions have two role requirements that go beyond generic skills. One is deep knowledge of their domain, like knowledge of legal requirements and global commercial practices for successful procurement management in a large diversified operation. The second is the social capital such people accumulate over time, like the relationships with key vendors, customers, competitors, industry bodies and government departments. This is very hard to transfer, especially to a person who is not currently playing the senior role, but may be called upon to do so at some juncture in the future.

A fifth challenge comes from the person whose successor is being planned. If the person is not nearing retirement and no special upward path is visible to her, she may see the preparation of a successor as a prelude to easing her out of her current job. This might affect her behaviour in a variety of ways, including her decision to leave before she is fired. If this happens, it would be

a case of succession planning accelerating the succession! Even when nearing retirement, or exit on promotion to another role, the incumbent may be reluctant to transfer knowledge to a junior because of latent insecurities, and also because she may have her own views on who should be the successor. Usually, if incumbents have a choice, they like to lobby for the most compliant reportee as their successor, and may not cooperate with the Management's choice made after detailed potential assessment. This may lead to inadequate preparation for the successor leading to poor performance and a chance for the incumbent to say 'I told you so'.

Finally, if succession planning is indeed hard, and an organisation chooses to do so only for critical roles, we return to the question of determining criticality. A person can be critical at any level of seniority. A mid-level executive who has built and nurtured relationships with a major customer, and has grown the share of business from that customer can be a critical resource. A liaison officer who can negotiate the labyrinth of large government bureaucracies can be a critical resource irrespective of rank. If the organisation has gone out of its way to bend compensation and promotion policies to accommodate a person, she is clearly a critical resource. However, identifying critical resources using this logic has political implications. How does a senior manager accept that she is not a candidate for succession planning, but her junior is?

“If succession planning is indeed hard, and an organisation chooses to do so only for critical roles, we return to the question of determining criticality.”

Looking at minimal disruption

A more practical approach would be to look not at succession, but minimal disruption, until a replacement is found from within or outside. If it typically takes five months to fill a position, all executives should be asked to annually create a plan for five months of uninterrupted operations over the exit of any of their reportees. This plan may provide for revised work allocation amongst existing reportees, and importantly, the executive herself 'stepping down' to partly play the role of the employee who has exited. If every manager signs up to such a plan, reviewed critically by her manager, the organisation will have achieved the desired goal of undisrupted operations. Managers who commit to such plans will be compelled to review and reassign work, ensure 'shadowing', stay current themselves, and try internal job rotation to ensure that they can execute on their plan when required.

Replacing formal succession planning by limited continuity planning may be a practical way forward when work organisations are morphing because of technology change. Why struggle to prepare for a successor for a role that may not be around for long? 

About the Author

Gautam Brahma is a management consultant who advises start-ups and SMEs on strategy & operations including sales, HR and IT. He carries an experience of over four decades in the public, private and non-profit sectors in telecommunications and IT industries. He has been an invited speaker on multiple industry forums and a monthly columnist on HR issues for nearly two decades. Gautam is based out of Gurgaon and can be reached at gautam.brahma@bizmentor.in.



Effective Time Compounding

Successful 'time entrepreneurs' understand that time leadership is about creating more hours in a working day by improving efficiencies in existing processes or by introducing new ones.

BY **BRIGADIER SUSHIL BHASIN**

It is said that all of us have the same 24 hours at our disposal on any given day. This is true but in a limited sense because a leader is not just responsible for his or her own time but for the aggregated (compounded) time of the team members whose hours are at the leader's disposal to utilize, manage and invest. Monetary interest compounds over time and adds to the initial capital, which, in turn, earns a higher return every year. The principle of compounding also works in the world of 'time entrepreneurship' along the same lines. A 'time entrepreneur' or 'time leader' is a person who is responsible for the time of his or her entire team, which in the case of a CEO or CMD could be thousands of people. Time leaders are not only responsible for their own 24 hours but for the working hours of all the people under their charge. So, a time leader with 1,000 employees who work for 8 hours a day is responsible for the daily productivity achieved (an equivalent of interest) in 8,000 hours (or time capital) that they give the company he/ she leads.

Time compounding occurs due to the aggregation of working hours of employees under a leader's charge. From a Human Capital perspective, the rate of return from this aggregation or compounding of time depends on efficiencies within a company's work culture and on the effectiveness of processes in the

organization designed to deliver productivity.

Organizations are built with different purposes and different ends in mind, but they do have the two elements called 'people' and 'processes' in common. An army defending the country or an FMCG company, a temple trust, an educational institution, a charitable hospital, orphanage or old age home are all organizations with these two elements in common. Irrespective of the nature of the organization, a time entrepreneur's job is to improve the productivity of both people and processes through innovation.

Innovation that ensures the performance of tasks in lesser time magically 'creates more time'. This extra time adds to the compounded capital and makes the organization more efficient. A time-conscious organization introduces efficiencies that have a bearing on the lives of employees beyond the working hours.

What is the time spent on trips to the water fountain on an average day in an office with 300 employees? What is the time saved when water bottles are provided at every desk twice a day? Can the photocopier and the team that needs most photocopies be reduced, so the time is saved? How can technology be used to save time in the execution of essential tasks in the organization? What L&D initiatives can introduce efficiencies in the workforce that

can, in turn, reduce the time spent on specific tasks?

The time saved due to various innovations or 'time created' in this fashion, which adds to the 'time capital' must be used consciously to create a better workplace ecosystem for all stakeholders.

With more time at hand, there is space for taking on added responsibilities, lesser workload, and more opportunities for bonding and recreation within the organization. It also helps a time entrepreneur or leader to foster 'time consciousness' in the organization, which encourages individuals, teams and departments to improve efficiencies that create additional time for themselves and others to have the space to breathe easy, grow and flower. Are you such a time entrepreneur? Hc

About the Author

Brigadier Sushil Bhasin is a time investment strategist, professional speaker and author of two books **Design Your Life** and **Million Dollar Second** (published by CNBC TV18.) As a TEDx speaker and corporate trainer, his stated mission is to help create a world conscious of time as a vital resource.

TCS and Tata Steel Take a Big Step Towards Inclusion

BY ANUSHRUTI SINGH



In a bid to further reinforce the culture of inclusion and to enable employees from the LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning and related communities) community have equal rights at the workplace, Tata Steel and Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) introduced a new human resource policy.

Recently, Tata Steel has asked its employees from the LGBTQ+ community to declare their partners and avail all HR benefits accepted under the law. "With its vision to provide equal opportunity to the employees, it has been an endeavour of the company to create an enabling workforce for all diverse groups, respecting and embracing the differences in the individuals", the steelmaker said in a statement.

Under Tata Steel's new diversity and inclusion (D&I) policy, the employees and their partners will be able to avail a range of benefits like health check-up, medical facilities, adoption leave, new-born parent and child care leave, and inclusion in employee assistance programme (EAP). Not only this, but they will also get financial assistance for gender reassignment surgery and 30 days special leave for the same. Additionally, the new employees will be eligible for the Tata Executive Holiday Plan, honeymoon package and domestic travel coverage.

The new health insurance policy of TCS redefines 'spouse' as a 'partner' and covers up to 50% of the cost of sex/gender reassignment surgery (up to a maximum of Rs 2 lakh) by insurance.

Ever since the Supreme Court of India struck down Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code which criminalises homosexuality, many companies have pushed to make workplaces inclusive for employees from the LGBTQ+ community. **HC**

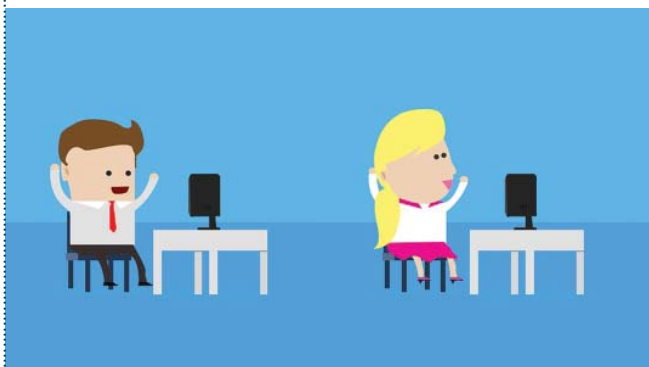
Newburgh Heights Council (Ohio, USA) Introduces a Shorter 32-Hour Workweek

BY ANUSHRUTI SINGH

The traditional rule of a rigid eight-hour workday is becoming an out-dated approach to work. In the recent past, we have heard about a lot of companies reducing the standard working hours and workweeks to increase productivity and improve the work-life balance of employees, but we've never seen a local government implementing the move until now.

Newburgh Heights, a village in the state of Ohio, USA, has announced that all of its full-time employees will soon be working a 32-hour workweek without any salary deduction. The changes will come into effect from February 2020. According to the official statement, the move is intended to provide personnel with an improved work-life balance and a competitive recruitment and retention advantage for the village.

"We are always looking for ways to improve the lives of our residents. By implementing employee-friendly policies that help us recruit and retain talent in innovative ways, we are meeting that goal in a fiscally responsible manner," said Mayor Elkins.



The village has about 70 employees in government service. As per the new policy, each department is allowed to determine how its employees will work throughout the week, while those in emergency services may have to work a little more.

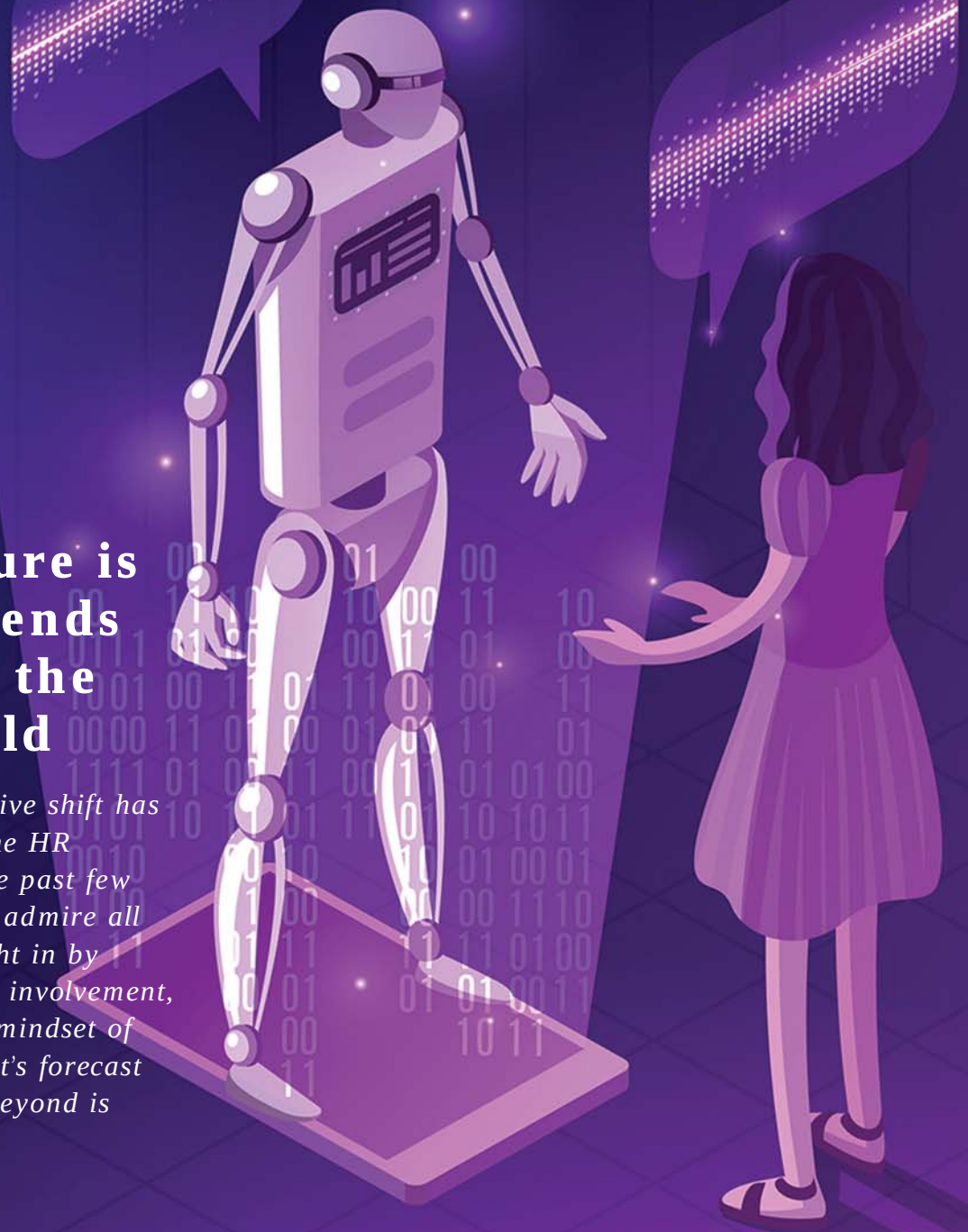
Last month, Microsoft had experimented a four-day workweek programme named "Work Life Choice Challenge 2019 Summer" in an effort to boost productivity and morale in its Japan offices and was rewarded with happier and more productive employees. **HC**

FORECASTING 2020 & beyond

The Future is Now: Trends Shaping the HR World

A major innovative shift has taken place in the HR industry over the past few years. While we admire all the boons brought in by digitalization, AI involvement, maturity in the mindset of CEOs/CHROs, let's forecast how 2020 and beyond is going to be...

BY SAHIL NAYAR



As I wound up a meeting in Boston, I grabbed my coffee before my team workshop in Bombay. “Oh, wait! What’s my team in Tokyo doing? I need to check...” so I thought, as I walked out of my home and started my car. I drove to my office and got down to work at my desk. This is a sneak peek into a few years into my future.

Are you startled? Did you expect super hi-tech screens and only humanoids moving busily around the office? Let’s bust a popular myth here. The future of work in 2020 and beyond is not going to be like a Hollywood sci-fi movie. Undoubtedly, we are rapidly progressing to a new world of work where technology-enabled workplaces will replace traditional work styles and spaces, but it’s not going to look like a whole new world. How much and how far is the transformation going to be? Let’s go back to my time travel into the future.

A DAY IN THE NEAR FUTURE

Communicating in a digitally advanced world

I walk into my office and get to work at my desk. I take quick updates from my team in Tokyo. I am happy that a colleague has resumed work after a brief illness. It’s amazing that I am able to manage absenteeism since help literally comes from across the world. The last couple of decades have indeed seen the greatest advancements in the communications space resulting in the inevitable, geographic shrinkage.

The rampant developments in this area have taken the world by a storm and workspaces of the future are no exception. Technology has given us multiple tools to virtually zip across the globe effortlessly and efficiently. Large distances will shrink faster, but what about the guy next door? There is a strong possibility that we may not know who our neighbours are both at work and home since our interactions would be more tech-enabled than touch-enabled. A colleague in the adjacent cubicle would be as far or near as one on the other side of the globe. In other words, it may be appropriate to expect geographic equalizing rather than shrinkage. I am not even commenting yet on the mindset of managers to have team members work below their noses, because going home on time is being inefficient and sitting long hours at work with some segments of India Inc is still considered as individuals giving their all to the organization. What a sacrifice, I must say!

New-age data retrieval and analytics

As I get ready for a meeting with my CFO, I am simultaneously bracing myself to face a barrage of questions that would challenge my proposal. The latest issue of a magazine pops up on my screen, and I see a very familiar title, “Data is the new oil”. My thoughts drift again. Well, hasn’t data always existed since time immemorial? The challenge was traceability and retrieval of what you want and when you wanted it. It is without a doubt that the best business decisions were taken after a deep analysis of relevant and available information. Rewards, recognitions and reprimands were the output of the analysis of facts and findings and not whims and fancies. All of the small and big mergers and acquisitions were the consequence of strategic thinking based on backed-up information and not because of a dream a CEO might have had!

What’s really going to change in 2020 and beyond is speed and robustness in decision-making due to quick data retrieval and efficient analytics. Of course, artificial intelligence will take center stage as machines start learning faster than humans do. Come to think of it, what will humans do when machines and bots start talking to each other in a language humans wouldn’t understand and, moreover, we wouldn’t be able to stop them? Of course, that breed does exist, the ones who love their gut more than anything else. Are we soon going to have robots that will operate just like our guts? Oh, I meant gut.



Changes in organizational design

I find myself very excited to conduct what used to be very unilateral team meetings. These days, I am no longer the chairperson. Priorities are agreed, and agendas are driven by my teammates. My role remains that of an experienced facilitator, and I feel quite at ease. I recollect my discussions with the fraternity over the last decade. We have debated enough over organizations becoming flatter in structure and people learning the art of self-management.

In my opinion, this is probably something that shall become a game-changer in the next half-decade. It may just not be possible for organizations to function in a traditional manner with hierarchical structures. When the workplace gets dominated with a young, demanding workforce adept at networking,



ADARSH MISHRA

Chief Human Resource Officer,
Panasonic India

“In a bid to create a futuristic workplace, companies are doing away with the old operational models and are rewriting the rules of success to drive agility and enhance employee relationship by focusing on a more technology driven approach. Concepts such as AI and machine learning to build a collaborative future workforce and support employees with significant insights will play a major role in the coming times. Predicting future business needs to develop a talent pipeline and making employees future ready through custom made experiences will also be key. Aligning such HR initiatives with business goals will help amplify employee potential and connect.”



MOHAN SITHARAM

Chief Human Resource Officer, Subex

“Two trends in HR that are here to stay, and perhaps grow further, are tech-driven HR and flexibility at the workplace. What I believe will change is the mindset of the HR fraternity to adapt to changing workplace dynamics like the approach to attrition (planned over expected), prioritising expertise over experience, and driving engagement through purpose rather than brand. As the industry moves towards a gig economy, a more dynamic resource environment comes to the fore, and relevance, both for the employee and the employer, will replace longevity.”

businesses will transform into clusters of workgroups that are agile and people-centric.

Shattering the ‘Professional Caste System’

Talking of people-centric reminds me that talent management needs my focus. I navigate through reports and choose to conclude this exercise soon. I must say, succession planning is something that has evolved and transformed. Gone are the days of promotions and climbing the ladder vertically.

These days, we talk the year-round and connect with our people deeply. Aspirations are encouraged, the path forward is articulated, and career plans are co-created. Employees no longer retire in the same workstream they started their career with. Forget retiring, as of right now, I am transitioning from my current role into a new role, from supporting one business unit to another one. I don't need to leave my organization to

experience that. I am fortunate enough to gain the experience of different business stakeholders, a new boss, and enhanced challenges whilst continuing with my current organization. Talent moves across various workstreams, thereby bringing in a diversity of thought.

An acquaintance informs me that in her organization she was allowed to progress into a role of her choice even though she didn't possess the requisite qualification, simply because the hiring manager saw a spark in her and was willing to bet on her potential. Satisfaction looms large on the faces of the employees when they feel cared for. At last, the “professional caste system” is broken!

Fluid is the new agile

I also notice another striking change since the last decade. While we were struggling to improve gender diversity, we were unable



MOHAN SINGH

Head-Human Resources,
Sterling & Wilson

“Fostering an engaged workforce is an organisation's biggest asset and goal. This unwavering focus will continue to power the right skills and capabilities in 2020. A synergistic work environment will support the needs of the people, respect diversity, offer work-life balance as well as embrace inclusion. Today's HR operating model is being redesigned towards empowering each business unit within the organisation to recruit, retain, and develop its team members effectively. Recognition, upskilling, and employee engagement which target higher productivity levels are today's buzz words that will continue into 2020 with greater emphasis.”

**MEENAL CHAUKAR**

Vice President-Human Resources,
Legrand India

“There will be an increased focus on talent ‘rebuild’ driven initiatives. These initiatives will be technology driven and will be transformational across all industries/functions. There is an urgent need for talent reskilling. Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) is the norm across major organisations, and this means initiatives for talent pipelining will be to get more women in the workforce and a new approach to other areas of D&I (PwD, transgender, LGBT etc.). Another trend, though not immediate but upcoming, are the non-traditional employment models like the gig economy, uberisation of work and their implications for HR.”

to make much progress. Of course, there were a few programs here and there, but it was, for sure, a “good-to-do” activity on most CHRO scorecards at the cost of generalization. Lately, one observes not just gender diversity but nationality, age, ethnicity and all possible elements of diversity being given their due focus. Conscious strategies are being put in place to crack the code on this. India Inc. seems to see the business case in investing through.

Technology has made it easier to bring in work flexibility; this has helped us retain and also rehire many of our womenfolk. But don't diversity and inclusion go hand in hand? Since we have virtual offices all over the world, it has become very easy and affordable to hire anyone who is differently-abled. This is how technology has touched and transformed many lives. Back then, we debated and argued that technology is an

invasion, and many jobs will be lost.

Looking back, it saddens me to think that a certain section of our fraternity impulsively made judgmental statements like, “HR will be dead by 2020”, and many echoed the thought right back. The 2020s decade has actually given birth to the new-age HR, where rigid hierarchy no longer exists. “Fluid” is the new agile. Come together, create value, and then disperse.

The gig economy and its impact

Just before I wind up for the day, my digital assistant reminds me about the manpower dashboard that has just been published. I am ever curious to see the trends, and I quickly swipe screens to see what is in store for me. I am so glad to see a decline in the headcount.

**REENI LIONEL**

HR Head, IndiaFilings.com

“In 2019, we saw a lot of adoption of cloud-based recruitment and payroll solution amongst MSMEs. There were also changes to the TDS regulations in India, which lead to companies looking for a HR solution that can fully automate their payroll and compliance process. India is set to overhaul the various HR compliances and regulations in 2020. I believe the change will lead to further adoption of cloud HR solution by MSMEs. In addition to compliance, we are seeing a lot of integrations happening on payroll solution with Banks to enable the employees to manage seamlessly. I think this trend will see a huge offtake - wherein a lot of payroll solution providers will evolve as fintech.”



Yes, you heard me right! The permanent staff is reducing, and we are noticing an increase in gig workers. “Perfect! This is exactly as per plan”, remarked my Talent Management Head.

I wonder why we didn't think of gig workers back then in the past. It is a brilliant way to get work done in the most economical fashion without having the headache of permanent employment and future retrenchment. Overheads are under control, and I am not expected to invest in their upskilling and training. Every gig worker is always accountable for keeping him or herself relevant. Ever since we have encouraged gig workers, many of our senior employees have decided to work part-time just enough to keep investing their expertise in the organization. At the same time, they have started to spend time at universities supervising innovation labs where future ideas are conceptualized and brought to life by young students. When we hire from these campuses, they are all future-ready already. No one ever asked the question whether employability is a challenge; we always asked whether they are employable, and now, we hear a resounding yes!

Learning on the go

As I walk through the office, I find a gallery of old photographs deliberately and strategically placed where the erstwhile training room was. Now we have bite-sized

learning on the go. Everyone is free to pick a course of choice, get certifications and hit their LinkedIn timeline as they traverse their return commute from Mumbai to Ahmedabad in the bullet train. This learning culture has become a business enabler and has given unprecedented business outcomes.

Improved work-life balance

What a whirlwind the start of this week has been! I wrap up my day and drive back home. Can you believe it's just midday and I find time to devote to my home and family? Well, after a few hours, my day starts again in another part of the world with another



KRISHNAN BANGARUSAMY
Senior Director – HR
Omega Healthcare

“Technology will continue to drive the way clubbed with the new behaviours and expectations of the workforce shaped by social media and the web, paving way for more flexibility and mobility for the workforce. To bring in balance, employers will opt out for co-working, a concept of multiple employees from different organisations using the same work place. This will balance the escalating overhead cost and match it with the expectation of the workforce for higher engagement. However, the real challenge is the rate at which the change happens. In fact, many believe that on the technology front, we are outpacing Moore's law, which states technological processing power will double every 18 months. Therefore, if we have to align our HR strategy to the desired business outcomes, then it all boils down to our ability to equip ourselves to match the speed of change.”

team. My biological clock is set to a global clock, and I have started to sleep regularly and become devoid of stress. There can't be a better balance than this!

