SKILLING SPECIAL

IS INDIA ON TRACK?

Dwindling economic indicators can potentially derail the skilling agenda. Is India on track to meet its skilling target by 2022?

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THE 500 MILLION CHALLENGE

The skilling quest for India is not a simple one. There are challenges ranging from - getting students to join vocational courses, convincing employers to invest in training the talent pool and to pay higher for skilled talent. What is clear is that if India is to achieve its skilling targets, it requires the synchrony of the various stakeholders to create a perfect ecosystem.

India's educational system further adds to the challenge: while the system is able to produce "higher end" professionals (like engineers and doctors), it leaves an enormous vacuum in the middle as the industry struggles to hire for most entry level jobs. 50 percent of India's population is under the age of 25 and the country's working population is expected to account for 30 percent of the global working-age population by 2030. But, just 2% of the total workforce is trained in any vocation. The government's expectation for the next 5 years is that the industry will generate 98 million incremental jobs and this will mean that 20 million workers will require some form of vocational training annually. Yet another challenge is that the country today has a training capacity of a mere 5.5 million. The existing supply of vocational training is largely inadequate to meet the demand.

The word 'challenge' is rapidly moving up to the top of India's skilling glossary; the government is cognizant of it and to that extent, has doubled the allocation for NSDF, but clearly there is much to be done beyond the government investing more on skilling initiatives.

The biggest challenge still remains as to who pays for skilling. Industry experts agree that there is a market failure in skills; employers are willing to pay for trained entry level hires, but not for training of unskilled candidates. Candidates want jobs but they are not trained to obtain them, and are not willing to pay for training unless a job is guaranteed. Finally, training companies cannot fill the classroom with candidates as nobody is willing to pay for the training. All players, candidates, companies and the government will need to find a way to finance skilling in a way that makes this target feasible.

People Matters has been following this sector very closely for the last three years. The previous cover stories, "India Skilling" and "India's Skilling Industry: In Need of Synchrony" (2010 & 2011 respectively) dwelt on the complex challenge faced by the $5 billion industry and sought a need of a greater synchrony amongst various players to realize the set target. This cover story, "Is India on track?" is an update on what has been achieved, the ongoing developments, government's renewed focus and what it means for India Inc. The story assesses where India stands on these initiatives, and how close are we to achieving this ambitious, but absolutely critical objective, of vocationalization of secondary and tertiary education in the country.

Please do share your views on the topic and join the conversation.

Happy reading!

Ester Martinez
ester.martinez@peoplematters.in

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send your comments at info@peoplematters.in
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CEO AS THE CHIEF TALENT OFFICER

A PEOPLE MATTERS - MONSTER.COM STUDY 2012

2011 was the year of optimism. 2012 is the year of volatility. This year, CEOs are looking closer than ever at talent as a lever to drive growth amidst uncertainty. *The People Matters - Monster.com CEO as the Chief Talent Officer Study 2012* reveals that 84 percent CEOs in India spend more than one-fourth of their time on talent related activities.

BY RAJLAKSHMI SAIKIA & G.K. KASHYAP

Most comprehensive HR magazine
I have just started reading *People Matters* online, I am glad to mention that this is one of the most comprehensive HR magazines I have come across. I am used to reading the online knowledge center almost daily and spend close to an hour. It is a great pool of industry updates, happenings in the HR arena, best practices and cultures prevalent across industries. Its deep insights into learning and development, recruitment strategies and performance management make it an enjoyable read! Thank you for sharing such great content!
- *Anushri Verma, Manager – HR & Media Relations, Virtuos Solutions*

Powerful & critical story
I just wanted to drop a short note on the cover story in the recent edition of *People Matters.* The story is very powerful and critical in the context of current and future success of organizations. At GE, leaders are groomed to understand and leverage the power of employee engagement. Most CEOs treat talent management and HR as critically impor-

tant. Thanks for bringing this to light. Look forward to future editions of the magazine.
- *Mayank P. Bhatnagar, Director – HR, GE Healthcare India & South Asia*

Relevant study
The May 2012 cover story on 'CEO as the Chief Talent Officer' is quite a revealing study and analysis.
- *Anand Swarup Sharma (online)*