CONCLUSION

We are at the start of 2020, eagerly waiting to see what the future has in store for us. But we create the future today, don't we?

- VUCA, a World War acronym, became a business jargon and survived as a fad through 2019. It is upon us to make this clearly a thing of the past. The future is going to see the prevalence of predictability and proactiveness instead.
- Technology would be realistic and an enabler of enhanced productivity, not a threat of job losses. It would help in reducing extrinsic stress like long commutes, repetitive tasks, etc., and help employees deliver better quality of work in lesser time than ever before.
- People would drive organizations and not be driven instead. There cannot be a better way to instill accountability in employees. The future looks brighter with everyone delivering with an utmost sense of accountability and the capability to take calculated risks with the intent of growth.
- Agile, relevant, and competent talent will always find a place under the sun. Organizations would have flatter and more democratic structures. People will take precedence over policies and processes, and collaboration will

“When the workplace gets dominated with a young, demanding workforce adept at networking, businesses will transform into clusters of workgroups that are agile and people-centric.”



VIPUL SINGH
Vice President & Head of HR and Communications, ADP Pvt. Ltd.

“Organisations excel through Associate Experience (AX) and User Experience (UX). Today's workforce, which majorly consists of millennials and Gen Z, want digitally powered experiences to drive excellence and deliver results. Hence, investing in technology-backed hiring, analyticsbased learning, and personalised, engagement-driven tenure, and measuring the experiences with them is critical to create an engaged and progressive workplace culture in this age. Meaningful experiences translate into high productivity, ease of doing business, and accelerated business growth.”

replace negotiation. We will learn to quickly make timely course corrections rather than blindly following a plan.

Peeping over to the other side of the decade, I can see a great wave approaching us with full vigour. It's time we brace ourselves and set sail to ride this great wave of **#FutureOfWork**. Thrill and excitement are guaranteed to those who are fearless and ready to ride. For others, it's a great time to write an autobiography. **HC**

About the Author

Sahil Nayar is a Human Capital Professional working at a leading professional services firm in the country. At leisure, you would either find him sharing his perspectives with budding talent at various Business Schools across the country or traversing treacherous roads over various genres of music. Views are his own. He can be reached on Twitter @sahilnayar

How To Recruit, Incentivize And Retain Millennials

BY PROF. DHEERAJ SHARMA

Is hiring Millennials truly difficult in a highly competitive employment marketplace? “How To Recruit, Incentivize And Retain Millennials” by Prof. Dheeraj Sharma offers several solutions to this perennial problem.

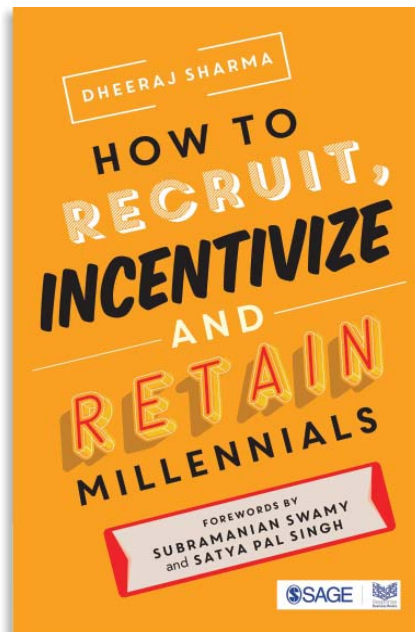
Millennials are seen as unique in terms of their characteristics and consumption patterns. The uniqueness of the millennial generation primarily stems from the fact that they are:-

- 1) The first generation to have been raised in nuclear families with both parents working,
- 2) The first generation to confront information overload owing to media congestion, and
- 3) The first generation to suffer isolation resulting from technological ubiquity.

Although Millennials are often described as tech-savvy, creative, active, and seeking continuous change, they have also been characterised as aloof, hard to understand, contradictory, and incompatible. They spend a major chunk of their time communicating over social media and are largely devoid of face-to-face conversations and human touch. And several organisations are forced to adapt their workplace and work environment. The varied ways of life of Millennials are also reflected in work settings.

The millennial workforce has entered the contemporary corporate world with unique needs, characteristics, expectations, and personalities. These differences pave the way for new challenges for organisations on a regular basis. Thus, ‘What do millennials want?’ is the one question that is confronting every organisation today.

Talent managers are looking for recruitment strategies that can help achieve optimal organisation fit. And several organisations have already started implementing innovative practices to attract and retain millennials. For instance, Infosys has scrapped the formal dress code and encourages its employees to wear smart business casuals. It has also come up with a new crowdsourcing initiative known as ‘Murmuring’ that invites innovative business ideas to contribute to the company’s strategy. Likewise, Microsoft attempts to drive the culture of innovation at the internship phase



itself by allowing interns to learn directly from experts. In a similar vein, IBM put forth an integrative tool known as ‘IBM Verse’ that integrates email, calendar, meetings, video chats and a lot of other capabilities on a single platform. IBM also has a well-developed reverse mentoring program to engage Millennials.

The book primarily deals with understanding the millennial generation. It offers prescriptive and descriptive insights into managing and working with the millennial generation. It specifically deals with issues such as recruiting, managing, and incentivising millennials.

There are several specific topics that are covered in the book that pertain to:

- Understanding the millennial generation
- Understanding the millennial generation in an organisational context
- Strategies for managing millennials
- Industry best practices for managing millennials
- Strategies for recruiting millennials
- Strategies for incentivising millennials
- Strategies for retaining millennials
- Strategies for leveraging on the strength of millennials
- How to best harness the talent in millennials

The book also features several short cases that illustrate discussions and perspectives in each chapter. As far as things stand, there is no specific book that looks at recruiting, managing, and incentivising the millennial workforce. **HC**

About the Author

Prof. Dheeraj Sharma is Director, IIM, Rohtak, and Professor (on lien) at IIM Ahmedabad. He holds a doctoral degree with a major in marketing and a double minor in Psychology and Quantitative Analysis. He has authored several books like Leadership Lessons from Military, Principles of Marketing: Business to Business Marketing, Consumer Behaviour: A Managerial Perspective, and others. Prof. Sharma continues to be on the board of directors of several organisations including IRCTC, Punjab Milkfed (VERKA), Alkem Laboratories, and NABARD Consultancy.

Rising Up to the Learning Organisation Challenge

In an exclusive interaction with Human Capital, Nishchae Suri, President – Asia Pacific, Middle East and Africa at EdCast, pragmatically explores the current and future opportunities for corporate learning, how new technologies can form pathways to transformative shifts in the learning & development (L&D) space, and how to align L&D initiatives for organisation-wide impact by making them learner-led. Learn all of these and much more from the learning leader himself!

BY ANKITA SHARMA



“In a time of drastic change, it is the learners who inherit the future. The learned usually find themselves equipped to live in a world that no longer exists.”

— Eric Hoffer

Across organisations, L&D has gained great interest over the last few years. Given the rapid pace of skill changes, advancements in technology, and shrinking shelf-life of skills, etc., it has become common sense that for competitive success and survival, learning must become an integral part of workplaces. To move the needle on learning, organisations urgently need to align L&D strategies with shifting business realities and leverage new technologies that will drive next-level learning experiences in 2020 and beyond.

Q You have over two decades of rich experience in globally dynamic organisations like EdCast, KPMG, Mercer Consulting, and Hewitt Associates. Take us through your journey and the key learnings. Also, what makes you passionate about what you do?

A Twenty years and counting! It's been a beautiful journey, and I'm grateful to my mentors, from whom I've learned the true meaning of meritocracy, the importance of relationships, and the role of culture and values in institution-building. I'm grateful to have always worked with teams of exceptionally talented, fiercely competitive professionals who are ambitious and hungry for growth, united by a common goal of serving our clients. I learned the “art of tough love”. I received all the love in the world from team members, but when it came to performance, there were no exceptions at all. My colleagues at work, mentors, and my teachers

reinforced the importance of being an everyday learner, investing in yourself to do better, to be better!

The work I do is in the service of every learner and the broader business community. At EdCast, we are powering the journey of every learner, giving meaning to their work, and the means to a rewarding livelihood. I love what I do. **“Learn, Live, Love”** is my mantra.

Key learnings:

- Always help others. There is greater honour in giving than in receiving.
- Always work like an owner. Fall in love with your work.
- Always set yourself to high standards. Excellence is a better teacher than mediocrity.

Q Henry Ford once said, **“Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty.”** What's your take on this quip?

A If you are not learning, you are not living. Today, everyone needs to learn more than ever before—to survive, sustain, and grow. To remain relevant and to be at the top of your game, one needs to reinvent and invest in oneself continuously. Technology is enabling modern learners to upskill and reskill when and where they need to, right in the flow of work. With disruption due to technology, learning has become hyper-personalised; quality content and user experience have become the focus.

Today's learners expect the same experience as Amazon, Netflix, and Google. Just as Netflix learns from user behaviours and starts recommending movies based on multiple factors using AI, LXPs (Learning Experience Platforms) do something similar for learning.

Q HR practitioners know that a culture of learning is vital

for organisational survival and success, but many find it hard to define and even harder to create an effective learning culture. What, according to you, is a learning culture? Also, what are a few trademarks of a learning enterprise?

A Unfortunately, in most organisations today, learning is primarily seen to be a *compliance-driven requirement* rather than a *culture-driven commitment*. Organisations must build an ecosystem where individuals feel empowered and responsible for their own development. It is essential to create an *everyday learning culture*, rather than an isolated training-oriented one.

A learning enterprise is one that encourages, celebrates, and recognises learning. To create a culture of continuous learning, ‘democratisation’ and ‘personalisation’ of learning is a prerequisite. Driving cultural change requires us to create an environment where individuals experience work as an opportunity for growth and self-discovery. Learning plays a central role in talent development; through learning, you can impact all facets of talent management, be it engagement, attraction, or retention.

Q In a world undergoing continuous and multifaceted change, disruptions are sweeping businesses. In the very context, the term ‘agile’ is thrown around a lot these days. What does ‘agile’ in L&D mean? Also, how can organisations experience agility?

A In a rapidly changing world where the rules of business evolve very quickly, we need to have learning systems that adapt and align to changing business needs in real-time, and support scale with speed. Organisations should leverage technology in both the identification of learning needs and in the creation and curation of knowledge assets.

To remain competitive, the best strategy is to create multi-faceted and flexible learning ecosystems, educate the learner on being a smart consumer, set and maintain context, and get out of the learner's way.

Q When it comes to L&D challenges, there is no shortage of research on the widening skills gap, decreasing shelf-life of skills, lack of learner motivation, etc. The new business imperative in L&D is 'democratisation of learning'. What is its importance and how can businesses enable it?

A We live in a world in which change is the only constant. How do we equip our people to deliver today and be resourced to deliver in a changing tomorrow? The "democratisation of learning" is about giving people the opportunity to develop themselves. When companies make it easy for people to share knowledge by acting as a network that facilitates the digitisation of the informal learning process, they make it more tangible, shareable, and effective.

“To remain competitive, the best strategy is to create multi-faceted and flexible learning ecosystems, educate the learner on being a smart consumer, set and maintain context, and get out of the learner's way.”

Q What are some of the common mistakes that you see large organisations repeatedly make in understanding the new learning dynamics?

A Fundamentally, the way employees view and drive learning

has changed. We have known for a while now that learning is one of the top engagement drivers for employees. However, with the pace at which skills are being rendered redundant today, learning has moved from being a preference to being an absolute imperative.

Organisations often falter in their legacy view of how learning experiences are delivered. Some still talk about static training plans and structured learning interventions, which offer little scalability, let alone impact.

Learning today has evolved. It is an experience and a mindset, not merely a series of isolated interventions. Empowering employees to articulate their own learning goals and action them with self-directed learning paths is the need of the hour. There is a hunger to learn amongst employees. Organisations that are able to tap into this paradigm effectively will be the ones that will emerge as industry leaders of tomorrow.

Q What would your piece of advice be to HR leaders who want to build a strong L&D business case for technology investments?

A We are currently witnessing a learning revolution in which technology is an integral part. Organisations require a plethora of tools and platforms to deliver a single user interface, build and manage employee journeys, develop apps, create and monitor workflows, and add forms of conversational interfaces to the mix to be able to meet business requirements and drive learner engagement.

The introduction of LXPs is helping organisations lead, enable, manage and support their L&D agenda while catering to the preferences and needs of the 'modern-day learner'. Such new-age technologies boost the learning health of the organisation. Moreover, the ease of integrating such platforms and tools with

enterprise-wide systems is ensuring that learning is at the heart and centre of their businesses.

“The democratisation of learning is about giving people the opportunity to develop themselves. When companies make it easy for people to share knowledge by acting as a network that facilitates the digitisation of the informal learning process, they make it more tangible, shareable and effective.”

Q As we step into the 2020s decade, what top trends are you tracking in the L&D space? Also, are there any that concern you?

- We see that L&D budgets have increased. L&D professionals will play a more strategic role in improving the overall organisational learning health to mitigate capability risks.
- There is greater executive sponsorship in upskilling & reskilling the workforce.
- The increasing use of technology in L&D is another observable trend. There is a distinct shift away from the traditional classroom-based ILT (Instructor-Led Training) and towards blended and digitised platforms which empower learners to leverage a range of resources at their own discretion and on their own terms. These platforms put learners in the driver's seat of their own growth, and that, to me, is a powerful paradigm shift. Technology is enabling modern learners to upskill and reskill when and where they need to, right in the flow of work. **HC**

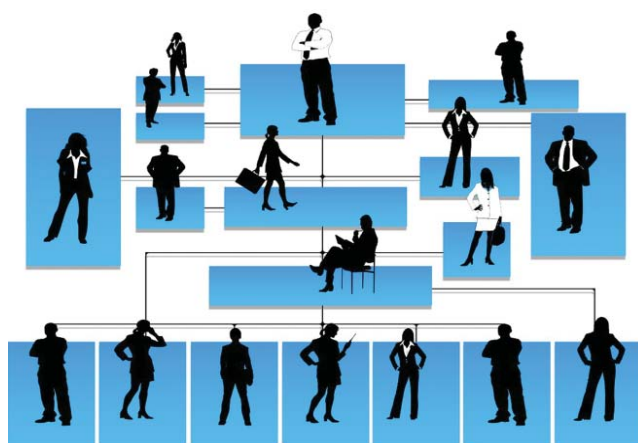
India in Need of Better Reforms to Increase Quality Jobs and Incomes

The creation of quality jobs, under-employment and income inequality remain challenges in India, according to a new survey by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

The employment rate has declined and is low, especially for women. When women have a job, they are often paid less. Labour laws are complicated, some are particularly stringent for industrial firms, and most of them kick in when firms grow, deterring formal job creation. In practice, most workers are not covered by core labour laws and social security. Recent efforts to streamline labour regulations into four codes are welcome. To accelerate job creation and thus improve equity, efforts to modernise labour regulations should continue, the OECD report recommended.

The report also expressed optimism about growth, but there are risks to the outlook. It noted that India's participation in the global economy is high and rising, with outstanding performances in some services in recent years. Still, private investment remained relatively weak, and the employment rate witnessed a decline amid a shortage of quality jobs.

OECD is a Paris-based inter-governmental economic organisation that works to create better policies for better lives. It aims to frame policies that foster prosperity, equality, opportunity and well-being for all. 



69% of Women Making Career Return Expect Pay Cut



While there is a rising trend of companies shifting their focus towards bridging the gender gap, women making career comebacks expect a salary slash from their last earned ones, reveals a survey.

The Chennai-based recruitment firm AVTAR Group in its annual research —VIEWPORT 2019 themed ‘Second Careers of Women Professionals – The India Story’ found that the majority of respondents (69%) anticipate a pay cut on their career re-entry due to the prevalence of motherhood wage penalty.

The survey was conducted among 783 second career women from various industry sectors with an average work experience of 9.5 years and an average duration of 4.4 years career break.

As per the findings, motherhood challenges (45%), maternity (35%) and elder care responsibility (16%) are some of the most common reasons for women in the country to take a break from their careers.

When it comes to career comeback challenges, even in the today's fourth industrial revolution era, driven by artificial intelligence and technological advancement, the insufficient support at home (23%) is among the top three significant barriers for second career women. The absence of strong network (59%) and skill gap (36 %) are the other two barriers listed on top.

Financial security and putting education to good use were the motivating factors for women to make career comebacks. Interestingly, 63% of respondents believed high career intentionality by preferring full-time jobs, while just 23% of women stated they would want to come back to flexible roles. 

HR Matrices: A Tool for Logical Manpower Management

HR manages an organization's best competitive advantage—its people. Is capability management really a challenge? Or do we just need a more organized and scientific tool for making better human capital decisions, manpower potential management and process improvement?

BY **SHRUTI VERMA**

We have a tough role to play as HR leaders. Dealing with human resources is all about dealing with a lot of perceptions, personalities, and attitudes. At times, it's just tough to put things in perspective and design a strategy that focuses on balancing the facts, emotions, and perceptions.

Interesting HR Matrices can be created to evaluate the existing employees and arrive at the best manpower management strategies. A logical HR Matrix based on well-evaluated needs/concerns of the organization can prove to be a highly valuable tool.

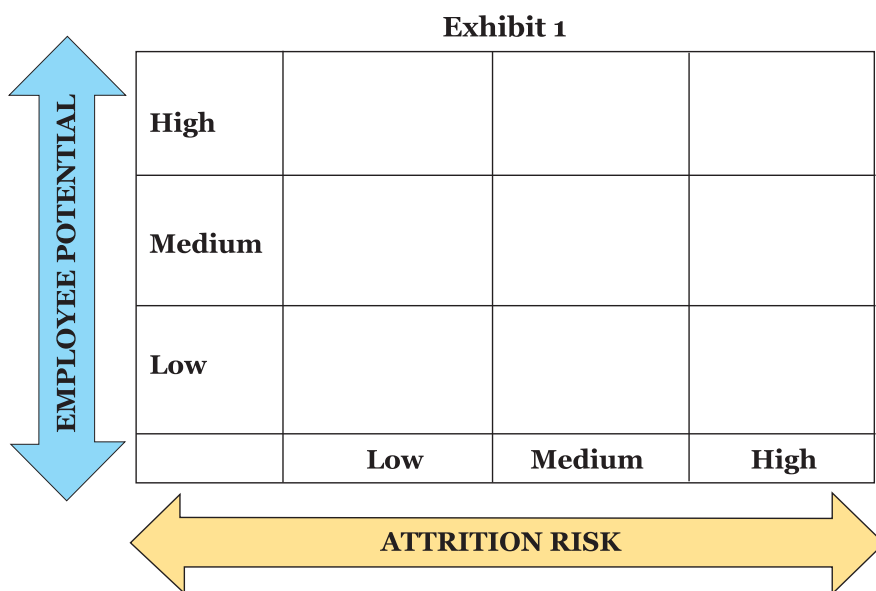
Here is a brief five-step guide on designing and using HR Matrices for the benefit of the current age dynamic organizations.

STEP 1

Designing an HR Matrix

What are the key concerns of the company "X" with its human resources?

- Employee potential
- Employee performance
- Attrition risk
- Employee disengagement
- Lack of empowerment, etc.



Other interesting matrices could be:

- HR Capability vs Business Priority
- Management Maturity vs CHRO Maturity
- Employee Performance vs Employee Potential
- Role of HR: Process Orientation vs People Orientation

These could range from a simple 4-box matrix to an elaborate 9-box

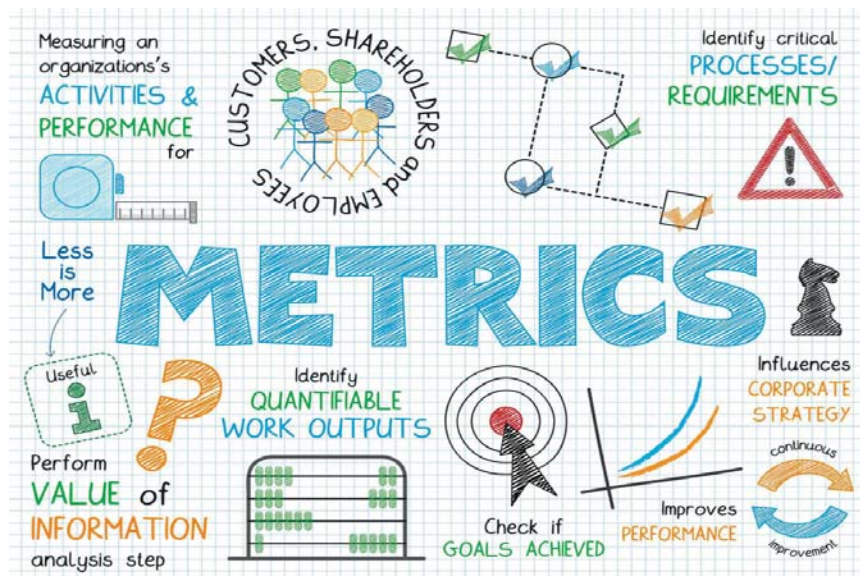
matrix or so based on how comprehensive one wants to be.

STEP 2

Mapping Existing Employees to Manpower Matrix

This is one of the most critical steps. It must ensure the following:

- Very conscious manpower mapping to be done while minimizing the perceptual bias.
- 360-degree feedback on each employee to be mapped in the



Line Manager: Quality of reports, adherence to timelines, quality of work, sales numbers, quality of account management, prospecting, etc.

- Share evaluation parameters with line managers to seek detailed inputs on employees' performance around various KPIs and make required changes. E.g. a Project Manager who is being rated highly positive in 360-degree evaluation might be a constant defaulter on process compliance, over lenient with the team, and hence ineffective at managing the team.
- Make final adjustments based on more concrete information from line managers.

matrix. This will include an assessment of factual parameters, seeking detailed and focused feedback from colleagues, line managers, and other stakeholders. E.g. conducting a 360-degree appraisal for a Business Development Manager through various stakeholders might include the following:

Finance: Sales numbers, collection overdue, gross margins, overall accountability for account management, etc.

Clients: Quality of interaction, pro-active updates, availability for feedback/follow-ups, etc.

HR: Overall hygiene, sales performance, personality, attitude, compliance, growth potential, etc.

“Designing a good strategy doesn’t necessitate the desired outcomes without a strong implementation plan.”

Exhibit 2

	High	High Potential/ Low Attrition Risk 10% Employee A	High Potential/ Medium Attrition Risk	High Potential/ High Attrition Risk
	Medium	Medium Potential/ Low Attrition Risk	Medium Potential/ Medium Attrition Risk 30% Employee B Employee C Employee D	Medium Potential/ High Attrition Risk
	Low	Low Potential/ Low Attrition Risk 20% Employee U Employee V	Low Potential/ Medium Attrition Risk	Low Potential/ High Attrition Risk 40% Employee X Employee Y Employee Z Employee W
		Low	Medium	High

STEP 3

Designing HR Strategy Based on Manpower Matrix

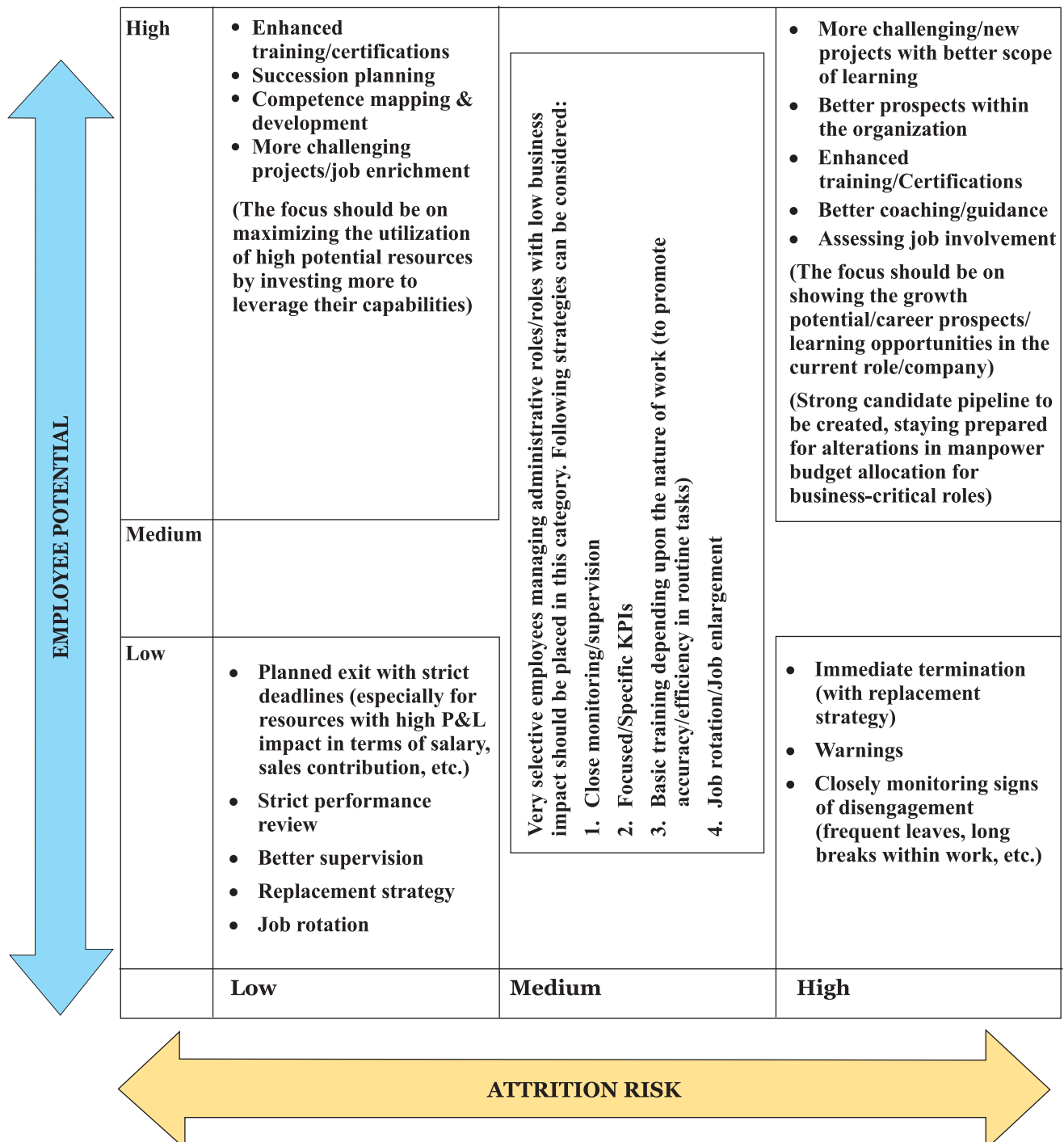
This will largely depend upon a number of other factors apart from an individual employee's placement in the manpower matrix. HR

strategy might focus on following variable factors too:

- Preparation for contingencies/ structural changes (candidate pipeline, manpower budget to accommodate high replacement cost, etc.)

- Future plans of the company (e.g. the existing employee skill set might be needed for future projects. In such a situation, even a low potential employee has to be maintained unless a ready replacement is there)

Exhibit 3



- The impact of the employee on P&L (salary, sales contribution, margin contribution, etc.) E.g. it might be difficult to maintain a high salaried low potential resource vs a low salaried low potential resource.
- The financial strength of the company (in terms of ability to maintain salaries of staff, withstanding low business performance, etc.)
- Critical nature of the role (e.g. a project manager's role may be seen as much more critical than any administrative role like that of an operations executive). Business-critical roles must be attended on priority.
- Feasibility of replacing low potential/low performing resources with strong personal relationships in the company due to the long service tenure.

Since the business environment and employees are highly dynamic in nature, the number of factors impacting the HR strategy could be countless. However, keeping all the other variable factors constant, following manpower management strategies might be considered for various category of employees:

“An interesting combination of facts & perceptions can be presented through various HR Matrices.”

STEP 4

Presenting HR Strategy to Management

This would largely involve using HR analytics like:

- No. of business-critical roles held by low potential resources
- No. of business-critical roles held by employees with high attrition risk
- % of employees identified as high/medium/low potential resources

- Sales performance of employees placed as high/medium/low potential resources (target vs achievement, gross margin contribution, new client additions, etc.)
- % of salary spend on maintaining high/medium/low potential resources
- Work tenure of high/medium/low potential resources with the company

Strategy proposals could be:

- Manpower budget alterations required for hiring new resources to replace low potential resources/high attrition risk resources
- Future investment in training, certifications, reward & recognition programs, employee engagement activities, etc. to maintain high potential resources.
- Sources/timelines/talent acquisition investment for identifying replacements of business-critical resources.
- Budget required for increments and promoting high potential resources.

E.g. an organization with more than 60% of employees identified as low potential might focus on investing in/arranging for replacements. For an organization with the majority of employees identified as high potential, the focus might be developing capabilities by increasing investment in T&D/learning programs, certifications etc.

STEP 5

Implementing the Strategy

Designing a good strategy doesn't necessitate the desired outcomes without a strong implementation plan. Important considerations in strategy implementation could be:

- Does the company need to maintain low potential resources for any reason for some time or could immediate termination be considered?



- Does the company have ready replacements/potential pipeline of candidates?
- Timelines for onboarding replacements and managing handover
- How can opportunities be created for upgrading high potential resources within the organization?
- Identifying a tailor-made development program for every identified high potential resource and related investment
- Budget allocation for identified development programs and its impact on overall HR budget
- Identifying the role-specific competencies and further implementing competency mapping for developing high potential resources
- Analyze whether the overall business strategy is to expand/contract/diversify, etc. 

About the Author

Shruti Verma is an HR enthusiast with more than a decade of professional experience gained from various industries/organizations in India and UAE. She is Masters in human resources (currently working in UAE) and a UGC NET qualified lecturer. Apart from her mainstream career in Human Resources, she has actively pursued her passion for teaching and writing. Connect with her at <https://www.linkedin.com/in/shrutiverma1>



The FutuREady HR

*Is the HR function ready for transformation? If yes, then what is its future amidst disruption?
Is the HR function not fully future-ready? If yes, then what preparation is required for the transformation journey?
Here is a fast forward insight into the future of HR...*

BY ABHINAV JAIN

Last week, my new house help ordered groceries using the smartphone app and sent a WhatsApp message to me to transfer the amount to his Paytm account. This left me with the thought that it does not matter if it's a blue-collar or white-collar employee, the employee of the future is technologically very advanced for their respective job functions, and the leaders need to ensure that the workplace capabilities meet their expectations.

Before discussing the journey of the HR function in the 2020s, we need to understand the future journey of its two main customers—the Organization and the Employee of the 2020s. It's a well-established fact that organizations of the future are becoming digital-friendly in terms of capabilities, data analytics, artificial intelligence (AI), and machine-driven culture. Most of the repetitive and data-driven tasks will be delivered using machine and software intelligence, while high-level thinking tasks that require causal, counterfactual, social, or emotional elements will be performed by humans.

Employees of the future will be more technology savvy and will demand more empowerment, agility and flexibility at the workplace and in business services. These transformational factors require that the HR function should also transform at an equal



pace with the organization and its employees. The burning question is: *"Is the HR function ready for transformation? If yes, then what is its future amidst disruption?"*

KPMG surveyed 1,200 HR leaders and executives from diverse organizations regarding their views on the future of HR function in the 2020s. As per the report analysis, more than 70% of HR leaders agreed that the HR function needs transformation, but fewer than 40% were confident that they have a work plan ready for the transformation. Some of

the priority focus areas for HR transformation that were identified in the report are:

- Transforming workplace culture from task-oriented to innovation-driven
- Digital capabilities development including AI and Machine Learning (ML)
- Alignment between HR, the C-suite and employee experience.

Hence, from the aforementioned report, we can derive the hypothesis that the HR function is not fully future-ready and needs to be

prepare for the transformation journey. Following are some of the key attributes of the HR function in the 2020s that leaders need to be mindful of while preparing for the future HR strategy:

Lean in-house HR headcount

With increased digitalization, AI, and ML, most of the transactional aspects of crucial HR functions, such as recruitment and onboarding, compensation and benefits, performance management, and exit processes, will be either automated or outsourced. Hence, one of the predictions for the future of HR is a digitally enabled business support function with lean in-house HR headcount. Most of the data-driven analysis will be automatically performed and delivered by digital tools to identify a trend or a case, but high-level thinking activities, such as causal correlations (why is this a case?), counterfactual arguments (what if this is not the case?), or social and emotional aspects will require the human factor. Hence, organizations of the future should start thinking in the direction of digital enablement of HR capabilities by curbing repetitive tasks, digitally generating data analysis to derive better insights and support more effective HR strategies in the long run.

Remote working policies and workplace infrastructure

As the Uberization of the workforce, crowdsourcing, and outsourcing become the new normal for future organizations, HR functions need to align with the new operating model of remote workforce management. Processes such as identification of rightly skilled resources without face-to-face interactions, execution of background checks and verifications, the turnaround of a quick, short-term contracts, and the ability to monitor and assess performance

on the outcomes rather than time-based models are some of the key capabilities that the HR function will have to develop in the 2020s.

HR as the strategic business partner

The future of HR function will be more strategic than transactional or administrative. HR professionals will have to understand the core business KPIs and drivers and align HR functions accordingly. A seamless collaboration of the HR executives with the CXOs will be imperative, and the future HR function will be the front-face of the organizations' brand marketing, internally and externally.

The emergence of new HR roles

As HR is already being identified as the strategic business support function responsible for holistic and digitally-enabled employee experience, new roles and responsibilities will evolve in the future. Rather than solely acting as the 'people managers', HR managers will play more sophisticated roles of being 'people advisors' and 'coaches'. Many organizations like Accenture have reframed roles of HR managers as People advisors enabled with specific skills. Hence, people advisors of the future need to be highly analytical and specialized in their respective areas rather than being HR generalists, as per the current trend. Highly specialized roles such as HR Data Scientist, Employee Experience Specialist, and Performance Coach will be invented, and HR generalist roles will disappear.

Employee Centricity

The future HR function will predominantly support the millennial and gen Z workforce. These generations are very demanding, information-driven, and technology savvy. Hyper-personalization of the employee experience will be a new KPI for

future HR. Organizations like Google and Amazon are envisioning a digitally-empowered employee experience while companies such as Shell and BP are focusing a great value on employee health and safety norms, based on their employees' priorities.

To summarize, the HR function is on the verge of a complete transformation in the 2020s and will have to be customized as per the businesses and employees' priorities. HR leaders must gear up and prepare for the transformation journey by clearly defining the vision, goals, objectives, future operating model, capabilities in terms of people, processes & systems, and the roles and responsibilities that are better aligned with the business. 

About the Author

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Pros And Cons Of A Gig

An engaged Gig workforce leads to build a talent pool of loyal individuals, who prefer to work with your organisation even if the compensation offered is low since "Experience" is the pivot.

BY **POOJA NATH**

Times have changed and there has been a revolutionary shift in work structure engagement.

There was a time when most individuals were striving to have a fulltime job, since it was perceived to be secure, even at the cost of one's well-being and interest. Having a full-time job marked one in a superior financial position with a stable and secure future. However, things are no longer the same since nothing is secure in such a volatile ecosystem with the metaphorical sword of Damocles' dangling over at all times. With so many job cuts, layoffs, and at times, the role of circumstances, compels individuals to pick up whatever is on offer for sustenance, be it part-time or freelance. And there is this another set who take the plunge to let go of their hefty paycheques to be on their own, and pursue something radically different than what they were pursuing in their career. This forms one side of the story.

A mutual advantage

The other side to this is that many organisations are looking at hiring parttime or freelance workforce, hitherto known as G or Flexi workforce. They have realised that partnering with such a workforce gives them the leverage to engage with a specialist with lower costs and zero retention accountability, in case of skill redundancy. We all



know that skills are changing rapidly, new is old in no time! So, a win – win situation for both.

A gig economy is a free market system, in which temporary positions are common, and organisations contract with independent workers for short-term engagements. Some examples of gig employees in the workforce are freelancers, independent contractors, project-based workers, and temporary or part-time hires. Many organisations like Uber, Zomato, and several consulting organisations engage with a flexi workforce, and reap the benefits

that come along. Research has indicated that organisations will need to fulfil nearly 50 percent of their talent needs through flexible talent in the next five years.

One's own journey of three years from a corporate job to that of a gig worker is a testimony to the above fact. While it did provide an opportunity to experiment, there were a few wrong decisions that led to great opportunities being missed, and some right decisions that resulted in enormous learnings. One also discovered the importance of learning and constantly acquiring new skills to create opportunities

for oneself, which can come knocking anytime, as also the significance of networking - knowing people beyond your own teams or organisation, as was the case in a fulltime job.

These years have provided the experience of being on both the sides of a table. As a “Gig Worker” and as a “Gig Employer”, and with this comes the perspective over the expectations from one another.

Benefits of partnering with a Gig worker

- Getting to work with a specialist or an expert at a low cost since hiring a fulltime expert is a costly affair, more so when the work is seasonal
- There are no compliances or financial obligations unlike in the case of a fulltime employee
- As an employer, there is no obligation to put them on the bench or layoff in case of skill redundancy
- In the event of performance dissatisfaction, you may choose not to work with them again
- Generally speaking, the lot is self-motivated and believes in upskilling oneself to create opportunities. This, however, has a stroke of the individual's mindset

“It is essential to create a pool of talented and trusted partners, who are always ready to work for you, and are mature enough to keep the confidentiality of your business model.”

Disadvantages of partnering with a Gig worker

- The employer may have lesser control since there are no fixed perks.

- It is challenging to keep the workforce engaged since the interactions with them are not regular
- Data security and confidentiality of information or resources could be under threat
- Delayed decision processes can lead to their unavailability, impacting the timelines, and restarting the complete search again to scout for the right talent leading to loss of time, effort, and money
- Poor experience may make them to decide not to work with you, leading to a limited talent pool and /or loss of a talented partner

Creating a pool of engaged Gig workforce

First and foremost, it is essential to create a pool of talented and trusted partners, who are always ready to work for you, and are mature enough to keep the confidentiality of your business model. And this can only happen over a period of time.

- Communication is extremely important. Clarity in communicating the deliverables, timelines, and the expected outcome brings in a lot of transparency, and smooth execution of the task in hand
- Reviewing their performance, depending on the project milestone and deliverables. Ensuring to give constructive feedback on the deliverables to ensure no gap whatsoever, and a fair association
- Be liberal and genuine in appreciating the good work done. This works wonders when it comes to driving performance and engagement
- Setting clear expectations on the terms and conditions of their working engagement
- Invest time in knowing them and their interest well, possibly offer their interest of work to keep the engagement level high
- Dealing with humans requires the need to connect, and when

understood, individuals sometimes are even willing to work for lesser compensations.

- Pay on time and be clear on the commercial terms

“Many organisations are looking at hiring part time or freelance workforce. They have realised that partnering with such a workforce gives them the leverage to engage with a specialist with lower costs and zero retention accountability”

The future of workforce arrangement is undergoing a massive change. Needless to say, it is a cost-effective proposition, and is aligned with the expectations of the gennext workforce. It is worth remembering that the “need is mutual.” A positive experience will create a pool of engaged Gig workforce. The rest can be explored and learnt as we stride towards the future and garner more experience. 

About the Author

Pooja Nath is a HR Transformation Consultant and a Certified Assessment Expert. She partners with Start-Ups and SME's on various organisational and people related interventions and helps them in transforming processes and bringing in efficiency in the organisation. Her areas of expertise include Organisation Design, Talent Management, Talent Development, Leadership Transformation, HR Systems & Processes and HR Advisory.



Should I Play Politics Or Not?

Lawrence B. MacGregor Serven, in his book, “The End of Office Politics as Usual”, writes that there is a definite link between politics and performance. Employees who steer clear of office politics usually end up being victimised, and suffer from work-related stress. This has led to an effective productivity loss of \$ 100 Billion in the US alone. Therefore, the pertinent question is whether employees should keep clear of office politics or keep their bosses in good humour keeping the long-term interests of the employees in mind.

BY **DR. PRAGEETHA G RAJU**

Avisibly annoyed and distraught Kamalinee Varma (Kamalinee) was aimlessly staring outside the window. There were a host of questions that were running through her cluttered mind. She muttered to herself, “is taking care of my colleague, Anushree’s children in line with my personal goals or company’s

goals?” “What if I refuse to oblige?” “Would my relations turn sour?” Can this kind of a request by Anushree be treated as appropriate in any organisation culture?” Out of agitation, she squeaked, “Oh God! What do I do now?”

Sudhanshu, a new recruit, who was in the adjoining cabin was startled when he heard her squeak

and came rushing to her cabin to check if everything was ok. He found Kamalinee in an uneasy demeanour and asked her as to what had happened. She piercingly looked into his eyes and ranted, “tell me Sudhanshu! Should I play politics to survive here?”

Sudhanshu was thoroughly perplexed, but he managed to calm

himself and also put Kamalinee at ease. He took her to the nearby coffee shop, and ordered for a cup of hot coffee and a chocolate brownie. Kamalinee took a bite, and while the cake was melting in her mouth, she sipped piping hot coffee and leaned back on to the chair, relishing the warmth and the taste. Sudhanshu looked at her and said, “*would you please tell me what happened?*” She opened her eyes, adjusted her voice, and began narrating.

Kamalinee is an MBA from a reputed institute in Mumbai. She got married after she had completed her MBA, and thereafter, worked as a management trainee for a couple of years. While she had been working as a trainee, she received an offer as a Manager in the unisex cosmetics department of a giant retail store. Kamalinee was overjoyed with the offer, and on a fine day, joined the store. She liked the work as it offered a lot of scope for her to learn. She was a quick learner, and very soon she was complimented by the other managers as well. But, she observed that the other managers at her level were very nice to their senior manager, Anushree Katyal (Anushree). They extended many favours to her. For instance, they often had lunch with her, brought her tea/coffee, and gossiped with her after office hours. Anushree was with the retail store for the last eight years, had seen the store’s highs and lows, and had witnessed its growth. She enjoyed the management’s trust, and in particular her loyalty, when the business was down. However, Kamalinee did not make any attempt to please Anushree, as she had to reach home on time to tend to her oneyear-old child.

After six months, it was time for Kamalinee’s first appraisal. She was rated as the top performer in terms of sales in the entire chain. Her joy knew no bounds, and she offered sweets the next day to every staff member in the entire store. Everyone in the store

complimented her for her good performance in her very first appraisal.

Meanwhile, Kamalinee began making friends in the other departments, and Bharathi Raghuvaran (Bharathi) was one among them. Bharathi was a manager in the Electronics department in the same retail store. Kamalinee stayed in an apartment which was close to the colony where Bharathi resides, and thus, they shared transport every day, and travelling together brought them closer. They started having lunch together, they chatted and shared many personal things between them.

One day, Bharathi asked Kamalinee to leave stating that she had to take care of Anushree’s children since she was in a meeting. Kamalinee was surprised, and asked Bharathi as to why she is extending this help. Bharathi replied with a smile, “*look Kamalinee! I feel it is important to help her out. Only if I help her, she would help me in return. Don’t you think so? Through a service of such a kind, I would get to know her better, and one day I can step into her shoes. In fact, you too should be doing the same.*” Kamalinee squealed in amazement as well as disgust, “*What!! How?!!...*” Bharathi said, “*if you don’t extend favours, you shall get none. This is the order of the day. So, please learn to play politics*”.

Kamalinee just wondered, “*what if Anushree asked me to do the same? Can I? What would happen if I refuse? Would I lose the job?*” Kamalinee mentioned this to Bharati, to which she said, “*She doesn’t demand, just requests, however, nobody rejects her request... because they know she is special...*”

Kamalinee paused, Sudhanshu was listening to her attentively. Sudhanshu cleared his throat and said, “*Kamalinee, just reflect whether Anushree’s request is ethical. Also, please reflect on*



your values, style, and beliefs.” Still confused, Kamalinee asked, “*Reflect what?*” Sudhanshu said, “*First of all, examine your stance on the following:*

- *One has to play politics to get ahead*
- *Effective organisation discourage/encourage politics*
- *Effective employees have little/more time for politics.*”

Kamalinee fell into deep thought. The same questions which ran through her mind today morning resurfaced, and the present points of Sudhanshu got added to it. 

About the Author

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Analysis By **Ravi Mishra**

Sudhanshu is absolutely right in suggesting to Kamalinee that she reflect upon her values, style, and beliefs. Every organisation has its own culture, which evolves naturally over time. However, it is at times reinforced by the top leadership or influenced by certain individuals or groups. Since it is early days in her career, Kamalinee is experiencing this for the first time, and hence, one can understand the level of internal conflict. It is not uncommon for some people to galvanise themselves around the power centre as an easy way to grow in their career. Bharathi is candid enough in sharing her wisdom on the basis of her experience.

Values have different shades, and at times, it becomes very subjective in the context of the purpose. It is totally unprofessional for Anushree to use the undue influence of her position by any yardstick. It is important for Kamalinee to reflect upon her values, and establish this in the organisational perspective with no fear. Bharathi maybe ensuring her growth by playing along with the tone of politics, but given her limited experience, it is truly not the right path. Kamalinee must validate this assumption by her self-analysis based on historical data, and deep dive by way of connecting with the other employees. It is likely that Anushree may be a one-off case in the organisation,

else it may not survive for a very long time.

The culture of an organisation evolves with people, and this is a great opportunity for Kamalinee to contribute to this to make the organisation a better place to work. She should develop confidence and positive energy to find the right approach to influence Anushree.

At the senior level, industry professionals or bureaucrats need to create space whereby they can manage their time. In countries like India, resources are available in terms of hiring domestic helps and child care services at a very reasonable cost. This is a privilege that does not come with any obligation or compromise the professional values.

In an organisational context, it is the responsibility of the HR function to develop structured feedback on performance management, and factor the hurdles in a different category. A factor often found is favouritism by managers to their men (Yes Men). This needs to be addressed at two levels:-

- (i)** Strengthening the execution of performance management in terms to auditing the SMART Goals, participating in periodic review and annual evaluation as an observer along with the manager, and
- (ii)** The organisation should discuss topics such as professional ethics at workplace, and work-life balance at forums like Townhall Meetings.

Senior managers like Anushree, external subject matter experts, and speakers must be invited to address such meetings, and employees can get the opportunity to share their point of view and experiences. Many times, these discussions provide an opportunity for self-reflection and correction to many individuals.

Kamalinee and Sudhanshu can share the matter to the HR Head so as to plan affirmative action and intervention to address the issue while maintaining confidentiality with regard to the source of information. Kamalinee can also loop in her skip manager in confidence, take his/her advice on dealing with the situation in the future as a preventive measure.