Informative content
The cover story featured in the May edition of *People Matters* is very informative.
- *(online)*

Great column
Referring to S.D. Shibulal's column on 'Focusing on recruiting right' in the May edition, recruitment has always been a key success factor, but the management must look at developing talent acquisition specialists who have to have the right approach.
- *Sofia Sarin (online)*

An eye opening concept
The story on *Practising Giftwork®* is an eye opener. I think most of us receive and give without

realizing it. I liked the emphasizing factor on what happens if we ignore. The key is to recognize the work as gift work here. Thanks for the article.
- *Kavita Aravindan, MphasiS (online)*

Well researched & written content
I am a regular reader of your magazine. Thank you for the well researched and well written articles. I came across your analysis in the *People Matters* Executive Development Survey 2012, which was featured as the lead article in your April 2012 issue.
- *Praveen Krishnan, KPMG Advisory Services - Management Consulting Practice*

Hi-pos are critical performers
Elango's column 'Hey, I am top talent...' showcases how top talent (Hi Per- Hi Po) are key critical performers of the organization and are offered for different value addition courses as well on job projects to give them appropriate platform to demonstrate their knowledge and honor consequently. However, most of them are not happy

with all this and they only want a higher position and money as compensation for their talent and work. Sometimes, to give them extra benefit (monetary or in hierarchy), becomes reason of dissatisfaction for many others and breaks their rapport with peers. It is a key challenge for HR to sustain their ability and retain them.
- *Anil Kumar Patel (online)*

Interesting & relevant
People Matters is a good magazine overall and I find the content quite interesting and relevant.
- *Aruna Jayanthi, CEO, Capgemini*

Build capability for competitiveness
I read the editorial titled 'Sweat in Peace, to bleed less in war' in the April issue. I appreciate *People Matters* for having created such awareness among the corporate and prompting them to build capability in order to remain competitive. All the best to you, and may God bless you.
- *Vijay Sinha, Head-HR*

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PDI Ninth House @pdininthhouse
Good article to RT: Why So Much Employee Development Fails & How To Make It Stick Ez.com/xhcr #India #Leadership #HR @PeopleMatters2

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Would like to congratulate @Ester_Matters @Rajlakshmi_S and the entire team of @PeopleMatters2 for a facelift of HR mags in India

Jaya Narayan @nohrgyan28d
Good 2 see. Much more needed" @PeopleMatters2: developing their senior #leadership through#executive education? bit.ly/HTCgCL"

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We tend to forget HR folks also need agony uncles 'The Counselor' is just what we need .Thanks @PeopleMatters2

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Corporate
HAPPENINGS

State of economy

The indicators, be it the Sensex, INR, GDP growth, IIP (Index of Industrial Production), are all flashing red. The economy is in a dismal shape, the rupee has plunged to an all-time low, approaching the key psychological level of 56 – thanks to Euro crisis and global risk aversion. A widening current account deficit, which is likely to touch 4% and concerns of investment in India, has further added to the pressure on the rupee. The Indian currency has been the worst performing among its Asian peers, having lost 22 percent this year.

From India Inc's perspective, the depreciating rupee will adversely impact its balance sheet. Companies with foreign debt on their books will be badly impacted as they will require more dollars to repay their loans. The oil companies too could be negatively impacted, as they will end up paying more rupees for the same value of dollar imports. On the other hand, export oriented sectors such as IT and textile should benefit from the depreciation. The stock market, which hit the upper circuit, after the UPA was elected for the second time in a row, is now in its worst phase since the Lehman crisis. Both the leading indices of the country have lost a third of their value since UPA-II came to power for a second term on May 22, 2009. The Sensex has fallen 32.94 percent since May 22, 2009, while Nifty has lost 33.62 percent in the same period.

The GDP growth rate has slipped to 6.5% in FY12. The IIP contracted by 3.5% in March, bringing down the average industrial growth for 2011-12 to 2.8% as compared to 8.2% in the previous fiscal year. Adding to the woes of decision makers and common people is the increase in inflation based on retail prices, which has been climbing quite alarmingly from 7.7% in January 2012 to 10.4% in April.