Several organisations suffer with such a kind of syndrome, the only difference being intensity and spread. There are three major stakeholders responsible to resolve such a problem- the Head of the HR function, the employee who is taking the brunt of burden, and the holders of such information who are not raising it at appropriate forums with a positive intent to eradicate this malice.



About the Author

Ravi Mishra is Senior Vice President-HR for Global Epoxy Business, Aditya Birla Group. He is associated with the Group since 2005, and has worked in different businesses i.e. Grasim Chemical, UltraTech Cement, and Birla Carbon. Prior to joining the Aditya Birla Group, Ravi was associated with diversified organisations such as, Nicholas Piramal Group, Mardia Group of Industries, and Nova Petrochemicals Ltd.

Analysis By **Sakshi Sood**

An ideal workplace exists either in one's imagination or in a utopian world. For anyone who has been in the corporate world for a significant period will endorse the fact that workplaces are often anchored in a quagmire of office politics.

Workplaces tend to become non-conducive working environments with a prevalence of *quid pro quo* culture. In this context, it involves expressed or implied demands for favours in exchange for some benefit (e.g. a promotion, pay increase) or to avoid some detriment (e.g. termination, demotion) in the workplace.

Kamalinee is facing a classic situation of *quid pro quo* at her workplace which can be construed as workplace harassment. However, as a safeguard against lawsuits and to be an employer of choice, every organisation needs to administer measures to prevent and tackle workplace harassment.

The first step to curb workplace harassment is knowing the ways of recognising it when it occurs. There are two main kinds of conduct that are considered as harassment in the eyes of the law.

1. Any conduct that is severe that it creates a hostile work environment viz. intimidation, abuse, and hostility.

2. When improper or offensive conduct is expected to be endured as a condition of employment. Requiring sexual favours for a promise of employment is an example of this type of harassment.

Getting annoyed or enduring petty slights are as such not considered as forms of harassment from a legal standpoint. However, when there is an increase in the

incidents to a point that the workplace becomes hostile, it is considered unlawful.

Curbing workplace harassment

Prevention is the best tool to eliminate harassment in the workplace. By communicating to employees that harassment will not be tolerated, by training on harassment prevention, by establishing an effective complaint process, and by taking immediate and appropriate action on an employee complaint, employers have an opportunity to stop inappropriate behaviour, before it reaches the level of illegal harassment.

Creating a Zero Tolerance Harassment Policy

A written policy that citing zero tolerance to harassment is an important part of preventing harassment claims and protecting the business.

Organisations need to -

- Align with international best practices to create and communicate their antiharassment policy
- Establish an effective complaint procedure and encourage employees to feel comfortable to come forward with any problems they face at work, including harassment of any kind
- Set up a dedicated grievance addressal committee and specify its duties.
- Timely investigate any claims and do not penalise the complainant for highlighting the issue. E.g. do not transfer the complaining party to a worse location in order to separate the parties



- Do whatever is necessary to stop the harassment immediately
- Restore any job benefits that were lost due to the harassment
- Sensitise and reprimand the person who committed the harassment
- Take action to correct past discrimination based on the harassing conduct
- Painstakingly document the investigation and the steps you took to remedy the situation
- Conduct periodic awareness generation campaigns on prevention of sexual harassment
- Develop champions to advocate the cause of prevention of harassment

Harassment of any kind has no place in the workplace. Every employer has a moral and legal obligation to provide a work environment that is free from intimidation, insult, or ridicule based on race, colour, religion, gender, or national origin. It is also a business imperative to sustain business in the long run. 

About the Author

An HR professional, **Sakshi Sood** currently works for a pharma major in Mumbai. She has worked with reputed organisations across different sectors in the past. She is an Electronics Engineering graduate from NIT, Surat with MBA in HR from SIBM, Pune. Sakshi is an avid reader, she takes keen interest in the current happenings in HR world.



Analysis By **Kalpana Bansal**

Kamalinee's situation makes one to mull over their early days in corporate life since her experience is no different from what is being faced by millions of qualified professionals at the workplace. Anushree's unreal and unstated expectations is truly condoning. And, data from nearly every employee engagement or exit survey reveals that the young feel that they have not been treated fairly by their reporting manager, or that the given work is "beneath" them.

One can reminisce their career during which they may have even ended up sweeping the stairs, cleaning restrooms, making photocopies, and brushing carpets. A year ago, one ran errands including purchasing green bananas for the boss' aged mother and organising a housekeeper at her residence.

Maturity and experience teach us two things- (i) Life never turns out as we expect it to be; and, (ii) We are not as special as we think we are. The Gita prescribes detachment and implores us to focus on our deeds, and do so with good intent, and to the best of our abilities, and leave the consequences to follow. The corporate world is disappointing because we probably have unreal expectations of what we do, and the change that we can bring. Kamalinee is experiencing what has been taught in MBA - "the school of hard knocks."

That aside, the question that looms large in Kamalinee's mind is the distinction between a "request" and a "work expectation". The time-honoured practice by the others in acceding to outlandish requests has morphed expectations into entitlements. Leaders like Anushree exist everywhere, and the restricting barrier to such unreasonable requests is the knowledge that someone is taking note of such behaviour. People tend to get away with stuff since they assume that nobody will point a finger at them. There is to an extent, a subservience of values to the self-interest in all individuals, and the prioritisation of ethical practice and values is usually the result of personal growth, perspective, and the ability to empathise.

Anushree might probably have some distance to cover in her journey to self-awareness. At times, an external party is required to hold up a mirror to bring home that reality.

Sudhanshu's inputs over Kamalinee's stance on office politics may be a trigger for introspection on personal stance as against organisational stance on core issues such as values. The culture of this organisation seems to permit the blurring of personal and professional boundaries, and encourage people to develop social networks based on parameters outside of work. Different types of people have differing levels of comfort over such blurred lines. In my view, it is impossible to keep the lines completely formal and not have situations that place individuals in difficult circumstances. It is up to the individual to choose to respond in alignment with how

they feel about the demands, and their own self-perception.

Do purchasing green bananas and getting the restrooms cleaned help one's performance review? Though not directly, it did help one to establish an equation with one's superior. It paved the way for honest discussions on issues where one could push back and effect change. And is it ethical to make such demands? Relationships are fluid, and we might choose to react differently in a relationship at some point than what we did at some other instance. When demands get excessively weighing on our internal conscience, we might just choose to walk away – the tipping point might just be different for each of us. **HC**

About the Author

Kalpana Bansal is Head - Competency Assessment and Development, Reliance Industries Ltd. She comes with an experience of more than 20 years and has worked in organisations such as Tata Unisys, Star TV, IMRB, Mudra Communication and Watson Wyatt (I) Pvt. Ltd and the RPG Group. Kalpana has an MBA and has completed her Executive Masters in Consulting & Coaching for Change from Saïd Business School, Oxford University.

So You Want to Be a Lifelong Learner!

Our ability to keep learning is so important that "learning agility" is often rated as one of the most critical qualities that strongly predicts the potential of a business leader.

BY DR. SHALINI LAL



Many of us imagined that by our twenties, we would be done with needing to be learners. By then we would “know something” of importance and would spend our professional time acting from that knowledge. And of course, as we became even more experienced, we would now guide and mentor others in our team who would do the actual work we used to. But is that true anymore?

In a world that is changing so fast, what we learnt even a few years back needs an update. To give you a sense of how much, consider that the World Economic Forum in their ‘Future of Jobs report 2018’ suggests that on an average, each of us needs an extra 101 days of learning by 2022. That’s almost a month each year! Given that most of us are already in full-time jobs where we feel stretched to our limits and also have many responsibilities at home, this may feel like an overwhelming idea. So here are a few tips and tricks that will help you create the rhythm you need to be a lifelong learner.

(1) Empty Your Cup

You may have heard the story of a Zen scholar who had come to learn



from a great Zen master. The scholar had studied for many years and knew many facts. When he went to meet the Zen master, he simply couldn’t help himself from telling the master more and more of what he knew. For a while, the master heard him quite patiently. He then asked him if he would like some tea. The master poured tea into the scholar’s cup. But then, instead of stopping when the cup was full, he kept pouring till tea spilled over and overflowed. “Stop! Stop! Can’t you see the cup is full?” shouted the scholar. The master smiled and replied, “But

you are like this cup which is full. When you are already overflowing with knowledge, how can I teach you anything new?” The scholar was at first taken aback, but as he understood what the master was saying, he began to smile.

At the heart of a learning mindset is this understanding. To be a learner, you first have to be able to “empty your cup” or be open to new ways of explaining the world. If on the other hand, you hold on very tightly to your current ideas, chances are you will not be able to learn much that is new and fresh.

(2) Do you have a process for learning? Do you have learning goals?

A recent article in the Harvard Business Review (*“Learning Is a Learned Behavior”*, Ulrich Boser, May 2018) describes a research study that shows that in order to be a good learner, it is not enough to be smart. In fact, many smart people are not the most open to learning. Instead, having a good process for learning is more impactful. This means that people who know how to learn will, over time, outperform other smart people who don’t.

Our ability to keep learning is so important that “learning agility” is often rated as the single quality that most strongly predicts the potential of a particular business leader. And this makes sense, right? Unless we have a good process of learning, experience alone can’t teach us.

So each of us needs a process, a rhythm and even goals for learning. For instance, I am learning how to be a better entrepreneur, a better consultant and a better writer, all while getting better and better at two bodies of knowledge—Organizational Science and Global Megatrends. Knowing this helps me guide my attention, energy and even money!

Do you know what you are trying to learn?

(3) Reflection allows you to grow

Each of us undergoes several experiences each day that could potentially teach us something important, if only we knew how. The best learners are able to learn something new from almost any new experience.

The most important step for learning is what happens right after your experiences. Without reflection, we can have many experiences and yet learn very little. It is in the conceptualization of our learnings that the seeds for new insights and actions are sown. For many learners, journaling is a

beneficial tool in the process. This is a never-ending (but virtuous) cycle.

We act, we reflect, we conceptualize, and then we try something new. And we repeat the whole cycle over and over again.

platform globally. Most of them are free, and you can listen to them in your car or while on a walk.

From time to time, you may also want to experience more structured learning programs—such



(4) Where can you learn from?

Now, once you have some broad learning goals in place, it is never difficult to learn, if you want to. One of the boons of digitalization has been the ready availability of any information you are seeking, almost instantly—books, magazines, journals—whichever you choose.

Reading is still one of the most popular ways of learning for some of the world’s smartest people. For instance, Bill Gates reads about 50 books a year. That’s about one book a week. A US-based study suggests that 85% of self-made millionaires read a couple of books each month.

Audible, a leading provider of audiobooks, allows you to hear books. If you like to listen to great ideas, you can also explore the world of Podcasts. While they are still not very popular in India, podcasts are a very fast-growing

“The most important step for learning is what happens right after your experiences. Without reflection, we can have many experiences and yet learn very little. It is in the conceptualization of our learnings that the seeds for new insights and actions are sown.”

as those offered by universities. Today, the possibilities are endless. Coursera, which runs courses by faculty from some of the world’s best universities, is still the strongest player in the MOOC market, but there are many others. If you want to learn from practitioners who are at the top of

their game, there is Masterclass. And then there are courses on other platforms like Udemy and Great Courses—each taught by skilled teachers.

There are many learning platforms, each with its own unique flavour. However, real learning is not just in consuming the content, but in engaging with it. This can take the form of writing in the margins of the books (like Bill Gates) or even maintaining a separate diary to record your learnings.

“There are many learning platforms, each with its own unique flavour. However, real learning is not just in consuming the content, but in engaging with it.”

(5) Learning from others

One of the wonderful things about being human is that we do not need to learn just from our own personal experiences, we have the ability to learn from others. There is a marvellous physical apparatus to this. Mirror neurons are a set of neurons in our brain that get activated when we watch others perform. The simple act of being around people who possess the skills or qualities that we would like to emulate begins to change us. Now isn't that wonderful!

You can learn from teachers, coaches, mentors or even simply by having a set of role models. Within your own organization, are there people you can learn from? You may work with them on a project or join their team. If not, you may watch them from a distance and seek a conversation. If you are lucky enough, you may even get some of them to be your mentors. And it is not just people senior to you who can teach you. If you surround yourself with great people in your team, you will have many opportunities to learn each day.

One of the other great things about the internet is that you can have virtual role models. You can watch them in action, and even if they do not know you, you can still keep learning from them. In some ways, this is no different from the story of Eklavya. He learnt from his Guru, even though his Guru did not know of him.

(6) A note on self-care

And finally, if you really want to be a lifelong learner, do not neglect sleep or exercise. Both have a deep impact on our ability to learn. Sleep allows our brain to wash away accumulated toxins and literally helps us stay fresh. And physical exercise changes the physical structure of our brain to strengthen conscious thinking. 

About the Author

Dr. Shalini Lal is an Organizational Consultant and Writer. She helps businesses build the leadership and culture they need. Reach out to her at shalini@infinityod.com and shalinilal.com

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Serenading Virtue: The Tryst With Character

The positive effects of experience, pain, and trial and error cannot be overlooked or underestimated during the formation of moral leadership.

BY KALPANA BANSAL



The western models of Leadership Development are person-centric. They strongly put the onus of character development on the individual, while emphasising “free will” and the human ability in discerning the right choice. Models of Leadership Development developed on the western theory focus on instilling a “sense of goodness” in leaders, or in the belief that if people “know” the “right thing to do”, they will act on it.

In their book, “*Ten Virtues of Outstanding Leaders: Leadership and Character*”, Al Gini and Ronald Green reinforce their claim that virtue is a matter of character and habit. They emphasise that the positive effects of experience, pain, and trial and error cannot be overlooked or underestimated in the formation of moral leadership. When this is contrasted with the Indian reality and the Hindu concept of tolerance, it is apparently visible in the day to day folklore and myths about Hindu Gods

outlined in the words of the author below:

“Walking through a temple, you might form the impression that Hindus take their idols lightly. Here, a God is stealing the clothes of damsels frolicking in a lake; there, another God encourages his brother to cut off the nose and ears of an admirer. On many walls of great temples, minor Gods and Goddesses engage in sexual acts that would never be shown on television before the watershed. Hindu Gods are imperfect, and act in morally ambiguous ways, using trickery, treachery, and subterfuge. They also show nobility, courage, and valour.” (Tripathi, 2008)

The above quote very succinctly summarises the Hindu concept of humanity and the concept of imperfection in existence. The basic premise of successive births, each eradicating or minimising prior “karma” is an integral part of the Indian construct, and therefore, it embraces the “darker” sides of

the morally virtuous as part of their Karmic penance.

“The basic premise of successive births, each eradicating or minimising prior “karma” is an integral part of the Indian construct, and embraces the “darker” sides of the morally virtuous as part of their Karmic penance.”

A mythological perspective

India has had a 3000-year old tradition of developing Leaders. It was part of the Guru Shishya (teacher- student) culture in which storytelling, sacrifice, and discipline were instilled in the offspring of the

royalty, saints, and scholars to build character and enhance resilience.

Various Indian texts outline that the prototype of a good leader is found in the ideals of *kshatra* – being selfless, well learned in subjects like statecraft, governance, war science, justice, commitment to dharma, ability to endure and face hardships, an attitude of being dispassionate and impersonal when delivering justice and punishment. This is a view at the highest level, and the several qualities required of a leader or ruler are found across hundreds of primary texts, which can be classed as under:

- **Ramayana, Mahabharata, Purana, ArthaSastra, and Smrti-s:** These elaborately discuss Raja dharma, and the main qualities required in a King such as “prajaranjakatva” (managing citizens) and “siksha dakshata” (education and up fitment).
- **Panchatantra, Vikramaditya-Betala and Bhoja-sala Bhanjika:** These texts demonstrate through stories the subjects discussed above in a way that they enable even a layman to understand.

(source: samvitkendra.org)

Story-telling and folklore were used to differentiate the concept of good and bad, and the acceptance of human frailties requires constant work on itself.

The Gita as a Leadership Development guide

It is believed that the Bhagavad Gita came into being around 200 BCE (a little over 5,000 years ago). The Gita is a dialogue between Sri Krishna and His dear friend Arjuna. Ever since the great commentator, *Sri Sankara*, fixed the total number of verses in The Gita as 700, this is being accepted as the most authentic number, and all the modern editions of the Gita contain 700 verses.

Few interesting aspects of The Bhagavad Gita and The Mahabharata

- 18 main *Puranas* (chapters)

- 18,000 *Shlokas* of *Srimad Bhagavatam*
- 18 *Parvas* (sections) of the *Mahabharata*
- 18 *Akshauhini* (divisions) of the army were involved in the battle of Kurukshetra (the Kauravas controlled 11, while the Pandavas controlled 7)
- 18 days was the duration of the battle
- 18 chapters in the *Bhagavad Gita* carry a lesson for each day of the battle.

It is indeed astonishing that an epic of such proportion was narrated in the middle of strife and bloodshed, and “doing one’s duty” was shown as the true path of a Leader. The war in itself was built on an artifice of deceit, treachery, and violence. And through this, the Gita outlines a path to higher spiritual consciousness of a Leader.

The Gita postulates a simple three-fold structure of reality: the world (*jagat*), the individual self (*jiva*), and God (*Parmatma*), and that there is no other entity besides these. The Gita states that what we witness through our own eyes is the world. And all of us have a vivid experience of the world characterised by activities and objects. Similarly, everyone has a vivid experience of his or her being or existence or self. Devdutt Pattnaik, the famous Indian mythologist, has summarised the 18 chapters of the Gita in 18 tweets to distil its essence beautifully.

Similarities with Western Thought

The Indian mythological text as well as the Bible make references of the powers of spiritual consciousness to improve character development, self-control, and higher awareness.

The Hindu concept of *dharma*, “doing one’s duty”, is the essence of spiritual leadership. Lord Krishna’s reference to *dharma* in The Gita reinforces his statement that Arjuna must perform his own *dharma* (duty), and not neglect it in the name of *dharma*. Arjuna



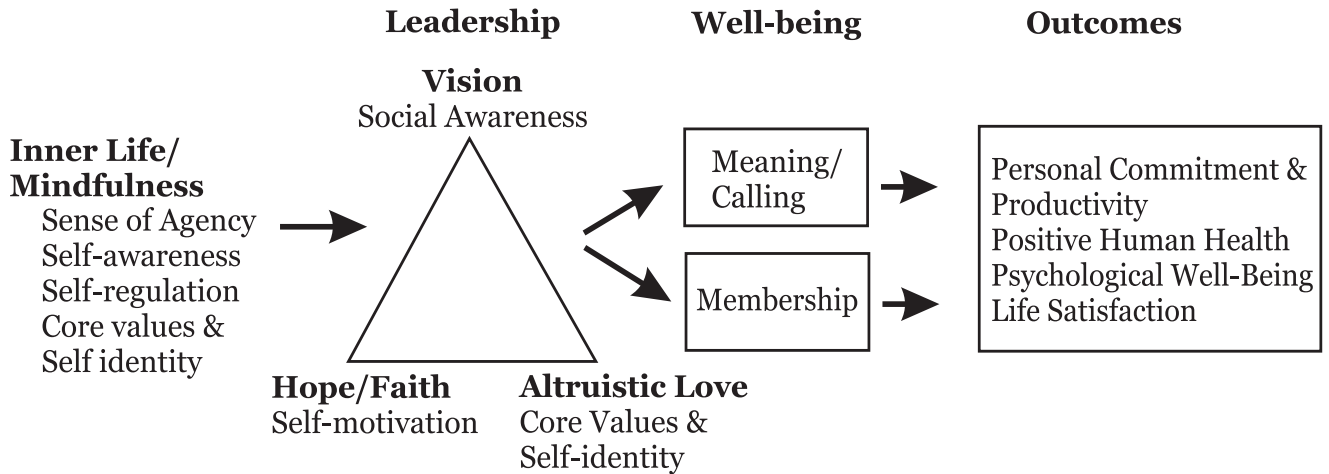
can neither protect *dharma* nor keep himself on the spiritual platform if he abandons the duties that are inborn to him. Thus, the Lord says, “*One’s own dharma, performed imperfectly, is better than another’s dharma well performed. Destruction in one’s own dharma is better, for to perform another’s dharma leads to danger.*” (from the English version of The Bhagavad Gita)

Authors Sweeney and Fry state, “*Spiritual leadership facilitates development of the social awareness, motivation, and core values and self-identity components of character development. Spiritual leadership emerges from an interaction of a leader’s vision, deep caring for group members, and hope and faith. Leaders who form compelling visions work on a higher purpose while fulfilling organizational values provide group members direction, inspiration to achieve the worthy objective, and, most importantly, meaning.*”

(source: ispiritualleadership.com)

Character-Centric and Situation-Centric approach

The concept of a Character-Centric approach of Leadership and the Situationist approach of Leadership aptly exemplifies the differences between the western school of thought and the Indian belief system. The western thought emphasises the concept of free will



and self-development of character and righteousness, and pins the onus on the individual. The Indian belief system is based on the concept of “dharma”, which is doing one’s duty, irrespective of one’s situation. The concept of rebirth and doing one’s “karma” explains the basic nature of a mixture of good and evil in all human beings, and situations are opportunities to negate the collected “bad” karma of the past, in one’s quest to “moksha” or salvation.

There are similarities and differences in the Indian thought

and the western management model. The Indian concept of Leadership is beautifully encapsulated in the writing of mythologist Devdutt Patnaik: -

“Svaha is what a yajaman (Entrepreneur / Leader) invests: goods, services and ideas.

Tathastu is the return on investment: revenue in the marketplace or salary paid by the employer.

It all depends on who plays the role of yajaman, who initiates the yagna. The yagna can operate both downstream, as well as

“The concept of a Character-Centric approach of Leadership and the Situationist approach of Leadership aptly exemplifies the differences between the Western school of thought and the Indian belief system.”

upstream, so the devata can either be the buyer or the seller, the investor or the entrepreneur, the employer or employee, director or doorman.”

What works better is a situational decision. However, one can say that there are valid perspectives in both models and drawing from the best of those could enhance the principles of leadership character development. **HC**

About the Author

Kalpna Bansal is Head - Competency Assessment and Development, Reliance Industries Ltd. She comes with an experience of more than 20 years and has worked in organisations such as Tata Unisys, Star TV, IMRB, Mudra Communication and Watson Wyatt (I) Pvt. Ltd and the RPG Group. Kalpna has an MBA and has completed her Executive Masters in Consulting & Coaching for Change from Said Business School, Oxford University.

FIGURE 1
COMPARISON OF MAJOR FEATURES OF CHARACTER V. SITUATIONAL APPROACHES

Character Project-Person Centric

- Self-mastery and habituation to the higher good (Aristotle).
- Unethical behavior from weakness, pathology, or lack of moral fiber.
- Moral philosophy.
- Character development programs (indoctrination, exhortation, values).
- Prominent in leader development and legalistic approaches.
- Locus of control: Individual
- Good apples and bad apples.

Situationist-System Centric

- Situations drive behavior.
- Mid-twentieth century (Milgram, Zimbardo).
- Unethical behavior is the product of psychological and social cues.
- Social psychology.
- Used as a defense or explanation.
- Prominent in organizational climate and culture literature.
- Locus of control: The system
- Good barrels and bad barrels.

Visualising Unity And Newer Dreams

The process of Performance Appraisal functions as a pivot for every employee, who eagerly awaits the incremental rise in his/her compensation, and visualises this as a surprise gift from the leadership.

BY **ABHIROOP BANERJEE**



Every year during winter we cherish Christmas Eve, and envision Santa Claus landing at our doorsteps with special and surprising gifts, and spreading smiles to make for an ecstatic realisation of happiness. Similarly, every festival in the human society strives to unite diverse people to rejoice, celebrate, and build newer dreams for the future that are perfectly blended with wisdom and ethics. For instance, Diwali is celebrated as the festival of lights by the poorest of the poor and the richest of the rich. It is also seen as the festival that promises to enhance prosperity and happiness manifold every year irrespective of the financial and social status of people.

Every human being possesses a unique talent and calibre that needs a positive direction from mentors, coaches, and gurus to realise the vision of life. To be more precise, to know the truth of self-existence on earth for a bigger purpose for which the supernatural power whom we call 'God' has chosen us.

Also, the process of Performance Appraisal is initiated during Christmas/New Year in companies. This functions as a pivot for each and every employee, who eagerly awaits the incremental rise in his/her compensation, and visualises this as a surprise gift from the leadership. Given the disadvantages of Bell Curve/Forced ranking

adopted for appraisals, it is better to have appraisal systems without them. This also avoids performance categories that enforce branding a performance tag to each employee as Average, Good or Excellent only on the basis of the targets achieved. It is high time for corporates to re-engineer the terminologies for the appraisal process that creates bridges among employees, contradicting the vision statement, furnishing each employee as a talented potential.

The functional heads are responsible leaders to harness the power of the team's potential, and train them to the requisite business competencies to achieve the targets together. The concept of individual targets needs to be evolved as team targets and cross functional targets which makes cross functional team bonding and learnings flourish. Eventually, the functional targets get achieved with the synergy of cross functional team dynamics.

Hence, by incorporating the concept of incorporating targets (KPIs) categorised to the individual level, team level, and the cross functional team (leader) for the functional head to appraise quarterly/halfyearly to assess the performance of each individual as an Individual achiever, Team achiever, and Leader. This shall enable the employee to ponder on the focus areas with self/team members accordingly. The

percentages of evaluation distribution to Individual target, Team target (same department), and Leadership target (cross functional team) must be decided by the functional Head. The weightage of the incremental rise should be in the order of target hierarchy (Self, team, and leader).

Incorporating the above concept of a three-dimensional performance appraisal aspect of each individual in an organisation, that shall infuse tremendous synergy of trust, appreciation, and development. This helps visionary leaders to transform the business performance exponentially with a robust performance process that each employee shall eagerly strive to cherish and shall celebrate every quarter like soulful Christmas with a sparkling Diwali enthusiasm building future for self and organisation holistically. 

About the Author

Abhiroop Banerjee is the Training Officer, Plasser India Pvt. Ltd. He wields an experience of more than 15 years in the manufacturing sector in both corporate as well as a Plant set-up. Abhiroop has an MBA in Human Resources and a Diploma from the Indian Society for Training and Development (ISTD).



When Bhelpuri Speaks

Modern communication has to go beyond the standard Cs and include a D—for disruption. For anything to register in mind and make an impact, it has to be different from routine and disturb the status quo.

BY AMIT GUPTA

During a recent visit to a seaside city, I preferred to indulge in a stroll along the beach during late evening. Gradually picking up every step, I was moving with a cautious romance and enjoying the feel of sand granules, occasional movement of few organisms, intermittent stepping on sea-shells, the splashes of water, and the tides of my thoughts. The hustle and bustle at the place ensured that there was adequate worldly noise around me. It was a pleasant challenge to pass amidst the din of reality and also, listen to oneself. It always is!

As I was bathing in my ideas and transcending to a different world, a sound caught my attention, “*Aapka dhyaan kidhar hai, Ramlal bhelpuri waala idhar hai!* (Where are you looking? Ramlal, famous for serving

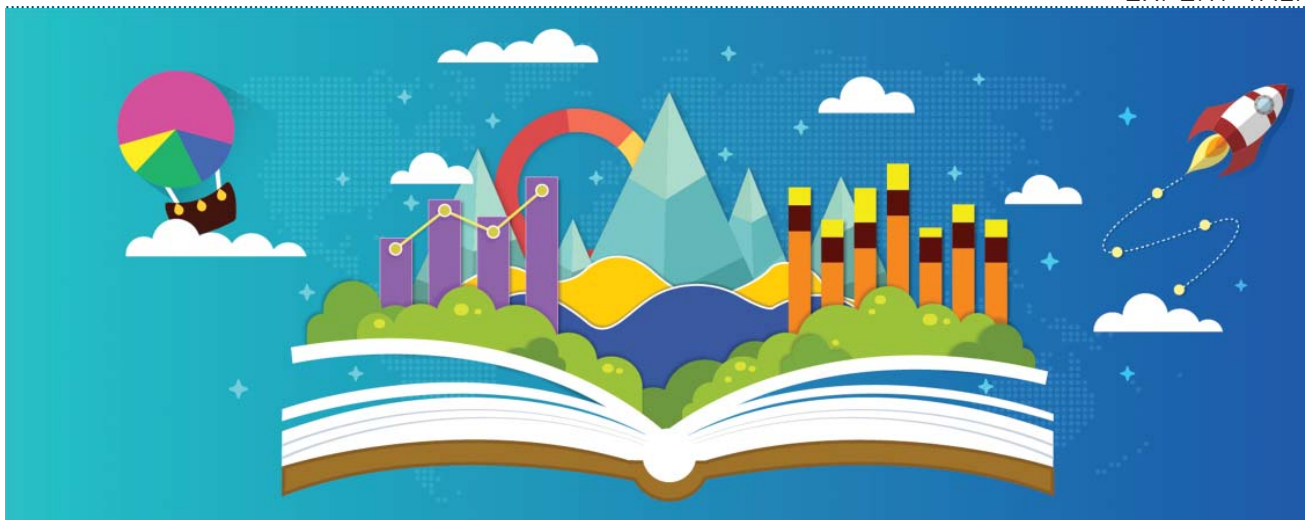
an Indian savoury snack, is here!)”

It was a small seaside vendor who was inviting customers with this call. I was tempted to move towards him, and I succumbed to the temptation. After all, in this era of information overload, where human attention span has reduced to about eight seconds, he had succeeded in catching the *dhyaan* (attention) of my ears and eyes.

I made a place for myself in the crowd around him and asked a co-buyer why that particular vendor was so popular while there were several hawkers around selling the same stuff? He said that it was not the taste but his unique way of talking that attracted customers. I watched for a while and observed that he was addressing each customer differently—*topi waaley babu, laal dress waali madam, daarhi waaley saab, saari waali begam*, and a few more in vernacular!

As a keen observer waiting for my turn, I found that each conversation was different. He was striking such a chord that customers were moving ahead with something extra besides carrying a plate of *bhelpuri*—a smile on their face! There was not even a single customer who went annoyed at his unique and distinct way of addressing. The words of the co-buyer echoed in my mind. People were enjoying the experience even though the taste of the food was not extraordinary. Amazing! I was excited for my turn to arrive.





“The erstwhile way of communicating through a celebrity spokesperson is gradually transforming towards a model of communication through storytelling. Yet another changing aspect of human communication is the emphasis on localisation.”

The *bhelpuri* vendor was winning a tough battle solely through his conversations, without harping on the product. The management lessons of 5Cs and 7Cs of communication surfaced in my mind. I had been thinking about this earlier, but this experience made me conclude that modern communication has to go beyond the standard Cs and include a D—for disruption.

Last year, Forbes Communication Council mentioned seven communication trends worth knowing about. The report has highlighted a key transition—the erstwhile way of communicating through a celebrity spokesperson is gradually transforming towards a model of communication through storytelling. Yet another changing aspect of human communication that has been underlined is the emphasis on localisation.

A reflection around self would make one realise that 80% of one's daily routine is a repetition. For this vendor, it was almost 100%. However, he was carving short stories and trying to make them as localised as possible. He was, in fact, generating what I call **“Energy Moments”**—moments that can create magic and enthuse the human spirit. Upon leaving his place, people were walking away with a fond memory and a smile—perhaps, the most difficult story to craft! He was, however, doing that easily with his words. We sometimes fail to do that even with our actions! It was a feat worth emulating for all those who remain

immersed in their regular jargons and protocols and find discomfort in defying the laid down regimen of communication. He was indeed brave—a spokesperson, a storyteller, and a disruptor.

I continued to watch the vendor with admiration and amazement. Aah! It was my turn. I moved on with awe. He addressed me as “*pardesi babu* (outsider gentleman)”. I was a bit surprised and asked him how he had identified me as an outsider? He told me that he read this from the inquisitiveness on my face. Before I could react, he cheerfully handed me a plate of *bhelpuri*, garnished it with special spice and said, “*Ek baar aayogey, hamesha yaad farmaogey!* (If you visit once, you'll keep returning!)” He was perhaps true. I had found an enlightening lesson at the cusp of a new year—a well-timed ‘Energy Moment’ that got etched in the memory for eternity! **HC**

About the Author

Amit Gupta is a senior HR Executive with Indian Oil Corporation Limited and has vast experience in Sales and Human Resource Development. He is a passionate writer, storyteller, and public speaker. He pens real-life stories regularly under the title *Myriad Musings* for The Times of India—<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/blogs/myriad-musings>. He also contributes to leading HR magazines. Amit can be contacted on amitonearth@gmail.com.

Ditch the Default: Leadership Lessons from Parenting

With the pace of change happening around the world, every leader needs to learn from experience and gain expertise. Moving out of comfort zones and exploring unexplored areas is the best way to develop oneself as a leader.

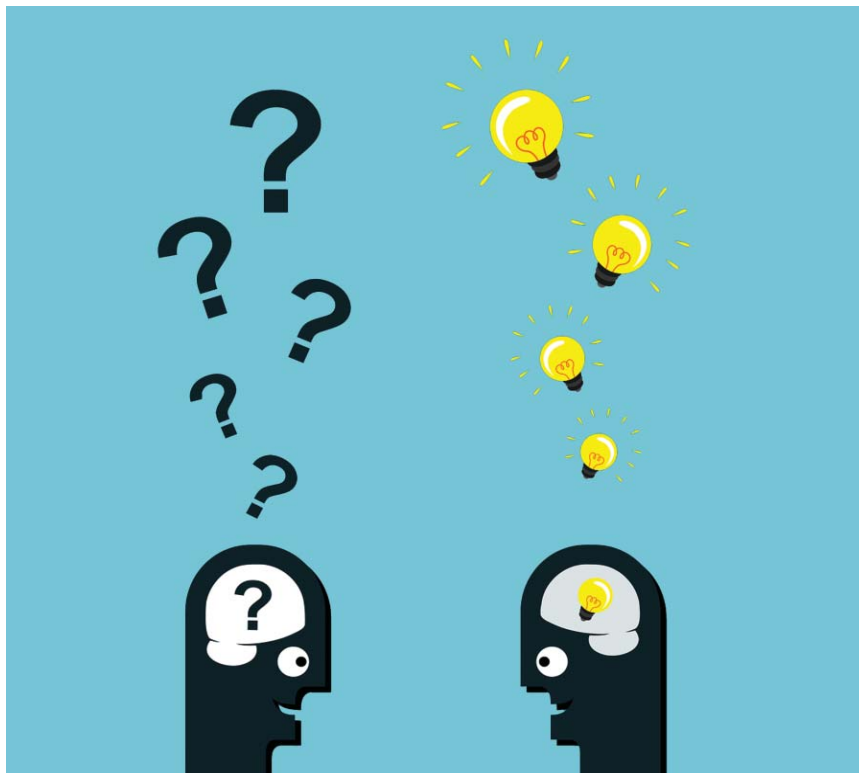
BY SWARNA SUDHA SELVARAJ



said, “My teacher wanted me to match the number names to the numbers”. “I know you like Math. So it would have been easy for you”, said the mother. “No, it is not. I was the slowest in class. Even before I could match three number names to numbers, my friends in class completed it. So, my teacher asked me to take it home and complete it”, said the little boy in a very low tone. He seemed unhappy with himself not being able to complete his work on time.

The mother asked him to show her the notebook and looked at the incomplete work. He was supposed to match the numbers to their names. On the left side of the page, there were numbers, and on the right side of the page, there were number names. There were ten numbers and the respective number names, all jumbled up on both sides. She knew that her son was upset with himself for not completing the work, and he would once again be his normal self if he could complete it. But he seemed to be thinking that the work was very difficult, and he would not be able to do it like he does many other number-related activities.

“Do you want to try it now?” asked the mother. The boy looked terrified and said, “No, it is difficult. I can’t.” She asked him if he wanted to learn how to do it, and he nodded his head affirmatively. “Then, you have to come and try”, said the mother. Though not very willingly, he agreed and started



A six-year-old boy was struggling to learn number names. He was studying in the first standard in an Indian school. He was very good at counting and, in fact, exceptional at addition and subtraction, which was not even a requirement in school for that age. One day, his mother noticed that her happy little boy was not so happy that week. She tried to find out what went wrong and saw one

notebook in his bag that he wanted to hide and not pick up. That was not very usual, either.

The mother was curious and asked what notebook it was. The little boy said it was something he didn’t want to show her and work on. With a smile on her face, the mother asked why he did not want to take that notebook out. He started crying and hugged his mother. Then with a soft voice, he

doing it. He looked at the number 7, which was the first number, and started to read the number names on the right side, one by one. By the time he came to the third number name, he had forgotten what number he had to match the number name with. Once again, he started, and then he was struggling to do this because he was not very fast with reading the number names and could not match the number to it easily.

The mother asked him what he was expected to do, and the son said that he had to match the numbers with number names. *“Do you have to do it left to right only?”* asked the mother. His face brightened up. *“No, that is not required to match the following. I could do right to left as well!”* said the excited son. He tried to read the number name that was listed first, on the right side this time. It was “Eight”, and his eyes quickly moved to the left side and found the number 8 and matched it to the name. He then moved number name after number name, made a couple of mistakes, and corrected it himself very quickly. He completed the work that had terrified him earlier and was so happy about what he learnt that day. His confidence level was once again normal, and he was excited about the next day of school, where he could showcase how efficiently he could match the numbers and names.

The mother taught an important lesson to her son—**Ditch the Default:**

1. **Face the fear;**
2. **Rely on strengths; and**
3. **Fail fast and fix fast.**

In today's world, leadership is no longer associated with just power and position, but more with expertise. With the pace of change happening around the world, every leader needs to learn from experience and gain expertise. Moving out of comfort zones and exploring unexplored areas is the best way to develop oneself as a leader. The lesson taught by that

mother is an instrumental leadership lesson to build entrepreneurial leaders within organisations.

Organisations can nurture young experts and build effective leaders of the future by giving the confidence to ‘ditch the default’ by:

- Creating opportunities for them to move out of comfort zones;
- Enabling them to realise their potential; and
- Standing by them when they fail and fix it fast.



About the Author

Swarna Sudha Selvaraj is the Head of Talent Development for TCS Europe, UK & Ireland. She is a vibrant HR leader with over 17 years of work experience gained from association with and Tata Consultancy Services and Murugappa Group of Companies. Swarna has been with TCS since September 2006 and has led the Learning & Development function for Banking & Financial Services—the largest Business Unit in TCS, Chennai region. She also has experience in managing the Learning Platform and Learning Content functions. Swarna has been recognised as an 'Emerging Training Leader' for the year 2015 (a global recognition from Training Journal, USA).

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Champions of Change

Here is a glimpse of how Accor, a global hospitality giant, is firmly anchoring 'Diversity and Inclusion' in its organizational philosophy and executing best-in-class HR strategies.

BY SRINIVASA RAO

Diversity and Inclusion

Our Diversity and Inclusion ambition is structured around 4 priorities:

- Gender diversity and equality;
- The integration of people with disabilities;
- A breadth of ethnic, social and cultural origins; and
- Multi-generational synergy.

RiiSE

In October 2018, RiiSE, an international network, was announced for the Accor group to promote diversity, knowledge-sharing, and inclusiveness. *Why the 'ii'?* Because it symbolizes *women and men* who are committed to the values of sharing knowledge of solidarity, and of combatting stereotypes.

RiiSE, open for both men and women, is active across five continents via the mobilization of strong regional communities. Its action is based in particular with the sharing of knowledge through a mentoring program, with 900 mentor-mentee pairs in some 20 countries in 2018. It works on the promotion of especially female talent to positions of responsibility, and on combatting all forms of discrimination.

With continuous efforts towards female hiring and RiiSE Initiatives

during 2019, we were able to recruit 22% of female employees. This helped us reach a total female ratio of 23% in our hotels. We aim to increase it to 30% by 2022. Recently, Pullman & Novotel New Delhi Aerocity hosted the first anniversary of RiiSE.

The HeForShe Initiative

HeForShe is an international solidarity movement working for gender equality initiated by United Nations (UN) Women with an objective to ensure that actions promoting gender equality are also supported and driven by men. Accor has been named as an Impact 10 x 10 x 10 Champion alongside nine other companies to represent this movement around the world. With "HeForShe", Accor pledges to achieve gender parity in management and equal pay, and sensitize and motivate male employees in favour of gender diversity.

HEARTIST

"Heartist" is heart plus artist. It is a cultural transformation journey of Accor, based on the DNA defined by the teams around the world. This initiative mentions each employee as a "Heartist" — a master of the art of hospitality who serves others from the heart, with curiosity and inventiveness. Each employee is empowered and autonomous, learns from others, is engaged in sharing knowledge and experience, and relies on new digital environments. The promise to employees is that they will feel valued and the talent in each of them will be recognized, making them actors of their own progress.

As a part of Heartist (Accor Hotel's global Initiative) launch at Pullman & Novotel New Delhi Aerocity in January 2018, we have re-designed rewards and recognition programs into Heartist Excellence Awards. The aim is to recognize



employees in various categories such as Incredible Associate, Incredible Executive, Feel Welcome Award, Women Leadership, Empowerment Award, Leadership Empowerment Award, Incredible Intern Award, Incredible Outsourced Employee Award, Stylish Starts, Trend Setter Award, etc. At Pullman & Novotel New Delhi Aerocity, we recognize 27 employees every month, and winners are awarded certificates and gift cards during month-end celebrations.

With the launch of the Heartist Campaign, we at Pullman & Novotel New Delhi Aerocity have decided to renovate all Heart of the House areas like Employee Entrance, Staff Area Corridors, Café Urbane, Lockers, Bunkers, and Admin Offices for all Heartist activities and initiatives.

Employee Satisfaction

Accor has tied-up with Aon globally for regular employees to participate in Employee Opinion Surveys which have 64 statements on 16 parameters like engagement, growth and development of people, communicating transparency, developing sense of service, developing collaboration between teams, encouraging individual initiatives, ensuring good quality of work-life, giving meaning and direction, improving organization's working conditions, improving perception of the company, recognizing individual and team contribution, strengthening support to employees, successfully onboarding new colleagues, supporting change linked to digital, and follow-up questions.

Pullman and Novotel New Delhi Aerocity has achieved the highest employee satisfaction score of 93% in Aon Employee Global Opinion Survey in 2019, which was 89% in the previous year.

INSPIRE

Accor's leadership development program 'INSPIRE' offers many opportunities for tomorrow's



leaders. The program is aimed at enabling passionate, motivated and agile graduates to start their career journey with Accor and build a leadership foundation through meaningful experiences.

INSPIRE connects up-and-coming leaders to meaningful opportunities through a 12 to 18 months customized program. Participants have a choice between a **cross-exposure structure**, where they are rotated between several departments across the property, moving into a focus area of interest, or **specialization** to develop their expertise by gaining experience in departments with a specific focus. In both cases, a personal mentor guides their progress. Other program elements include peer ambassador, property project, networking opportunities, jump up and checkpoints.

At Pullman & Novotel New Delhi Aerocity, we have promoted 80 high potential employees (12% of total manning) during the annual increment cycle and have transferred 28 employees from our hotels to other Accor properties in higher levels under mobility and talent development. We also visited 18 hotel management colleges for the campus recruitment drive to attract fresh talent and to generate employment for young talented students.

PLANET 21

Planet 21 is Accor's sustainable development initiative with a vision to drive the change towards a positive hospitality experience. A total of 21 commitments have been

identified and structured under six pillars:

- Engage our guests in a sustainable experience;
- Co-innovate with our partners to open up new horizons;
- Work hand-in-hand with local communities for a positive impact;
- Move towards carbon neutral buildings; and
- Strive for zero food waste and healthy, sustainable food. 

About the Author

Srinivasa Rao is Director of Talent and Culture at Pullman & Novotel New Delhi Aerocity, Accor Group. He is a seasoned Human Resource leader with 18 years track record of successful accomplishments in managing all phases of human resource management, ranging from HR operations to performance management for the hospitality industry.



Dismissal During Pendency Of Dispute

BY K.V. SINGH AND NACHIKETA GOYAL

When proceedings concerning a workman are underway, the moot question is whether the employer is permitted to dismiss / discharge him. And the answer is yes. However, the same is subject to an application seeking the discharge of the workman being filed by the employer as per the proviso to Section 33 (2) (b) of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 (“Act”). And as per the aforesaid proviso, unless the workman has been provided with wages for a month, and an application has been made by the employer to the authority before which the matter is pending, and such application is approved by the aforesaid authority, the workman

cannot be discharged during the pendency of the proceedings.

The decision of the adjudicating authority under Section 33 of the Act is based on *prima facie* view of the adjudicating authority as to whether the domestic enquiry conducted by the employer, prior to proceeding with the discharge/dismissal of the workman is proper, just, and fair or otherwise. Further, an application under Section 33 of the Act does not affect the pending proceedings under Section 10 of the Act, or the right of a workman to proceed under Section 10 of the Act.

Recently, the Hon’ble Supreme Court of India, in the case of John D’Souza v. Karnataka State Road

Transport Corporation [Civil Appeal No. 8042 of 2019] elucidated the powers of an adjudicating authority while deciding an application under Section 33 (2) (b) of the Act. The facts of the aforesaid case are that the workman (Appellant) joined the Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (Respondent) as a bus conductor on 28th November, 1984. The workman reportedly remained absent from duty from 18th August, 2005. Thereafter, he was sent a notice on 5th September, 2005 to resume his duties, and subsequently, an article of charges was sent to him on 23rd June, 2006. Since the workman did not respond to the charge sheet, an enquiry was initiated

against him. The workman, despite being given the opportunity, did not produce his evidence or witnesses in the domestic enquiry. Thereafter, on the conclusion of the enquiry, a showcause notice was served upon the workman, which was replied to by the workman. However, the disciplinary authority not being satisfied with the workman's reply, passed an order dismissing the workman. Since, an industrial dispute was already pending against the workman, the employer moved an application under Section 33 (2) (b) of the Act before the Labour Court. The Labour Court framed the following questions for consideration:

- 1) Whether the domestic enquiry held against the workman was fair and proper?
 - 2) Whether the enquiry officer was justified in holding that the charges were proved?
 - 3) Whether the disciplinary authority was justified in dismissing the workman?
- and
- 4) To what award or order parties were entitled?

The Labour Court held that the domestic enquiry against the workman was just and fair. However, on the basis of new evidence produced before it by the workman, the Court held that the disciplinary authority was not justified in dismissing the workman, thereby, rejecting the application of the employer under Section 33 (2) (b) of the Act. The employer challenged the order of the Labour Court in a Writ Petition filed before the High Court. The High Court dismissed the Writ Petition against which the employer filed a Writ Appeal before the Division Bench. The Division Bench ruled that the Labour Court stretched its jurisdiction while deciding the application under Section 33 (2) (b) of the Act, by taking into consideration new documents produced by the workman, and

that the Order of the Single Judge Bench of the High Court was liable to be set aside. Against the aforesaid Order of the Division Bench, an appeal was filed by the workman challenging the aforesaid Order.