The Indian currency has been the worst performing among its Asian peers, having lost 22 percent this year

Diversity and Inclusion
strategies in India

Gender continues to be the top priority on the diversity and inclusion agenda for companies in Asia Pacific. According to Mercer's Asia Pacific Diversity & Inclusion report, over 90 percent of the participants surveyed list gender as the main focus of their diversity efforts in India. Consistent with this focus, the most common diversity programs offered by companies in India are gender-related, such as mentoring (61 percent) and family-friendly policies (55 percent).

60 percent of the participating companies in India reported having a 'diversity & inclusion' strategy in place at the global and regional level of which around 14.5 percent had a diversity strategy at a country level. Among the 40 percent of respondents whose companies do not have a 'Diversity and Inclusion' strategy, over half reported that they would like to explore or are already looking into establishing a diversity and inclusion strategy.

For companies with diversity strategies in place, efforts in 2012 will mainly focus on two initiatives - developing women for leadership roles and attracting more diverse talent to their organizations as

rated by 36 percent and 39 percent respondent's respectively. It is interesting that while multiple generations within the workforce was identified as a trend impacting the workforce, few felt that it is a major area of focus for 2012.

According to Shanthi Naresh, Principal, Human Capital, Mercer India, "diversity & inclusion strategies are gaining a strong foothold within India Inc. demonstrating inherent benefits for both employees and employers." It is expected to grow further with more focus around creating stronger linkages between the diversity and inclusion strategy and the business. Going forward, measuring the impact of the strategy on productivity, retention and profitability will be the key to its success.

Employees skip work to watch major sporting events

A global survey, 'Sidelined by Sports' commissioned by The Workforce Institute at Kronos Inc. reveals that employees around the world have, to varying degrees, called in sick to work over a sporting event. Whether they stayed home to watch it on television, attended it live, played the sport themselves, or needed a day off after staying up late to watch, sports has a significant impact on attendance at work, says the survey conducted by Harris Interactive.

"We are glad to bring attention of corporates to manage absences better in India, and provide practical insights to employee behavior and trends"

- James Thomas,
Country Manager
India, Kronos

EMPLOYEES LIKELY TO SEE LOWER PAY HIKES THIS FISCAL

In the ongoing annual appraisal time, a survey conducted by Deloitte India reveals that India Inc. is expected to give slightly lower hikes in salary as well as variable payouts this fiscal. The overall increment would be around 12 percent. The lesser pay hike projection compared to about 13 percent last fiscal comes against the backdrop of high inflation and global issues impacting domestic economic growth.

Foreign firms lure mining engineers

The mining industry in India could well face shortage of talent as global firms such as Rio Tinto and BHP as well as companies in countries like Indonesia and South Africa are luring India's best mining engineers with fancy packages and perks. Head hunters are tapping fresh graduates directly from institutes, and engineers with 5-15 years experience from mining companies, luring them with fat packages and perks such as company-funded weekends in cities where their families live. Indian companies that pay less than a third of what foreign firms pay and post engineers in rough, remote areas, are thus facing tough competition for talent.

The problem of talent scarcity is further compounded by the preference of mining engineers to opt for jobs in software firms as they offer better terms, leading to an alarming reduction in the number of fresh engineers who choose mining as a career option.

eBay to hire 1,000 staff for India facility

Online retailer, eBay, plans to set up a new development center in Bangalore and hire up to 1,000 employees for the facility over the next three years. As a matter of fact, the company is aggressively hiring senior technologists with product development experience across functions like research, platform and application development, architecture, quality engineering, product management, marketing and product analytics, user experience & design, and information security.

The proposed center will build on eBay Inc's existing presence in India, which includes a global development center with over 2,200 employees in Chennai and the eBay India business unit in Mumbai. PayPal, a global e-commerce business acquired by eBay in 2002, is planning to tap into Bangalore's software talent pool.

Indians don't feel 'engaged' at work

According to the 2012 Gallup research, engagement scores in Indian workplace is a concern. As matter of fact India's engagement number is a mere 8 percent, which means that only 8 percent people who come to work are engaged, positive and thrilled about their jobs. 32 percent of them are actively disengaged, implying that they come to work and sit with someone who is spirited till his spirit goes away. All the more, 60 percent of the employees feel 'not engaged' at the workplace. It is apparent that if this state of affairs continues then it is indeed going to be tough for India in the next 10 years. Apart from this, the survey also states that a record high of 31 percent of Indian adults - or about 240 million Indians - rate their lives poorly enough to be considered 'suffering'; this is against 24 percent 'suffering' in 2011.

APPOINTMENTS

S.Y. Siddiqui has been appointed as the Chief Operating Officer, Administration - HR, Finance, IT & COSL, Maruti Suzuki India effective May 2012.

Kanwal Kaul has been appointed as the Global Head of Talent Acquisition & Development at Capgemini effective April 2012. Prior to this, he was the Regional Recruitment Operations Head, Asia Pacific & EMEA at UnitedHealth Group.

Prasanth Nair has been appointed as the Global Head - HR at Cipla, effective May 2012. Prior to this, he was President and Head - HR and Financial Services at Thomas Cook India Ltd.

Martin Kriegner has been appointed the CEO of Lafarge India effective May 2012. Prior to this assignment, he served as their Regional President, based in Kuala Lumpur.

Gurprriet Siingh has been appointed Managing Consultant at YSC. Prior to this, he was SVP - Organization Capability and Innovation at Welspun Group

Career has no boundaries

N.V. 'Tiger' Tyagarajan, President & CEO, Genpact, shares the need for a strong succession plan to groom leaders from within and help them in their transition

Q You were the CEO at GECIS, before the organization became Genpact and demerged from GE. How was the transition in becoming the CEO for the second time?

I think the transition was very smooth. It was part of a structured succession planning process that had been planned and orchestrated down to the last detail over a period of time. I don't believe that anyone was truly surprised with my taking over. It helped that I had worked closely with the leadership team for a long time and we had experienced shared success. When we made the transition, the company was strongly positioned to deliver and we were confident that what we had built would help us sail through. It just felt like the right time and therefore, the transition was natural.

And on making the transition for the second time, this was different in terms of Genpact now being an independent, publicly listed company, whereas the earlier CEO role was of a division of GE.

Q What was the process followed for succession planning in your case?

When I rejoined the company, I was the senior most in the company after Pramod (Bhasin). However, it was not a given that I would be succeeding him. As the company grew, I spent a lot of time in the market and with clients; everyone agreed that being close to clients was an important aspect of running the company. In 2008, I took on the role of a Chief Operating Officer and this role was created because it allowed Pramod to do more things as I took on

some of the responsibilities that he had in terms of the day to day running of the business. This also helped create a potential succession plan. In fact, this is how we do it right across the company. We identify people with potential, give them the exposure they need to grow, give them the ability to grow and then once they are ready, move them to the next level. But, nothing is a given until it happens.

Q How do you architect the succession planning process at Genpact, where while people know they are on a fast track, they also know it is not a given?

The architecture starts with our bi-annual talent review process. This is a robust, fairly intense process where we assess the talent depth by business and ensure that our talent strategy is in line with our business strategy. It is a very rigorous process across the organization; it begins at the bottom and finally, for the top 200-300 people, the review is with me and the rest of the leadership team. This is where we look at our leadership pipeline; there is a clear discussion about strengths, weaknesses and development needs of individuals. There is also a discussion about where can a person go in terms of his/her full potential, and then defining 'full potential' for each employee.

> **The world today is defined as uncertain and volatile; you have to run your business with a clear understanding that your clients are going to have ups and downs. Therefore, you need very high flexibility in your business**

Each person is reviewed with respect to what the person is doing, what is the opportunity, what are the development needs, strengths and weaknesses. Consistency of performance over time is important, followed by attitude and then potential and performance, that form critical inputs. Once identified, we discuss the possible risk of people in that talent pool leaving the organization, who could be the successor, what role would that person succeed into and why, etc. So, it is a series of chess moves that are actually made to identify the right successor for each role and allow room for people to be grown within the organization.

has helped in growing the business continuously.

Q In your view, when it comes to a CEO position, is it better to groom internally or to hire externally?