The Hon'ble Supreme Court of India observed:

"31. This Court in the above cited decisions, has, in no uncertain terms, divided the scope of enquiry by the Labour Court/Tribunal while exercising jurisdiction under Section 33(2)(b) in two phases. Firstly, the Labour Court/Tribunal will consider as to whether or not a prima facie case for discharge or dismissal is made out on the basis of the domestic enquiry, if such enquiry does not suffer from any defect, namely, it has not been held in violation of principles of natural justice and the conclusion arrived at by the employer is bona fide or that there was no unfair labour practice or victimisation of the workman. This entire exercise has to be undertaken by the Labour Court/Tribunal on examination of the record of enquiry and nothing more. In the event where no defect is detected, the approval must follow. The second stage comes when the Labour Court/Tribunal finds that the domestic enquiry suffers from one or the other legal ailment. In that case, the Labour Court/Tribunal shall permit the parties to adduce their respective evidence and on appraisal thereof the Labour Court/Tribunal shall conclude its enquiry whether the discharge or any other punishment including dismissal was justified."

The Supreme Court held that the Labour Court did not exceed its jurisdiction in allowing the workman to adduce evidence but it erred in relying upon the same despite holding that the enquiry was just and fair. Therefore, only in a case of *prima facie* defective enquiry, the adjudicating authority can allow additional evidence to be adduced and rely upon the same.



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I am a human resource manager in a company in Gurgaon. We frequently encounter problems with the workmen employed and various other parties. Instead of going to the courts and tribunals for all the disputes, we would like to explore the option of conciliation. Could you please help us understand the procedure followed by the conciliation officers?

Please note that Section 11 of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 (**“ID Act”**) provides the procedure for conciliation with respect to an industrial dispute. As per Section 12 of the ID Act, if an industrial dispute exists or is apprehended, the conciliation officer can hold conciliation proceedings. The officer, for the purpose of bringing about a settlement of the dispute, will investigate the dispute and carry out all such acts as he thinks fit to induce the parties to come to a fair and amicable settlement of the dispute. Once a settlement has been arrived at, the conciliation officer shall send a report to the Government along with a memorandum of the settlement signed by the parties. If a settlement has not been arrived at, the conciliation officer shall send a report to the Government stating all the steps which have been taken by him and the reasons as per his opinion as to why the settlement could not be reached. After the examination of the report, if the appropriate Government is satisfied that the case can be referred to a

Board, Labour Court, Tribunal, or National Tribunal, it will make such a reference. If a reference has not been made, the appropriate Government will communicate the reasons to the parties involved. Also, please note that the report by the conciliation officer should be submitted to the appropriate Government within 14 days unless some other time period has been fixed by the Government itself. Under the ID Act, the settlement is binding upon the parties.

I work with an information technology company based in Delhi. With respect to the recent Code on Wages, 2019, what shall be the implication on bonus?

As per the Section 2 (21) of the Payment of Bonus Act, 1965, the definition of the term ‘wage’ does not take into consideration allowances excepting dearness allowance and food allowance. However, as per the Code on Wages, 2019, various allowances and components are included under the definition of wage if the same exceed 50% of the amount payable as wages. Section 2 (y) of the Code on Wages, 2019, provides that payments made to employees under certain heads such as allowances, commissions, incentives excepting bonus, etc. exceeding 50% of the amount payable as wages shall be considered as a remuneration of the employee. Therefore, in such a scenario, an employee may receive a higher amount as bonus as compared to

the bonus calculated and paid under the Payment of Bonus Act, 1965.

I am a manager in a logistics company in Mumbai. In order to bring uniformity in our salary package, we are desirous of decreasing the basic pay of few of our employees who have been recently transferred from one department to another. What are the legal provisions to be considered while changing the basic salary within the same entity?

Please note that any change in basic salary of the employees, within the same entity, would amount to change in conditions of services as specified under Fourth Schedule of the Industrial Dispute Act, 1947 (**“ID Act”**), and the same would require the employer to give prior notice of at least twenty-one (21) days to the employees intimating them about the proposed change as per Section 9A of the ID Act. It should also be noted that Section 12 of the Employees Provident Fund Act, 1952 (**“EPF Act”**), puts an express restriction on an employer from effecting any reduction in the wages of the employees, if the same is only with the intention of reducing the employer’s liability to pay contribution under the EPF Act. 



Super Talent

Sought after they will always be, how to spot and nurture them organizations will have to see.

BY DR. SWATEE SARANGI

Talent who have the will and skill to augment business success is valuable. Megatrends of digital, data, diversity, and dynamics of geopolitics have made change more complex, chaotic, and challenging. In this state, businesses face challenges of surviving and pressures of excelling. They surely need talent who have the powers to innovate, the prowess to accelerate business performance, and the potential to realize strategy and maximize technology. Moving beyond fixed boundaries to merely optimize, organizations need talent who can grow and multiply manifold—those who have the power to be relevant and enable businesses to stay highly competitive, the hard skills to take advantage of what machines and bots offer, and the ‘human-centred’ skills to connect and lead people with purpose and passion. I call them **“Super Talent”** as they are a superb amalgamation of capabilities. A supply of super talent through both the make and buy routes is critical in accomplishing future agendas.

Defining Super Elements

Before acquiring them, we need to define the elements that super talent are made of. What is it that makes them outshine usual talent?

- Super talent rise above doing the repetitive and mundane activities which can be mimicked and even superseded by machines.
- They focus on the *key* and the *crux*, which are strategic and have high impact. Being high on human-centred skills, they can sense, feel and analyze events, people, and phenomena in incredibly sharp ways.
- They can fathom both reasons and emotions in the workplace.
- They can judge and decide on the current—and predict and comprehend future business trends using multiple data and pieces of evidence. I admire their competence and confidence to *visualize* and *realize*.
- When it comes to skills, they have both width and depth to use a

“Super talent desire to work with organizations that are aligned with their career anchors and core values. They seek to find purpose and derive meaning in their jobs and organizations by contributing meaningfully and growing significantly.”

range of technical and behavioural skills and have deep domain expertise in few. That makes them able and adept as *Specialists* with designing and consulting competencies. They also possess the power to don and transcend into *Generalists* when need be.

Being Super Real

While being extremely astute at deriving the advantage of artificial, super talent are *super real*. With high humility quotients, they emerge as builders of intellectual, social, and financial capital. We can easily spot them in the way they observe and interact with others, and by how they pay attention to the world and people around them. Using both the head and heart, they engage in ‘*super conversations*’. They reflect mindfully, listen actively, and connect deeply. With high compassion and empathy, they inspire their teams to achieve sustained stellar performances. Value gets multiplied as they lift and lead not merely by adapting in existing spaces but imagining new ones. They epitomize trust and empowerment and are super role models.

Driving with Super Will

Super talent have a spirit and will that is indomitable. They have the grit to take actions and make things happen. We hear them say “*Can Do It*”. By stretching and striving, they achieve meta goals which may seem almost impossible to others. They are not reckless but fearless. Super talent welcome challenges and changes, take calculated risks and deal well with ambiguity and volatility. Seeking possibilities for growth, they tread unconventional routes. Unorthodox and original ideas and innovative solutions come from them. Businesses immensely benefit as the will of super talent manifests in high levels of energy to pursue and push daunting goals.

Scoring in the World of Machines

The unique mental makeup of super talent makes them valuable, inimitable, and rare. While machines are

programmed to learn and execute commands, super talent have the passion and zeal to learn on the go, and visualize the big picture. Being high on fluidity and flexibility in their thinking patterns and delivery styles, they can contribute to unexplored shores. No matter how intelligent machines are, for leveraging them to add value in the changing context, we need the ingenuity of super talent. More than skills, they have the digital mindset to integrate and align with the artificial seamlessly. New business workflow and models aligned with dynamic customer aspirations can be met with their creativity and innovation.

Choosing Super talent

A systematic and strategic approach towards discerning super talent is critical. Following tools, if aptly used, can immensely help in making the right choice:

- A robust competency framework covering the behavioural domain and leadership competencies helps in selecting super talent.
- Nuanced proficiency indicators help in making reliable and valid decisions.
- An interview facilitated with the intent of learning more about the person than simply “judging” is key.
- Behavioural Event Interviewing and situational questions can reflect personality dimensions for the role and cultural fit with the organization.
- The recruiters are spoilt for choice with the plethora of psychometric tools for leadership assessment. Selection of the right assessment by not losing sight of the objective can help in gleaning pertinent leadership behaviour insights. They are especially useful for providing reflections on Emotional and Social Intelligence variables.
- Sometimes, organizations use a case study depicting real work scenarios and experiential exercises to gauge cognitive and even behavioural assumptions and inferences.
- Running a Development Centre (DC) through a battery of tests around a Story Board can particularly help in

objectively assessing competencies of candidates to think, act, and engage with diverse stakeholders and contexts.

Attracting Super Talent

The war for talent is real, and shortages for it is acute. Organizations therefore need to attract super talent in creative ways, keeping both the existing and potential employees in focus. The following tips and tricks could be helpful in this context:

- Being perceived and valued as an employer of choice offering promise of career is a catch. Super talent desire to work with organizations that are aligned with their career anchors and core values. They seek to find purpose and derive meaning in their jobs and organizations by contributing meaningfully and growing significantly. Authentic employer branding helps in providing a true narrative that helps talent to ascertain compatibility.
- Sequential interviews and multiple touchpoints in the selection process can help in unravelling layers about both the person and the organization. However, one thing to watch out could be that a multiple layered selection process runs the risk of super talent falling off in the middle of an elaborate, long-drawn hiring process.
- Connecting with candidates through respect and empathy can help form vital first impressions about the organization. Also, a good candidate experience could translate into an enriched experience of employee engagement later.

Growing Them to Get Them

Organizations that grow talent always find it easier to attract them. We need super talent not just in A-positions but across all organizational levels. Some ways could be:

- Progressive career pathing in both the ladder and lattice formats compel talent to see the promise of career growth.
- Variety in roles, challenging assignments, and structured mentoring helps to create optimism for the



future of younger employees. Providing safety nets in the form of buddies can help senior laterals settle down in their new *avatars*.

- Investments that organizations make in deploying and developing talent through classroom interventions, e-learning, role rotations, and action learning projects play a profound role.
- An organizational pull can be created through learning culture based on a growth mindset aimed at sharpening digital fluency and honing cutting-edge skills.
- Designing growth roles, creating empowering workplaces, and providing enriched employee experiences that are 'super' can help in getting and growing super talent. 

About the Author

Dr. Swatee Sarangi is the Global Head of Learning, Leadership and Organizational Development at Dr. Reddy's Lab. She has over two decades of blended industry experience encompassing teaching, research, training, consulting and leading excellence in talent modelling, strategic visioning, learning, people, leadership development, culture, workforce diversity and work practice innovations. An academic gold medalist, her Ph.D. is in Talent Management and Organizational Development. Swatee is passionate about applying human constructs in the workplace. She is an eminent researcher with several publications in reputed international journals. She is an avid collaborator who partners with best global academic and consulting partners to shape leadership and future workforce competencies with global dimensions. As a HR Influencer, she illumines audiences on diverse themes in various global forums.

“Talent Matters. But Super Talent Matters More.”

Burnout In Bankers

The cost of employee Burnout to businesses is enormous, and includes decreased individual and team productivity. It leaves the employees highly stressed and the resulting attitude sabotages projects.

BY DR. K N VISWANATHAM

Though not uncommon in the other industries, Burnout in the banking industry is strikingly overwhelming. Burnout is often viewed as a subprime crisis, and as such, no one ever sees it coming. Even though employees experience Burnout, they are not aware of the extent to which it would adversely affect them. Alexandra Mitchell, a career banker turned academic, opines that burnouts peak among the top bankers. And it has also been made evident by research that Asian bankers experience an elongated burnout zone from 'somewhat burnout' to 'total burnout'. However, the specific reasons for burnout among the Indian bankers remain unexamined.

Originally introduced by two psychologists, Herbert Freudenberger and Christina Maslach, Burnout does not differentiate between age, sex, colour, creed, industry, and nationality. It is hazardous, and can be contagious. And when left unchecked, it can impair individual health, human relationships, and organisational effectiveness.

Burnout is a state characterised by physical, emotional, or mental exhaustion, and when left unmanaged, can cause major breakdown among employees. And according to the World Health Organisation, Burnout is a legitimate medical condition. The main symptoms are: - lack of energy, low vitality, and loss of sharpness in thinking, decreased work engagement, difficulty in concentrating, reduced productivity, irritability, sleep difficulties, anxiety, dysphoria, recurring sickness, and



absenteeism. Burnout can often be misconstrued as “being lazy, uncooperative, negative.”

Burnout can strike bankers since they withstand too many pressures with too little time. The following are the common types of banker burnout victims and the classification is contextualised to bankers. (Borrowed from Nickell & Freudenberger)

- **Super bankers:** Who want to do everything themselves because no one else can or will,

and they have never let anyone down

- **Workaholics:** Who are driven to meet unreasonable demands (either self-incurred or assigned by others) placed on them.
- **Burned-out Samaritans:** Who are always giving to others while receiving little help or appreciation in return.
- **Mismatched bankers:** Who do their jobs well but do not like what they are doing.
- **Midcareer coasters:** Who may once have been high performers but have no enthusiasm left in them.

Formula For Burnout

(Too many demands on strength and resources over a prolonged period of time) + (High expectations and deep personal involvement in the work one does) + (Too few actions taken to replenish the energy consumed in meeting these demands) = **Burnout**

The cost of Burnout

The cost of employee Burnout to businesses is enormous, and includes decreased individual and team productivity. It leaves the employees highly stressed and the resulting attitude sabotages projects. In response to work burnout and to mitigate the associated costs to

businesses, many global companies have introduced appropriate training programmes to improve their employees' mental health and wellbeing.

Mindfulness may appear wishy-washy, but is a tested tool to overcome Burnout. Recent times have witnessed a "definite momentum change" with several global corporates employing mindfulness. Learning & Development leaders must give adequate attention to mindfulness because it makes their employees more effective. Mindfulness increases memory capacity, focus, effective decision making, and robust strategy formulation. It trains employees to use their prefrontal cortex, which allows them to make more measured responses in such a way that it adds value and reduces dissonance. Further, it allows employees to transition a period of change more easily, more congruently, and helps them in coping with the rollercoaster of workplace stress.

“Mindfulness may appear wishy-washy, but is a tested tool to overcome burnout. Recent times have witnessed a “definite momentum change” with several global corporates employing mindfulness.”

Organisations are also making use of mindfulness to tackle stress and burnout, and at the same time, to increase employee performance. Google is one such example that offers mindfulness to its employees. Barclays, Citigroup, J.P. Morgan, Goldman Sachs and PwC have implemented Mindfulness programmes for their employees to overcome Burnout and improve mental faculties and workplace productivity. The length and

breadth of practice research points towards implementing mindfulness.

The need to make use of Mindfulness

Learning & Development leaders in banks must give adequate attention to mindfulness because it makes their employees more effective. Mindfulness enhances memory capacity, focus, effective decision making, and robust strategy formulation. It trains employees to use their prefrontal cortex, which allows them to make more measured responses in a way that adds value and reduces dissonance. Further, it allows employees to transition a period of change more easily, more congruently, and cope with the rollercoaster of workplace stress.

A couple of years ago, top bankers in UK have been advised to address the well-being of employees after an alarming report mentioned that several bank staff believed that their job was bringing down their health. In another study, a major chunk of the employees concurred that their firm has a negative impact on their health and wellbeing. Employees of too-big-to-fail banks reported that their well-being and quality of life was disturbed. This is the time for banks in India to underscore the value of implementing mindfulness interventions.

In view of the above, there is a compelling case for senior leaders of banks to empower their employees to overcome burnout and must keep the following pointers in their mind:

1. Leaders of banks need to take the issue of Burnout into cognisance rather than brushing them aside, and consciously address this psychological aspect
2. Learning & Development leaders of banks must make room for a minimum 2-day mindfulness intervention as a mandatory requirement for all employees
3. Specifically, bankers who are in the domain of strategic business operations must undergo mindfulness intervention, and experience a roller

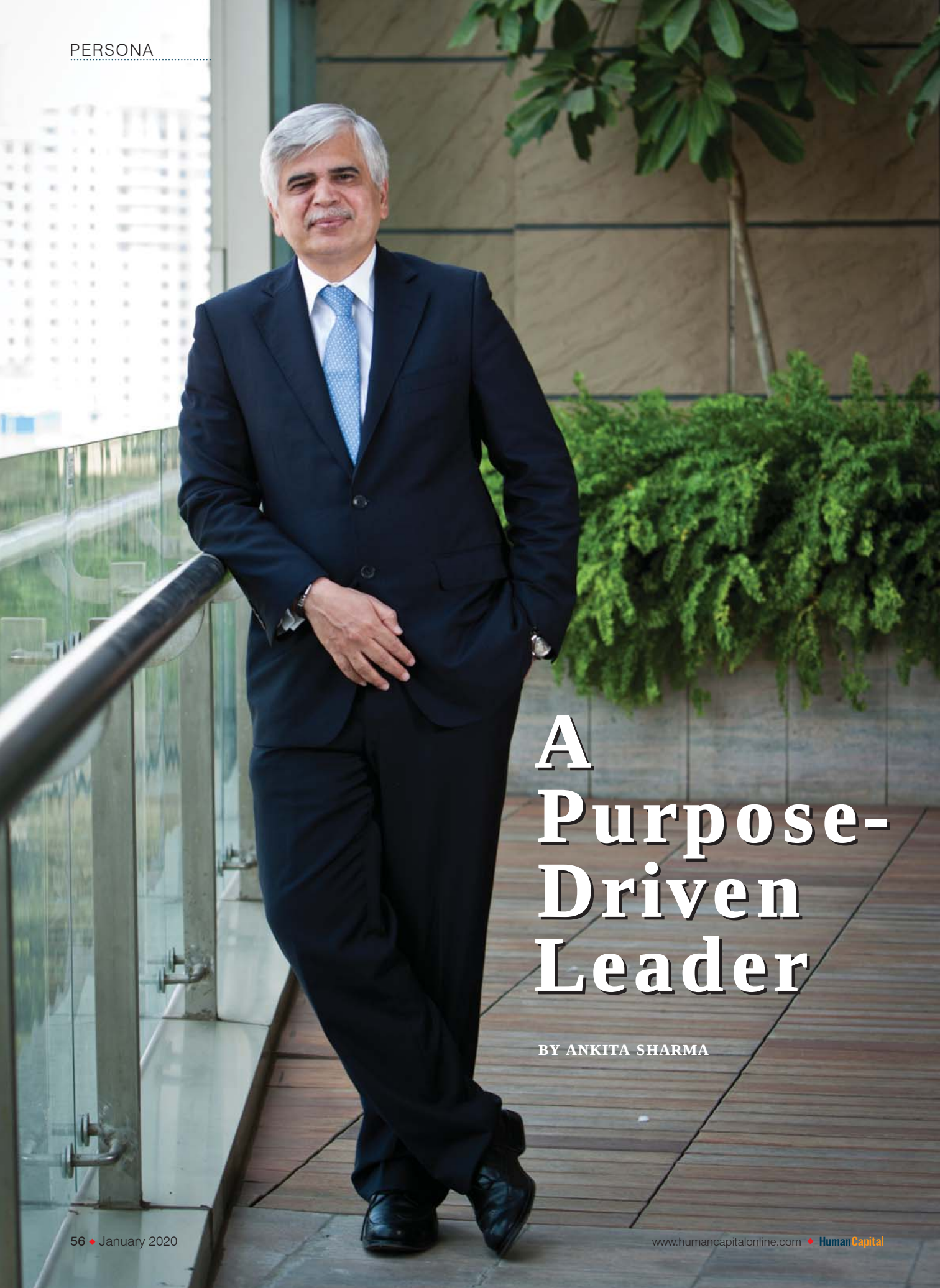


coaster ride with long and extended working hours.

4. Top management teams involved in strategic decision-making must have the benefit of mindfulness.
5. It must be acknowledged that mindfulness was developed as a systematic school of thought in the field of mental health, and hence qualified professionals must be engaged to implement these interventions.
6. Leaders' role in creating a positive work culture such as managing work processes cannot be undermined, so that individuals and groups are neither overloaded nor underloaded. Old fashioned practices such as eleventh-hour planning, endless meetings without meticulous agenda, unnecessary longer hours of working which hampers work-life balance must be consciously avoided.
7. To the maximum extent possible, policies should be in place to allow employee flexibility to work at the pace and manner that will ensure personal satisfaction while maintaining the much-needed productivity. 

About the Author

Dr. K N Viswanatham is a Senior Faculty Member at the State Bank Institute of Leadership, Kolkata. He comes with an experience of more than two decades in teaching, training, consulting, and research. Dr. Viswanatham has a Master's degree in Psychology from Andhra University, and an M. Phil & PhD in Clinical Psychology from NIMHANS. He can be reached on consultdrv@gmail.com.



A Purpose-Driven Leader

BY ANKITA SHARMA

Richard Rekhy, Board Member of KPMG Dubai and the former CEO of KPMG in India, is a leader driven by a higher purpose. He chooses to become a 'servant leader' and powerfully exemplifies its game-changing impact at all levels of the organisation and for leaders of all ages. Get ready to be inspired as the undeniably influential leader calls for a new direction of leading from the heart and shows us how consciously embracing higher purpose is transformative—at both the individual and organisational levels.

In 'The Heart of Business', Matt Hayes and Jeff Stevens profoundly write, "The inescapable truth is this: As the heart goes, so goes all of life. That foundational truth not only guides and impacts every personal human life, but it also profoundly impacts modern business and its leadership." Today, it is no secret that millennials and even younger Gen-Z want to work for purpose-driven organisations and be part of a "bigger picture". While the concept is really basic and fundamental, the hard reality is that only a handful of leaders and businesses are truly driven by purpose—the majority of them merely pretend to be.

Q How do you look back at your professional journey traversed thus far? Could you share some of the experiences you've had that really stick out for you? Also, what are your key learnings?

A My professional journey has been one of excitement. I have been fortunate to have worked for great companies and with high-quality people. I was lucky that I found my mentor very early in life who, in many ways, moulded me to become what I became. What I learned from him was to be positive, solution-oriented, and that one should always walk on the high ground irrespective of the financial loss or gain. While I imbibed my values from my parents, I picked

up my professional traits from two to three people who had a lasting impact on me and for whom I am very grateful.

My greatest learning came from my failure when I was with Arthur Andersen and could not make it to a Partner. I felt very disappointed. However, it was learning in many ways, about how I looked at failures, and my ability to bounce back even stronger by working harder, such that all the disappointments of that one year were more than made up in next few years through extra promotions, etc.

Life gives us challenges, and we must accept them. Most exceptional learnings happen when you fall or falter and are able to bounce back by recognizing your true talent and ability to perform at a completely different level.

The other significant learning is that the relationship is the key, and one should try never to burn bridges irrespective of the provocation.

As a leader, one needs to remain at the top of the situation, direct the conversations, and manage conflicts in an effective manner.

Q Based on your varied and rich experience in leadership roles, what, according to you, are the key 'drivers' and 'derailers' of leadership success?

A Key Drivers:

- It is important that leaders are inspirational, lead through

Rapid Fire

Favourite quote: "My mission in life is not merely to survive, but to thrive; and to do so with some passion, some compassion, some humor, and some style."— Maya Angelou

Favourite line of poetry: From 'Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard':

"Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth

A youth to Fortune and to Fame unknown.