If you can groom someone from within the company, it is so much better. There is more stability, there is more buy-in, and if the company is doing well, then why wouldn't you find someone from inside? But in a situation where it is not possible to move someone from within to become the CEO, then there has to be a long-term plan to identify the person who has the potential to fit the role, and then a number of steps must be taken

same time, he/she becomes part of a particular team, which he/she leads. So, this sends out the message that this person is going to be the next leader. The second is that while you do that, you should also simultaneously be talking to the others as part of their appraisal, their development process, etc. as to what bigger things they can do. Yes, you won't be able to satisfy everyone. But, if you have taken all the right steps over the 2 or 3 years, then the chances of dissatisfaction are limited.

Of course, in a team of 20-25, there will always be somebody who might not with be happy with the decision.

If you see, the world is clearly defined as uncertain and volatile. So, you have to run your business with a clear understanding that your clients are going to have ups and downs. Therefore, you need very high flexibility in your business. This requires flexibility in moving people, moving locations, introducing new businesses, and so, flexibility is at the core of doing everything in business. At Genpact, your career has no boundaries. There have been people who have moved from sales to operations, to HR, to finance, and so on...some because they are actually capable of doing many things well and others who wanted to experience and learn multiple things. This process happens at all levels and

to create the opportunity and the process for bringing him/her from outside. All this must happen in a systematic manner.

Q How do you ensure that when you pick one out of the multiple potential candidates for the role, the others are not left unsure and insecure about their career in the company?

The trick is to firstly make sure that whoever is picked in the end is a natural and obvious choice. And therefore, at the CEO level, you have to take many steps for many years to actually make that happen. So, it is critical to give the identified successor the opportunity to do things that are different and broader. At the

Q How do you groom 20 people in your leadership team to prepare them for future business needs? Do you follow the same process, and how do you look at their careers?

Their career planning is done the same way. The HR leader, Piyush (Mehta) and I take charge of that. I do their appraisals and discussions, and I bounce it off Piyush. We document these discussions, which are then available for the HR leader to refer to. Over the year, the practice is to keep going back to those documents to assess what else is required to help the person. As part of grooming these leaders, we move their jobs and roles a lot in order to more develop the person and expose them to things that they need exposure to for better business acumen. ▣ⁿ

IN BRIEF

The AI-IA merger is only 70 percent complete; critical human resources functions, which go to the core of the problems over the clash of cultures, have not yet been merged

In July 2006, the high-level panel consisting of officials from Air India, Indian Airlines, Ministry of Civil Aviation, and ICICI Bank Chairman Emeritus N. Vaghul were zeroing upon a consultant to chalk out a roadmap for the operational mega merger between two state run carriers. The well intentioned overwhelming thought then was to create a competitive national airline on the lines of British Airways and Singapore Airlines. Air India and Indian Airlines were merged on March 1, 2007 to create a new company called National Aviation Company of India Ltd, later changed to Air India Ltd. However, five years post the mega merger, it is apparent that the amalgamation was a marriage of two incompatible individuals. In the lack of oversight and leadership, Air India has literally slipped into an abyss.

In the present context, the agitation called by the Indian Pilots Guild (IPG) started on May 8, 2012 when the pilot members took mass leave protesting the move to provide Boeing 787 Dreamliner training to pilots from the erstwhile Indian Airlines. Now in its twenty first day, the so called agitation has lead to a loss of over Rs.325 crore. The pilots have made four demands which include exclusive flying rights on Boeing 787 aircraft, payment of arrears from 2007 onwards, travel on first class when not working, and the right to be promoted as commanders within six years. The agitation in itself is not new, even last year in March, a group of pilots from the erstwhile Indian Airlines under the banner of

FLIGHTS OF
FANTASY
AI-IA MERGER

The premature strike called by AI pilots has been hurting brand Air India; but the root cause of the problem is the whimsical AI-IA merger

BY GYANENDRA KUMAR KASHYAP

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Indian Commercial Pilots Association (ICPA) had adopted the same strategy to make their dissenting voices and demands heard. The rivalry between the two wings of the merged entity has not only derailed the operations of the national carrier but has also caused a lot of embarrassment and harm to brand 'Air India'. As a matter of fact the market share of the once dominant Air India has reduced from over 60 percent to just about 17 percent. Ajit Singh, the Minister for Civil Aviation, has often in his media interactions specifically mentioned that the merger of the two erstwhile airlines in itself is the root cause of the crisis.

It is critical to delve deeper and analyse as to what are the underlying reasons for the agitation – is it merely the exclusivity of flying rights and issues of career progression or are there inherent malaise that has gradually led to the mega merger not working out as planned. Why is it that the benefits as advocated by the consultants, Accenture with Ambit Corporate Finance, in terms of synergy, economies of scale, and profitability, not taken place? Synergy is a far off cry for this merger. To this day, the merger is only 70 percent complete. Significantly, critical human resources functions, which go to the core of the problems over the clash of cultures, haven't been merged. The truth is that there are several HR issues unresolved among the employees of both the sides. There are differences in their salary structures, work schedule, perks, training & orientation programs, and even promotion schedules. Even today, Indian Airlines employees are given orientation towards domestic operations while Air India employees are trained for international operations. The case is similar for the engineers, cabin crew in-charge, cargo managers, and other functionaries of both entities. They too are voicing the same resentment over the merger.

Talking of profitability, in Air India's case, the merger was expected to result in a saving up to Rs.1,200 crore from 2010. But the merged entity is neck deep in debt and losses; the net loss for Air India in 2010-11 was Rs.

6,994 crore and the provisional loss figures for 2011-12 stands at Rs.7,853 crores. This wide gap between what was projected and the reality raises the question as to whether it was indeed a merger or a murder; critics, however, prefer terming it a 'murderous merger'. Interestingly, both AI and IA were making cash profits till fiscal 2006-07 but have been witnessing losses soaring thereafter. As of now, the total debt for Air India is a whopping Rs.44,000 crore while the accumulated losses are Rs.20,000 crore. The truth is that the merger hasn't spawned the promised benefits mostly because till date, the merger has merely remained on paper.

THE RIVALRY BETWEEN THE TWO WINGS OF THE MERGED HAS BROUGHT EMBARRASSMENT & HARM TO BRAND 'AIR INDIA'

Justice Dharmadhikari Committee Report

Post the agitation staged by ICPA and the fact that the stop gap solution for pay parity did not find many buyers; the ministry set up the Justice D R Dharmadhikari committee in March 2011, with the task of studying and making recommendations on matters of HR integration, level-mapping and pay parity of the two organizations that were merged to create the 28,500 employee Air India in 2007. The committee submitted its report on January 31, 2012 and reports in the media state that the committee has recommended a voluntary retirement scheme (VRS) to prune the workforce at Air India; implementation of a 'no work, no pay' concept; and a comprehensive analysis of the pay structure across the airline to bring it on par with other public sector units. The committee advocates that both

sets of pilots should get uniform salaries. It suggests cross-utilisation of pilots, which means IA pilots can fly Dreamliners, and AI pilots can fly Airbus aircraft, after obtaining requisite endorsements and training. IPG would certainly not be happy with this recommendation as they claim that the pilots' career progression is under threat, and that they alone should fly the new Boeing 787 Dreamliners. With computerization of pilot duties, which until now was done manually at the behest of pilot unions, would mean that erstwhile AI pilots lose their hegemony over lucrative long-haul flights to Europe and USA.

Why now?

It can be reasoned that the strike is an expression of all the prejudices against the merger. The present agitation by IPG and the previous one by ICPA are telling examples of their animosity, reasons enough as to why the merger of the two erstwhile airlines matters little to either of them. Nonetheless, the agitation is untimely and premature. This is so because the recommendation of Justice D R Dharmadhikari committee is with the government and it will soon be implemented. The myopic vision of IPG can be gauged from the fact that at a time when the government has approved a bailout package to the tune of Rs.30,000 crore and with Dreamliners joining the fleet would in effect help reduce operational cost & optimise capacity on routes; the union has opted to agitate.

What next?

The Civil Minister, in a bid to end the stalemate, did lend his ears listening to the grievances of IPG and said that there would be no victimization of the agitating pilots. However, till date the Air India management has sacked 101 of the agitating pilots bringing to open the clear disconnect between what is said and what is done. Thus, it is clear that the ball is in the government's court. While no union should be allowed to dictate terms, the legitimate demands should be met. Procrastinating the issue will help none. The AI–IA merger should not be allowed to go down in history as a failure. ⬛m

IS INDIA ON TRACK?