Fair Science frown'd not on his humble birth,

And Melancholy mark'd him for her own."

The best book you've read recently: Factfulness by Hans Rosling

Leadership style: Servant leadership

Pet Peeve: People who pretend and are sycophants

I strongly believe in...Higher Purpose

The most important thing I do on a Sunday is... spend time with the family, including my dogs, doing various things which they want and go to the church.

I deal with setbacks by...working harder, taking the setback in its stride, overcoming the challenges, and emerging stronger. I strongly believe in the quote, "When you come out of the storm, you won't be the same person who walked in..."

personal example, and possess a high degree of empathy (EQ). A good leader is someone who leads from the heart, connects with the people, and shows concern and care for them.

- Leaders need to be agile, have good decision-making abilities, take accountability for their actions, and should challenge the status quo because what is going well currently may not work under changed circumstances.
- 'Humility' and 'Integrity' are hallmarks of a great leader.

Up Close and Personal

You are an inspiration for many. Who inspires you?

Sachin Tendulkar, Nelson Mandela, and Steve Jobs.

What has been your most memorable leadership moment so far?

The most humbling experience was receiving a gift from a group of office boys as a token of gratitude for bringing some policy changes for their welfare.

What are the core principles that drive you innately every day?

Being at the service of others and touch as many lives as I possibly can.

What are your top productivity hacks?

Greeting people with a smile and attitude which says “I care”, being concerned for their welfare, and creating a happy place where people feel secure delivers great results.

How do you maintain your work-life balance?

I would look at it differently and call it work-life harmony. As you keep becoming more senior in an organisation, you become hard-pressed on time, and that is your biggest challenge. Sometimes people become so caught up with the regular work chores that they forget the other facets of life. One should create a good work-life harmony such that both professional and personal sides are balanced according to the need of the time. Also, a hobby should be developed around something that one feels passionate about.

I ensure that I spend time with my family over weekends and take short vacations at regular intervals. On the working days as well, I go for my regular walk. Listening to good music is another stress buster for me. I also make sure that I get some time to read.

What would we be surprised to learn about you?

Irrespective of any position that I held during my career, I have ensured that I am approachable to people at any level of the organisation. Despite being a taskmaster, I have ensured that there is a human element involved, and coaching and guiding the team through tasks has always been my focus. Moreover, I never look for short-term gains and always act in the larger interest of the organisation.

What would your family describe you as?

I would like to provide an extract from a social media post by my daughter...

“I have come to realise my dad is so much more than the man I idealised my whole life. I have learnt what it means to be humble after gaining immense success. I know what it means to be charitable not for garnering recognition. I have learnt what it means to put your heart and soul into your work. I have learnt what it is like to be upright and honest, I have learnt that what a dutiful child is to their parents, and I have learnt that being a good human being above all else is what is important. And I have learnt all these things from you Papa. You didn't need to sit down and tell me how to live, but you showed me.”

Key Derailers:

- One of the biggest leadership derailers is arrogance, because of which nobody will come forward with suggestions, thus making the organisation less effective.
- Lack of self-awareness is another big issue.
- Leaders operating from an “I” position instead of a “We” position are self-destructive. An “I know it all” attitude can be fatal to any organisation's growth. The words of Steve Jobs resonate with me: *“It doesn't make sense to hire smart people and tell them what to*

do; we hire smart people so that they can tell us what to do.”

- Complacency and ignorance of the environment in which leaders operate can make the organisation vulnerable and resistant to change appropriately with the trends in the market.
- Leaders who aim for power over others, unlimited wealth, or the fame that comes with success tend to grow at others' cost, becoming self-centred and egotistical. They soon start to believe their own press. As leaders of institutions, they eventually think that the institution cannot succeed

without them. This is a big fallacy and leads to the downfall of many organisations.

Q A few years back, KPMG launched a ‘Higher Purpose’ global campaign under the theme “Inspire Confidence. Empower Change”. You were then the CEO of KPMG India. Could you take us through some of the key highlights of the campaign and how it helped inject a sense of purpose into the organisation's culture and employees' work lives?

A KPMG launched its global campaign “Higher Purpose” that was aimed at redefining the

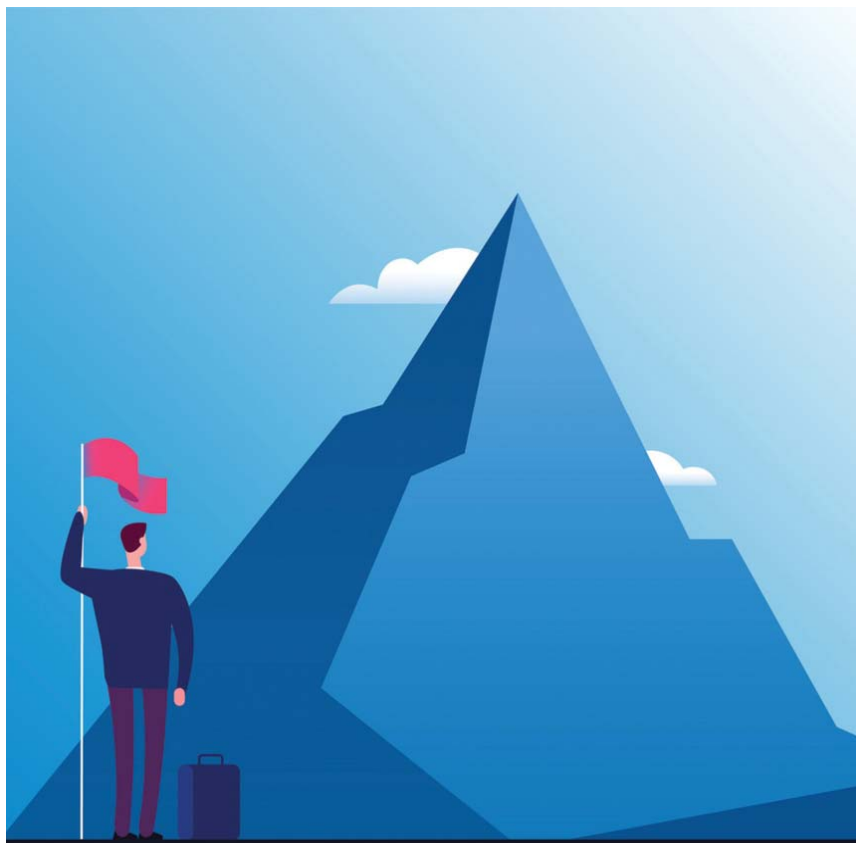
meaning of “work” and giving a sense of empowerment to its employees. The firm decided to involve its employees more closely by helping them connect their own purpose with the work that they do in the firm—something that was beyond paychecks.

I personally led this campaign in India. We wanted to create a culture that would bind the firm and its people together, make our clients want to work for us and serve as that forum on which people could find their anchor in an ever-changing world.

A full-fledged organisation-wide story contest titled **“Do you live your purpose at KPMG?”** was launched, which built momentum around the campaign. The stories could be about any person, event, or incident that inspired employees. This contest served as a trigger to get people to take a step back from regular work and think about what their individual purpose was. Informal sessions were also held, such as fireside chats to get people to casually share their personal stories.

To mark this campaign, we did town halls at three locations, and all the employees from India attended these town halls in person. It was truly wonderful to see the sea of blue and each person carrying their purpose in their hearts, some of which were narrated at the town halls. We had also invited industry leaders, inspirational speakers, and entertainers. In my view, this was the most successful campaign in the entire KPMG network.

This resonated very well with the employees and had a big effect on them. The attrition rate fell several folds, and people started feeling more connected through a common purpose. Employees were significantly more motivated to strive for continuous improvement and high performance, and they began to think that their work had special meaning and was “not just a job”. This also gave us the opportunity to bring our values to



life once again, and the very purpose of KPMG’s motto *“Inspire Confidence. Empower Change”* was achieved to a great extent.

Q What are some of the common mistakes you see organisations repeatedly make in developing next-gen leaders?

A We live in a time where change is the only constant. What most CEOs forget to do is develop a talent pipeline. For any company, the choice and cultivation of its future leaders are essential for its long-term health. It is also crucial that an entrepreneurial spirit within the organisation is encouraged to build a culture where leaders emerge from within. Moreover, leaders must be empowered at different levels, as this will help develop a talent pipeline and ensure a continuous supply of leaders from within the firm.

To develop people for the future, leaders need to identify current capabilities against leadership requirements of the future. Also,

they need to ensure that these identified individuals have a growth promise and the will to take the best advantage of and respond positively to the development opportunities. Coaching and mentoring of these potential future leaders will play a key role—this element is sadly missing in many cases. The leadership skills need to be tested by throwing them in the deep end of the pool.

Q Could you give a few quick tips for people who are newly transitioning into a C-Suite role?

A *“The highest destiny of the individual is to serve rather than to rule.”—Albert Einstein.*

What will distinguish good leaders from others is not the quality of the decisions they make, but how they exercise their responsibility and whom they consult in reaching these decisions. My advice would be:



- Use your power wisely and justly, or it can become a liability rather than an asset.
- Work to build your sources of power and use them to influence others in the organisation so that goals can be met and visions are achieved.
- Be energetic, agile, and out of the box thinkers. Also, always be high on integrity and live your values.
- Strive to create a sense of community both within and outside of the organisation.
- It takes confidence, passion, and drive to reach a level of success and then do what's necessary to sustain it. Be restless and always look to challenge the status quo. Also, always put the organisation before self.

- Connecting with people is very important. People are the heart and soul of an organisation. The quality of work from motivated and engaged employee is what will lead an organisation to success.

Q As we step into the 2020s decade, what are the biggest trends and themes you're watching out for in the HR and leadership space?

A The world is changing with the huge adoption of new technology, and HR is at the centre of this change. HR, as it is currently practising, will be dead in the next few years. HR leaders will need to get more involved in business and become an integral part of building the strategy of the organisation. They will need to understand the new technology and how it will

impact the workplace and the workforce going forward.

As far as leadership is concerned, leaders will need to:

- Be more agile and tech-savvy, challenging the status quo and reinventing themselves at much shorter intervals than they do now.
- Be relevant both in their thinking and attitude.
- Ensure that the organisation is adequately empowered and more people are involved in the decision-making process as the complexity and pace of the ongoing change are beyond the thinking of the people. **HC**

Nestlé Announces a New Global Gender-Neutral Parental policy

BY ANUSHRUTI SINGH

Organizations are showing increased interest in cultivating gender diversity, not because it is the right thing to do, but simply because it makes brilliant business sense. To foster an equal representation of men and women, Nestlé has launched an inclusive and enhanced global parental support policy. Under the new policy, parental leave for primary caregivers will be extended to 18 weeks of fully paid leave from 14 weeks previously. The policy establishes a minimum of 4 weeks for secondary caregivers, for whom there was no global minimum before.

“Every family is unique, so we have designed a parental support policy that is flexible enough to work for us all. Supporting the healthy development of infants has been a core value of our company since our founding. Our new parental support policy is an important part of our efforts to provide children with the best start in life, by allowing parents to spend more time with their new child”, said Nestlé CEO Mark Schneider.

The new policy sets new global minimum standards but does not set any limits, as in some places Nestlé may choose to provide more leave than the 18 weeks for primary caregivers and the 4 weeks for secondary caregivers. Additionally, the company will always allow longer parental leave if local laws require it. Besides this, the parental support policy reinforces employment protection, non-discrimination, health protection, the availability of flexible working options, as well as breastfeeding support.

Nestlé will start implementing the policy in 2020, with the global rollout slated to be completed by the end of 2022. 



Social Security for Gig Workers!

BY ANUSHRUTI SINGH



While the gig economy is emerging as one of the prominent forces in the new era of corporate culture, the Indian government is planning to provide insurance benefits to eligible flexi workers under the state-run Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC).

The move is a part of the Social Security Code Bill, 2019, approved by the Union Cabinet recently. The Code aims to provide insurance benefits under the ESIC to gig, platform and plantation workers. For the very first time, such workers will be covered under India's social security law. Usually, gig workers are referred to in the context of the sharing economy, for companies such as Uber, Ola, Zomato, Swiggy, etc.

The ESI law will apply to all establishments employing a minimum of 10 workers. However, employees working in hazardous establishments, even with a single worker will be given ESIC coverage.

As per the Bill, fixed-term contract workers are proposed to be eligible for gratuity benefits before completing five years of service in any establishment on a pro-rata basis. Presently, workers (in casual, contractual, temporary or permanent employment) are not eligible for gratuity before completion of five years of continuous service, under the Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972. 



Innovation: A Make Or Break For Retention

Employees are a vital resource for bringing in new ideas and techniques. And employees must be motivated by rewarding them for their creativity and providing the company with new ideas.

BY JOSH FECHTER

In a global economy, businesses have to compete against organisations around the world for a greater foothold on the market. It, therefore, becomes imperative for the company to introduce innovation in the workplace. For employers, innovation can help create new products and services that bring in additional clients. Creative options like wellness programmes and telecommuting are likely to make way for quality employee pool. When it comes to holding employees in the long run, innovative workplaces seemingly have a better retention rate.

Employees want forward movement

While some employees may be content with where they are, most aspire to achieve higher goals in their careers. The only way to make them move forward is through employee development. It is not possible for a workplace to offer promotions and leadership positions for every employee. However, one can offer development options like educational programmes, education reimbursement, and crosstraining opportunities.

Likewise, it is not possible to give a raise or promotion to everyone, but they can be provided with newer training opportunities. Such opportunities help in developing the workforce, which



also implies that the organisation is getting bettertrained employees for the same salary. Moreover, providing new opportunities cultivates a sense of gratitude among the employees. When they feel appreciated and enjoy their workplace, they are less likely to go elsewhere.

More than the daily grind

No matter how great you are as an employer, there are bound to be routine, mundane tasks from time to time. It is impossible to give exciting and interesting projects for every employee to work on. While the tasks may be routine, one can still satisfy the needs of the ambitious, forward-thinking employees through other techniques.

Therefore, organisations need to adopt innovative ideas in the workplace. If the leadership is constantly working on new ideas and revolutionary projects, it will surely excite the employees. Marketing a new project or solving engineering issues gives the employees something to work for. New and interesting projects help to make your employees happier, which can also encourage them to stay longer in your company.

Junior employees can be innovative

Unfortunately, many workplaces adopt a top-down management approach. And instead of encouraging new ideas, these traditional workplaces direct and

coordinate low-level workers. No one is able to think or act outside of this rigid hierarchy. This is a humongous problem because some of the company's most creative workers are low-level and entry-level employees. Instead of merely rewarding their tenure in the company, encourage low-level employees to speak up. Often, these new employees bring with them new ideas and fresh perspectives.

In addition to making the workplace more productive, listening to junior employees encourages them to stay in the company. Employees need to feel that they are being taken seriously, and are valued in order to stay at a job in the long run.

Innovation is difficult to define

While it appears that every business consultant, corporation, and training seminar speaks about the value of innovation, very few people bother to define what innovation is. In reality, the definition of innovation changes depending on the industry and the business.

The main goal is to define: -

- What innovation means to you?
- What kinds of goals are you working towards?
- Is your company creating forward-thinking ideas and leading your industry into the future?

Like any goal, innovative objectives of an organisation must be clear and measurable. One has to know what they want in order to accomplish it. In addition, the goals must be measurable so that one can know when it has been finally achieved. One should also make sure to communicate their goals and ideas so that everyone in the workplace knows what to work for as a team.

Poor execution leads to disruption

A few years ago, Coca-Cola decided to release a product called New

Coke. Among focus groups, New Coke tested well. People actually enjoyed it more than the traditional Coke. Unfortunately, Coca-Cola did not realise just how strong the nostalgia factor was among its customers. Coca-Cola held such a sway over the American culture that no one wanted to buy New Coke and give up the old formula. Ultimately, Coca-Cola switched back to its traditional blend.

Innovation is often a good thing, but this is not the case every time. A poorly executed idea or initiative can end up harming the corporation's bottom line. And if the poorly executed idea involves employees, it can end up causing them to leave. Before you adopt any new ideas, spend some time in getting feedback from your employees first. Often, the frontline workers provide the best feedback because they actually see how product rollouts and policy changes function in practice. Once it is decided that the idea will actually work, it needs to be planned out carefully to avoid a sloppy, unsuccessful introduction.

Companies must be adaptable

For a company to succeed in today's economy, it has to be adaptable and flexible. Rigid companies are unable to change and evolve as they need to. Netflix stands out as a good example for an innovative and adaptable company. When Netflix has a major change to its product offerings, it fires the workers who are no longer needed. In a typical corporation, the business would try to move these workers to other positions and avoid laying them off. Netflix removes any workers who are no longer necessary so that it can adapt to changing market conditions.

Thankfully for your workers, being adaptable does not mean you have to fire a bunch of employees. Instead, encourage workers to come forward with new ideas. Be

open to change. If something does not work out right away, offer new solutions or techniques that will get the job done.

Driving innovation

If employee retention is the company's principal goal, it needs to find ways to drive innovation. Employees are a vital resource for bringing in new ideas and techniques. And employees must be motivated by rewarding them for their creativity and providing the company with new ideas. If the other employees see someone getting a bonus, gift card, or are openly thanked for a creative idea, they will be more likely to dream up innovative ideas as well.

Other than rewarding creativity, new ideas can be encouraged by giving workers space to think and create. This may involve giving them actual physical space by offering telecommuting options. You can also give your employees space to innovate by setting aside time for brainstorming. Smart employers also encourage employees to collaborate together on new ideas.

From investing in development to becoming more flexible, there are numerous ways for an organisation to emerge as an innovative workplace. In addition to inspiring creativity, these techniques will also encourage employees to stay with the company. When the employees feel encouraged and rewarded for their ideas, they will want to continue their career with the organisation and dream up even better ways of doing things. 

About the Author

Josh Fechter is the Co-Founder and CEO of Squibler. He has written five books and has penned several blog posts. Forbes has noted him as one of "12 Innovative Founders To Watch And Learn From."



‘Spoken With’ Or ‘Spoken To’

The perspective of ‘Spoken With’ immediately brings to foray an opportunity that spells involvement, engagement, and a feeling of belonging. And these are significant contributors to the success of people, organisation, business, and customers.

BY KENNETH W WHEELER

Today, with digital natives occupying a larger workspace than ever before, employee behaviour is undergoing a paradigm shift. HR Managers across organisations are now becoming proactive in redesigning the workplace and people strategy to adopt to the rising sea of change. Among the multiple mindset changes, a single foremost critical attribute that the young workforce brings to the table is a clear expectation. The need to be ‘Spoken With’ and not ‘Spoken To’ is indeed very critical for the success of the employees as well as the employers. This is the very foundation on which behaviour at work will thrive in the coming years. The perspective of ‘Spoken With’ immediately brings to foray an opportunity that spells involvement, engagement, and a feeling of belonging. And these are significant contributors to the success of people, organisation, business, and customers!

Having grasped the subject’s importance, let us look at a few tools that can be adopted and practised to balance, and even possibly score higher on ‘Spoken With’ culture, as compared to a ‘Spoken To’ work environment.

The magic of active listening: A simple, yet powerful act of listening attentively with empathy goes a mile to build the strong



habit of executing the art of ‘Spoken With’. Leaders must look at adopting a mindset where they genuinely want to listen with the intent of making a difference for the better. Active listening can transform one’s ability to communicate and connect with employees at a higher pedestal, build stronger rapport, and reflect a direct impact on their well-being,

motivation, and performance output.

Managing by walking: This is a leadership behaviour trait that is highly fruitful when well performed. This tool gives you direct access into the employee’s comfort zone, and automatically establishes a platform to have conversations where you are using more of the ‘Spoken With’

“Active listening can transform one’s ability to communicate and connect with employees at a higher pedestal, build stronger rapport, and reflect a direct impact on their well-being, motivation, and performance output.”

approach. Take a few minutes out as a leader, walk the floor, and open a dialogue with employees – just ask; *How are you? How was your weekend? How is your project progressing? Can I offer any support or assistance?*

A simple touchpoint executed in this manner will greatly foster a spirit of ‘Spoken With’ and rest assured, such a practice is surely bound to impact employees positively, and they are likely to offer more of their best in return.

Ask leading questions: Every time your employee/team member asks you a question on some issue, problem, or challenge – how about you not jumping at the opportunity of providing an answer?

- If someone says, *“I am a bit stuck with this task”*
- You respond with a leading question, *“Can you walk me through all the steps that you have taken till now to complete this task?”*
- On getting a reply, hold for a bit and ask again, *“What else can be done?”*
- Wait again after the reply and ask, *“What are our other options?”*

Have your employees to speak more, and try to obtain the solution from them, and you will strongly score high on building a ‘Spoken With’ environment and contribute to developing your employees’ thinking acumen.

Pick ‘We’ over ‘I’: This is an amazing ability to possess that can potentially work fantastically well for you as a Leader to achieve the approach of practising the ‘Spoken With’ methodology. On picking this style, your communication does not come as *“I need you to work on this project”* but *“Let us work on this project together.”* With such an approach, you do not say, *“You failed to do this well”* but you say, *“We could have done this better.”* By adopting such a method of language and conversation, you make an impact where the employee never experiences the burden that they are working alone, but experience confidence with the support you provide. This helps with your employees being more innovative and forthcoming with their ideas, initiatives, and creativity.

“A simple touchpoint will greatly foster a spirit of ‘Spoken With’ and rest assured, such a practice is surely bound to impact employees positively.”

Encourage Intrapreneurship:

As a leader, it is important to set the premise of the conversation and project plan discussion. However, beyond this, one must then be open to let employees’ pick up the end-to-end ownership of the programme’s success. A powerful way to achieve this is to focus on developing a ‘spirit of intrapreneurship’ where employees take on every task/project wearing a ‘founders’ hat’. When you allow for such a culture to grow, you make a substantial contribution to let everyone know that they are ‘Spoken With’, and employees will be more committed to treat every project as their own baby and nurture it in that spirit.

It is a fact that employees are hired to contribute, and help achieve the company’s vision or an entrepreneur’s dream. It only makes sense to understand and practice various key aspects, which gets them to proactively deliver quality work, and go above and beyond their normal KRAs, while they continue to feel connected overall. The approach and tools called out above are fairly simple. However, it takes belief in the thought process of a leader to implement such initiatives at a ground level. I encourage to give the ‘Spoken With’ approach a try in all its honesty, it sure is worth its salt in millions! 

About the Author

Kenneth W Wheeler is VP Human Resources (L&D), LogiNext. He comes with 16 plus years of rich learning experience spread across industries. Awarded as 101 Top HR Minds (India) 2019 and a certified NLP coach, Kenneth is a well-rounded expert in Envisioning, Strategizing and Leading a robust gamut of HR and L&D framework, contributing to both MNC (Wipro) and the Start-up ecosystem (Ola, LogiNext).

Workplace Inclusivity for People of Determination

How to calibrate your organization to become an inclusion champion for People of Determination

BY MURAD SALMAN MIRZA

Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) initiatives within the corporate sector have been surging lately as progressive organizations scramble for desired talent to sustain relevance and competitiveness in the digital age. However, achieving efficacy in proportional representation of conventionally marginalized segments of the workforce in promising career paths is proving to be a daunting goal. One of the key factors in the respective context is the inability of the disenfranchised to have a 'loud and coherent voice' by influential backers that resonates effectively throughout the corridors of power. Willing and capable 'People of Determination' are confronted with such a dilemma at every stage of their endeavours to make meaningful contributions to society.