While on the one hand, India Inc. is struggling to maintain a healthy growth rate & profitability, on the other hand, the Sector Skills Councils - charged with workforce development of particular industry sectors - are struggling to fulfill their core functions. Will the doubling of the allocation for National Skill Development Fund help put the skilling agenda back on track?

People Matters delves deeper into the various initiatives and developments in skilling to assess whether the efforts are in sync with the stated skilling target given the current macro-economic challenges.

BY GYANENDRA KUMAR KASHYAP & RAJLAKSHMI SAIKIA

The *People Matters Entry Level Hiring Survey, 2012*, reveals that 84 percent respondents would prefer hiring freshers with vocational skills. However, the larger question is – are there enough people being skilled to bridge the demand-supply gap and will the prolonged economic slowdown in any way derail India's skilling agenda?

The skills gap

The skill requirement studies estimate that India will require around 260 million skilled people by 2018 and around 340 million by 2022. Over 13 million people are required incrementally every year in over 90 categories of skills. A CII–ICRA report envisions that by 2015, approximately 2.25 million skilled workers will be required in the auto sector, about 5 million in the banking and financial services sector, 4 to 5 million in retail and 13 to 15 million in the construction sector. Similarly, a report published by CII and the

WHILE CURRENT ESTIMATES SUGGEST THAT 5 LAKH STUDENTS NEED TO BE TRAINED PER YEAR, ONLY 75,000 WERE TRAINED LAST YEAR

Boston Consulting Group (BCG) in 2010 offered clues to India's demographic dividend complexities. In manufacturing, the report estimates that even with technological change, automation, improvements in overall productivity of 5 to 7 percent (in real terms) to 2025, India will still lack a trained workforce of between 50 to 60 million.

For India to realize its fabled demographic dividend, its yawning skills gap needs to be bridged. According to the Survey, 79 percent affirm that the present educational institutes do not provide enough practical exposure to make candidates employable. Further, 66 percent say that there is not enough quality entry level talent entering the workforce; a fact further cemented as an overwhelming 97 percent of the respondents agree that training entry level talent is a must. Research reports suggest that out of 5 lakh students targeted to be trained per year, only 75,000 were actually

trained last year; an achievement ratio of just 16 percent. If this trend of under achievement were to continue, the demand supply mismatch perhaps cannot be bridged. In the light of these statistics; the focus therefore not only has to be on the number, which is humongous in itself, but also on the quality of skills being imparted.

The positive vibes

The growth prospects of the Indian economy depend, to a large extent, on how the country tackles certain issues of intellectual capital today. The good news is that the government, in its bid to skill 500 million people by 2022, has undertaken a series of initiatives almost on a war footing in the past few years. The government's National Skill Development Plan (NSDP) is the flagship initiative. To this end, the NSDC has been entrusted with skilling 150 million people, the Ministry of Labor and Employment (MoLE) has a target of 100 million, the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), 50 million and the rest of the 200 million among 17 other ministries.

The government has further taken a significant step towards making people more employable and plugging a looming skills deficit by announcing the creation of a vocational education framework and integrating this with its mainstream education system. The national vocational education qualification framework will come into force from the 2012-13 academic sessions in polytechnics, engineering colleges and other colleges under the university system. In the first year (2012-13), the new vocational stream will cater to the needs of companies in information technology and back office services, as well as retail, food processing, automobile, fashion design, and construction businesses. The new vocational stream is expected to cater to 5 million people with the equivalent of a graduate degree or diploma every year. Besides this, the launch of credit guarantee fund and exempting vocational training institutions from service tax will make skills training affordable.