“While technology has increased the possibility of adding more 'People of Determination' to the workforce, for example, as customer service representatives, app developers, bloggers, data scientists, etc., their overall contribution at majority of the businesses are still relatively low and prone to promotional organizational branding moves, rather than concrete inductions as a significant element of strategic initiatives.”

Additionally, the penchant for using technology as a 'panacea for

all ills', rather than an 'enabling tool for achieving efficiencies' leads to considerable lags in 'low-tech' solutions that are often more important for organizational effectiveness than the flashy allure of 'do it all' gadgetry. Consequently, let us explore how an organization can calibrate effectively for becoming an Inclusion Champion for the 'People of Determination' by prudently optimizing the hybrid use of high-tech (product-focused) and low-tech (people-focused) solutions.

A simple way is by developing a checklist of astute self-reflective questions that cultivate the right thought processes and galvanize robust, actionable measures to bring desired results. Some of those are as follows:

High-Tech (Product-Focused)

- How is technology facilitating the inclusion of people with disabilities in our organization? Can we see some shining examples in the respective context?
- What are some of the challenges faced by people with disabilities in our workplace? Have we taken some measures to overcome them with the help of technology? If so, were the respective measures effective?
- How important is workplace design in terms of the effective use of technology to increase the inclusivity of people with disabilities? E.g., general access areas, customer-facing locations, signs/boards, washroom facilities, ergonomics, etc. Have we been able to do that in our organization successfully?
- Have we taken robust and effective measures to address the safety, security, and privacy concerns of people with disabilities in our organization through the effective use of technology?
- What are some of the innovative ways in which our organization is using technology to train, develop, sensitize and other employees about their peers with disabilities?
- How can technology help people with disabilities in terms of enhancing their skills within our organization?
- What are some of the challenges/drawbacks of using technology for people with disabilities in our



organization? How can we overcome them?

- What are some of the frontiers where technology still needs to make a bigger impact on people with disabilities in our organization?
- How is technology being leveraged to increase the 'voice' of the people with disabilities to improve their inclusion in our organization? Is it effective?
- How is technology helping to safeguard people with disabilities against bullying/obnoxious behaviour in our organization? Is it effective?
- Do we use psychometric testing or any other evaluation for assessing people with disabilities in relation to their peers? If so, what was the result?
- Are there any areas in our organization where 'humanistic' aspects hold more relevance than merely relying on technology?
- Is benchmarking done by our organization to see how others are faring in terms of using technology to increase the inclusiveness of people with disabilities?

Low-Tech (People-Focused)

- Do we take the time to acknowledge our colleagues with special needs and ask about their wellbeing when meeting them in the hallways/corridors?
- Do we advocate/enable/give 'visible' assignments to colleagues with special needs to provide ample opportunities for recognition and career progression?
- Is career growth and development clearly defined and implemented for employees with special needs in our organization?
- Have we sat down/gone out with our colleagues with special needs for lunch and casual chat?
- Have we gone on any informal outdoor activities with our colleagues with special needs? E.g., cultural festivities, museums, historical places, boat rides, sports events, etc.
- Do our colleagues with special needs feel comfortable in talking/coming to us for discussing any

challenges that they are facing in the workplace?

- Do we mentor young talent with special needs in our organization?
- Have we stood up for our colleagues with special needs in their absence when confronted with insensitive/derogatory remarks by other peers?
- Do employees with special needs engage in recruitment initiatives for our organization?
- Are the same standards of performance applied for colleagues with special needs in our organization?
- Have any employees with special needs left our organization? If so, did we do an exit interview? What did it reveal?
- How do we assure and ensure stronger bonds in our organization within teams whose members also include people with special needs?
- Are mentors provided to people with disabilities? If so, has that helped our colleagues with special needs?
- Is there a day dedicated to colleagues with special needs in our organization? If so, are there any shining examples of recognition and bonding activities done during the respective day? Can other employees also bring anyone in their family with special needs on that day?
- How have we changed the policies/procedures to increase the inclusiveness of people with disabilities? Has that helped? What have been the key lessons?

The aforementioned checklists can be used during a periodic management review for reinforcement, restructuring, or refinement of prevalent Inclusion practices. There can also be informal ways of gauging the success of Inclusion initiatives for 'People of Determination', e.g., observing the 'employee grouping' at lunch tables in the office cafeteria, seeing the eagerness of peers to engage in projects with their colleagues with special needs, watching employees going



the 'extra mile' to facilitate the orientation of a new colleague with special needs, etc.

A few prominent organizations are already taking significant strides in becoming Inclusion Champions, e.g., Microsoft has initiated positive measures to benefit from the talent of people on the autism spectrum^[1].

It is prudent to recall the following evergreen quote of Maya Angelou in the respective context:

“People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

Ladies and Gentlemen, how does your organization make 'People of Determination' feel? Do you even know? Do you care? **HC**

Reference:

[1] *The Wall Street Journal*. (2019). *How Microsoft Tapped the Autism Community for Talent*.

About the Author

Murad Salman Mirza is an innovative thinker and an astute practitioner of areas within and associated with Organizational Development, Talent Management & Business Transformation. He is globally ranked in 9 areas (HR, Leadership, Culture, Management, Agility, etc.) by the world's first open platform for Thought Leaders (www.thinkers360.com). His research papers have been read in more than 60 countries. He has worked in various geographical regions and for progressive organizations ranging from SMEs to large corporates. His LinkedIn profile can be viewed at www.linkedin.com/in/muradsalmanmirza/

PAST EVENTS

7th NHRDN HRM Summit

DATE : November 15th – 16th, 2019

VENUE : Leela Ambience, Gurugram

ORGANISERS : NHRDN

The National HRD Network (NHRDN) hosted the 7th edition of HRM Summit on the theme 'Organizational Excellence: Talent, Technology, Happiness & Well-Being' on November 15th and 16th, 2019 at The Leela Ambience, Gurugram.



The Summit was led by Mr Prem Singh, President - Group Human Resources (Group CHRO) - JK ORGANIZATION as the Summit Director.

Dr Krish Shankar, Executive Vice President & Group Head (HRD) – INFOSYS & National President – NHRDN delivered the Keynote Address and Dr Habil Khorakiwala, Founder Chairman - WOCKHARDT GROUP delivered the Chief Guest & Inaugural Address respectively, led the eminent line-up of panellists.

The Summit was very well received and was attended by over 300 senior HR professionals and academic leaders from all over India.

Some of the eminent speakers at the event were, Gaurav Kapur, Head of Policy – ACCA INDIA ; Sunit Sinha, Managing Director – ACCENTURE STRATEGY, Murlee Dhar Shyam, Director (Global Talent Practices)– AIRPORT TALENT INTERNATIONAL; Abhay Kapoor, Sr HR Leader, India Operations (North) – AMAZON; Mamta Wasan, Senior Vice President (HR) – FIS; Adil Malia, CEO & Partner – THE FIRM; Hardeep Singh, Head of HCM Transformation – ORACLE INDIA; Anurag Aman, Partner – KPMG INDIA.

Date : November 30th, 2019

VENUE : Amity University, Noida

ORGANISERS : Amity University, CORE HRIR & HRCI

CORE HRIR in collaboration with HRCI organized a Mega HR Conclave on November 30th, 2019 at Amity University, preceded by a scholarship test from HRCI worth \$595.

The conclave was initiated by Dr. Sanjeev Bansal, Dean FMS & Director Amity Business School, followed by two panel discussions themed “Technology as an Enabler or Replacement” and “Future of Engagement”, respectively.

The panelists addressed fears regarding technology replacing jobs, while stressing the need for evolving transactional skill-sets to strategic in the first panel discussion.

The second panel discussion started with redefining the Employee Engagement in today's context as the workplace dynamics have completely changed. The panel also shared ideas on how engagement can be



used to drive a high-performance culture and build a sense of accountability with business using Engagement.

Jayati Roy, Director HR, Barco; Girish Kohli, Head Performance and Rewards, Bennett Coleman & Co. Ltd; Rajiv Naithani, SVP HR & Global Head - HR, Infogain; Saswati Sinha, Head - HR, Cheil India; Atul Tiwari, Director Tech HR, OYO and Aashish Singh, CEO, Qunify Technology, some of the key panelists.

Devender Kaur won scholarship for the HRCI Exam & 13 HR professionals received participation certificate from HRCI & CORE HRIR.

18th Bangalore HR Summit 2019

DATE : December 13th -14th, 2019

VENUE : Hotel Royal Orchid, Bengaluru

ORGANISERS : Institute of HRD



Institute of HRD, hosted the 18th Bangalore HR Summit 2019, on December 13th -14th, 2019 at the Hotel Royal Orchid in Bengaluru.

In this two days HR Summit, Human Resource Professionals participated and deliberated on the theme “Future of work and workforce Management”. HR Directors of Leading companies including Accenture, Mphasis, TeamLease, IBM, Wipro, InMobi, Rapido, TechMahindra, Fincare, Denave, QAI, Vimeo and Axciscades, addressed the delegates on a wide range of issues regarding the theme. Aditya Priyadarshan, Sr. Principal, Accenture Strategy, and. B.B.Shetty, Ex- Regional Head, TCS delivered the keynote addresses.

The HR summit deliberated on several subthemes which included, Building a workforce management strategy, Aligning Workforce management strategy with Business Strategy, Future of work & Workforce Management Strategies, New trends in Workforce Management, Building collaborative workplaces, Employee engagement strategies to impact business results, AI and ML in Workforce management, Technology and Analytics for Workforce, Agile Talent Management for Future and Leadership for future workforce Management.

HR Awards 2019 were also announced on the occasion. The young HR manager of the year award was given to Priya Payal Sharma. The Great HR Practices Award was conferred to Neogrowth Credit Pvt.Ltd. The HR Innovation award was also given to Neogrowth Credit Pvt.Ltd.

National Career Counsellors Network Career Hackathon'19

DATE : December 14th, 2019

VENUE : India International Centre, New Delhi

ORGANISERS : National Career Counsellors Network Career (NCCN)

The National Career Counsellors Network Career (NCCN) hosted the first edition of Career Hackathon'19 on December 14th, at the India International Centre in New Delhi.

During the event, eminent Edtech practitioners and top thought leaders from renowned schools shared insights on what it takes to thrive in today's K-12 scenario. The Career Hackathon'19 also provided an ideal platform for networking among student and school fraternity.

Sunanda Rao, General Secretary National Career Counsellors Network, and Kavita Rai, Co-Founder Concept & Project Manager Career Hackathon'19 had the honour of inaugurating the conference and welcoming all the delegates and speakers to the one-day conference.



In the opening address, the guest of honour Prof Group Captain O P Sharma Director General MUIT shared the perspective of TEAM and shared the practical guidance on being a team performer.

In the keynote address, Shantanu Prakash, The Education Guru, Trustee Millenium Schools shared the insights on Radical Shift from STEM to STEAM.

The one-day concluded on a glamorous note with the NCCN Excellence Awards ceremony. The awards handed out in five different categories which recognised students, schools, Individuals, MSME and Foundations for their pioneering and innovative practices that impact not just society but also schools, society and the fraternity as a whole.

UPCOMING EVENTS

EXPECTED SPEAKERS




Toby Foxcroft
Advisor and Consultant
Microsoft/ Cisco




Tori McLeod
Global Strategic Business
Partner & HR Director
Coca-Cola




Kaisa Lakovaara
Global Employee and Labour
Relations Leader for HRMS
IBM

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DATE : February 6th – 7th, 2020

VENUE : Hotel Via Castellana , Madrid, Spain

ORGANISERS : Ulead Media Group

Ulead Media Group is organising the HR LEADer Summit on February 6th - 7th, in Madrid, Spain.

For the event, more than 15 high-caliber speakers and trainers from leading institutions across the world have been invited to empower attendees with key insights.

The conference will bring senior level attendees from such companies as Siemens, Abbvie, Coca-Cola, Microsoft, Nestle, 3M, Unilever, IBM, Hays, Deloitte, Expedia Group, Culture Amp, RIA Payment, Pepsico, Tchibo, CAT BLD, Enaire, Amdocs, Netflix, Madkour Group, LinkedIn, Schneider Electric, RDT Ingenieros, Skyscanner, Nvidia, and many others.

Through a dynamic program of focused sessions, interactive discussions and networking opportunities, the attendees will have a deep understanding of:

- Rise in people and HR analytics
- Appointment of the contingent workforce
- Wave of augmented and virtual reality
- Wider shift from automation to productivity of HR process
- Focus on skills intensifies

Appointments



NALCO Appoints Radhashyam Mahapatro As HR director

Radhashyam Mahapatro has been appointed as the new HR director of the National Aluminium Company (NALCO). He will be taking charge on 1 January, 2020. Mahapatro holds a BSc. Degree in Physics and pursued his postgraduation in personnel management, industrial relations and labour welfare. His core areas of interest are productivity improvement, rural development, poverty alleviation, environment, and ecology.



Dr. Reddy's Lab Appoints Swatee Sarangi As Global Head – Learning, Leadership and Organizational Development

Dr. Reddy's Laboratories has appointed Dr. Swatee Sarangi as its Global Head – Learning, Leadership and Organizational Development. Prior to this, she was associated with Larsen & Toubro as its Head - Learning & Organization Development. Swatee has over two decades of blended industry experience encompassing teaching, research, training, consulting and leading excellence in talent modelling, strategic visioning, learning, people, leadership development, culture, workforce diversity and work practice innovations.



Paytm Appoints Rohit Thakur As CHRO

Rohit Thakur has joined Paytm as its new CHRO. Prior to this, he was associated with Accenture India as the Head of Human Resources. Thakur is a seasoned HR professional with more than 26 years of experience across industries like Technology, Consumer, and Energy. He has worked with top companies such as Microsoft, GE, Eicher, Cadence Design Systems, etc. Thakur is an alumnus of XLRI Jamshedpur and completed B.Com (H) from Shri Ram College of Commerce, University of Delhi.



Hilton Appoints Sabu Raghavan As VP, HR

Hilton has appointed Sabu Raghavan as Vice President, Human Resources, India. With over two decades of experience in human resources in the education and hospitality industry, Sabu joined Hilton in 2011 and was most recently based in Singapore where he oversaw human resources for Southeast Asia and India.



Datamatics Appoints Rima Ghose Chowdhury As CHRO

Datamatics Global Services has appointed Rima Ghose Chowdhury as the Executive Vice President (EVM) and Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO). Before this, Chowdhury was a professor and HOD, human resource management, at the NL Dalmia Institute of Management Studies and Research. She has more than two decades of experience in Corporate and Academics, has worked in various industries, including IT, media & entertainment and Petrochemicals.

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where in as a recruiter you will ensure the business requests are executed as per the contractually agreed timelines adhering to metrics of cost, time taken to identify and quality of hiring a candidate. You will be responsible to manage the end to end recruiting life cycle of a candidate in terms of sourcing/scheduling and offer negotiation until the candidate onboards.

Experience : 7-8 Years
Location : Bengaluru / Bangalore
Job ID : 161019007014



Manager HRM-E&P TATA Steel

Hiring for Manager HRM with Key Accountabilities : Support the implementation of the HRM strategy

for Business Unit, to ensure timely and effective execution of all processes and regular escalations of all employee queries and grievances so as create an engaged and competent workforce. Ensure end-to-end management of contract workforce by focusing on vendor/supplier management, day-to-day administration of grievances, wages and contract terms and capability development of contractors to engage skilled contract employees towards ensuring increase in motivation, capability and productivity of contract workforce at Tata Steel.

Experience : 3-8 Years
Location : Jamshedpur
Job ID : 121119904152



Employee Engagement Manager IBM India Pvt. Limited

Position open for Employee Engagement Manager with Key Responsibilities: Considering

engagement metrics and employee feedback specific to your site, work with leaders to generate ideas and plan activities that meet goals Participate in regular meetings with the Engagement Program Manager and Engagement Leads at other sites to align on plans and drive initiatives forward Collaborate effectively with cross-functional teams to execute successful activities.

Experience : 3-8 Years
Location : Bengaluru / Bangalore
Job ID : 131119907419



HR MIS Executive Axis Bank Limited

Great opportunity to work with Axis Bank. We are currently seeking a high caliber professional to join our team. Good command on excel. Responsible for maintaining the HR MIS. Ability to handle a variety of tasks and priorities at the same time. Analytical thinking and innovative work approach. Manage queries, issues and escalations if any working on Monthly/ weekly reports and dashboards.

Experience : 2-7 Years
Location : Mumbai
Job ID : 111119007100



HR Business Partner - Global Operations Hewlett Packard Enterprise Pvt. Ltd.

As a APJ Regional HR BP, acts as a consultant and partner to the Global Operations Business Organization. Drives the people strategy and organizational design, and the process of transformation, talent management, and workforce planning. Leads change initiatives and implements specific HR strategies to achieve organization goals and objectives. Aligns performance management and reward systems to drive and reinforce desired behaviors.

Experience : 6-10 Years
Location : Bengaluru / Bangalore
Job ID : 81119904337



HR Lead Wipro Limited

A Business Partner role stretches across the gamut of HR activities touching an employees life-cycle at various stages in a Business Unit. The Role would encompass the following: Partner with the business to identify and fulfill short term business needs towards talent management. Collaborate with business team to ensure compliance and traction across various employee life-cycle processes. Plan and execute Engagement Activities across the unit. Interact with other functions to resolve process breakdown issues.

Experience : 4-8 Years
Location : Bengaluru / Bangalore
Job ID : 81119903768



Talent Acquisition - Sales Hiring SAP Labs India Pvt. Ltd.

Looking for Talent Acquisition - Sales Hiring and Responsibilities include: Collaboration with key business and HR partners to understand and help determine short and long-term talent acquisition needs to meet business objectives. Develop strong and effective partnerships with business leaders, executives, HR Managers and to advance talent acquisition initiatives.

Experience : 7-12 Years
Location : Mumbai
Job ID : 231019907183



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Role of HR in Digital Marketing and Cloud Computing

BY SAFURA BEGUM

Human Resource is increasingly becoming one of the most critical functions to impact the success of the organization. As companies face a dearth of skilled talent, the war for hiring the top-talent has intensified even further. The HRs armed with traditional recruitment solutions will be no match for those equipped with next-gen technologies. To ensure your organization gets the top talent available on the market, the HR department should effectively use digital marketing, cloud computing, and other similar emerging technologies.

HR and Digital Marketing

Digital marketing has become one of the most significant parts of marketing campaigns. Today, marketing is slowly moving towards digital due to changing consumer patterns. So, why would that not apply to human resource department? With over 79% of job aspirants searching for jobs using digital social platforms, HR specialists have to contemplate using digital marketing for HR functions. So, what can HRs do with digital marketing?

Social Media

HRs can leverage the power of social media to look for the next hire by posting the requirements across social media platforms. Such a move can increase the horizon of candidates that can be targeted. HRs can also use social media to build an online company profile by sharing information related to the organization, work culture, perks available on the job, etc.

Digital Advertisements

Running online advertisement is a great way to reach to a broader range of candidates. HR specialists can run advertising campaigns similar to their marketing counterparts. This would require HRs to build an online presence and ensure that information is updated across all points of contact. So, updating the website with the available opportunity would also be required.

Email Marketing

While HRs currently do use emails to reach potential candidates, the reach can be increased manifold with email marketing. The HR department will have to understand the target audience and use content that appeals to them. A well-planned email marketing campaign can yield huge results.

HR and Cloud Computing

Cloud-based solutions have largely impacted most of the functions, and HR is no different. Cloud computing has the potential to transform the entire company culture by impacting all significant aspects of human resources, some of which are as follows:

Recruitment

Cloud computing can be used to streamline the recruitment process. All the decision-makers can access the information, review it, and share feedback with a simple click of the button. This eliminates the back and forth, reduces the cycle time, and increases efficiency. Cloud computing also facilitates real-time decision making in the recruitment process.

Data Security

"Data is the new oil" is a phrase heard far too often, but what if this oil of your organization were to disappear? Physical emergencies such as office fire, earthquake, or any other natural or human-made disaster can lead to permanent damage and loss of data. HR can safeguard the vital information of the organization by securing all the information on cloud-based data tools.

Improved Efficiency

HR managers can introduce cloud-based tools for seamless collaboration between the employees. With the rise of remote working culture and geographically diverse teams, the ability to collaborate efficiently can have a huge impact on the success of the organization. Moving HR processes to the cloud will also improve the flexibility and accessibility within the organization.

The HRs of today have no option but to use these technologies to navigate the changing landscape. The ones that do not adapt might have to pay a heavy price. Is HR in your organization using digital marketing and cloud computing?

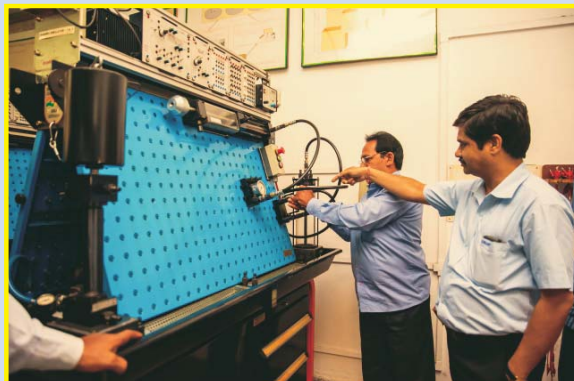


About the Author

Safura Begum is the CEO & Founder of INVENTATEQ, a Software Training Institute. As an entrepreneur, she shares a constant passion towards learning new things to keep her institute updated. Safura holds a Bachelor of Science degree and possesses expertise in the technology space.

TRAINING SCHEDULE (Jan - Mar 20)

	SNo	Course	Jan-20	Feb	Mar
Electrical / Electronics / Instrumentation	1	PLC Prog. & Applications		17 - 21	
	2	Advanced PLC			16 - 18
	3	PLC Networking			17 - 19
	4	PLC Prog. & Networking		17 - 25	
	5	PLC & SCADA	28 - 05		
	6	SCADA System			23 - 27 (RS View)
	7	HMI Panel Programming		04 - 06	
	8	Field Instrument. & Control	13 - 17		
	9	Programming & Maintenance of AC/DC Drives	20 - 24		23 - 27
	10	Variable Frequency Drives	20 - 22		
	11	PLC to Drive Communication			02 - 04
	12	VLSI Design	20 - 24		
	13	Embedded System Design			16 - 20
	14	Electronics Maintenance		10 - 14	
	15	Electrical Control and Relay Logic Applications		24 - 28	
	16	Preventive & Breakdown Maintenance of Electrical & Electronics Equipment			23 - 25
	17	Industrial Automation		17 - 27	
	18	MATLAB - Programming & Simulation		24 - 28	
Mechanical	1	Industrial Hydraulics		17 - 21	
	2	Advanced Hydraulics	06 - 10		
	3	Industrial Pneumatics			23 - 27
	4	Mechanical Maintenance	06 - 08 Machine Alignment & Balancing	03 - 05 CBM	16 - 18 O&M of Gear Box
			21 - 23 O&M of EOT Cranes	24 - 28 Vibration Analysis	
	5	AutoCAD	13 - 17 Mechanical		
	6	CAD/CAM	20 - 24 ProE	17 - 21 Solid Works	
	7	CNC Milling		10 - 14	
	8	Advanced Electronics in Automotive Vehicle	20 - 24		
Computer / IT	9	Welding Technology	21 - 23		
	1	Oracle PL & SQL			16 - 20
	2	Oracle SQL & Administration			23 - 27
	3	CISCO Network Essential		17 - 22	
	4	CISCO Routing & Switching		24 - 05	
	5	CISCO Cyber Security Essential	20 - 24		
	6	Graphics Designing (Print/Multimedia)			09 - 13



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