Skill development or creating a pool of skilled workforce cannot be solely the government's responsibility. While the government has taken up this agenda with an intention to leverage the demographic dividend; India Inc. too necessarily needs to come to the forefront, partner with the government to draft skill competency standards and qualifications, and treat workforce who have undergone

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CURRENT VS GAP IN TRAINING INFRASTRUCTURE ACROSS PLAYERS

Player	Current (mn)	Est gap (mn)
NSDC	5.50	8.13
MoLE	1.20	7.75
MHRD	3.36	0.80
Transportation		2.73
Construction	0.46	1.30
Rural development	0.55	1.21
Urban development		1.36
Agriculture	1.98	
MSME	0.29	1.04
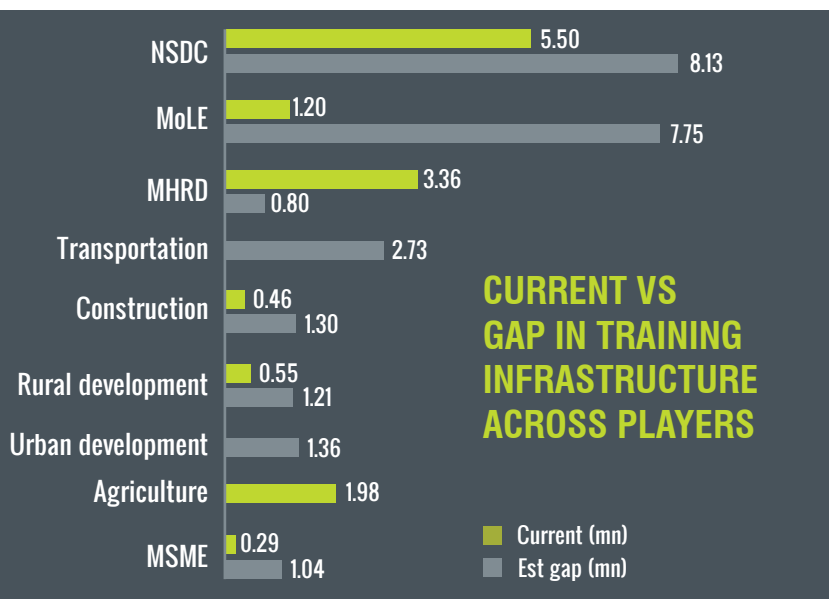
vocational education at par with the ones who opted for mainstream education.

The industry participation

To a large extent, industry is the victim as well as the culprit when it comes to scarcity of skilled workforce. However, there is a palpable trend in India Inc., starting to train its people on a scale large enough to alter the nation's future. The Survey finds that 91 percent of the respondents have an in-house facility to train their new hires. Apart from in-house training modules and outsourcing, there are a number of private firms across industry verticals that are also adopting ITIs. This approach helps companies skill future workforce. For instance, Maruti Suzuki India is adopting 40 state-run technical schools to create a customized labor pool, needed to fuel its Rs.18,000 crore expansion in Gujarat. The ITIs, mostly in northern India, will not only ensure a steady supply of trained personnel to the auto maker, but also to its dealers and vendors such as Sona Koyo, Amtek Auto and Rico Auto Industries.

S.Y. Siddiqui, COO, Maruti Suzuki India shares, "At Maruti, we do not look at the cost of training as an expense, rather it is viewed as an investment for building a talent pool for future organizational requirements to face the challenges of the competitive business environment." This corroborates to industry belief as approximately 40 percent of the

Survey respondents confirm that they spend more than Rs.25,000 per candidate on training and skilling fresh candidates.

In fact, the ITIs adopted by various companies such as the Taj Group, Hindustan Unilever, Videocon Industries, India Cements and Punj Lloyd, have shown to have better placement record. This is primarily because in such cases ITIs get better infrastructure, contemporary curricula in sync with the industry demand which consequently also improves their placement record. The adoption of government ITIs is a win-win situation as it helps the cause of modernization, and from the company perspective, it helps them to get industry ready workforce. 82 percent of the respondents affirm that mainstream education coupled with vocational training helps in bringing down training cost and time required to make candidates productive on the job.

Further, there are seasoned players like Centum Learning (Bharti Group) that bring to the table both backward and forward linkages. They work with companies to understand their skill set requirements over a period of time and then work backward to decide what courses they should launch and where should they open new training centers. TeamLease, a people supply chain company, is emphasizing on backward integration. Manish Sabharwal, CEO, TeamLease, shares, "We currently offer short term courses in English, Soft Skills, Accounting, Finance, Sales, IT Hardware and will be soon adding hospitality and retail." He further adds that they are working with several states to go live with 'Vocational Universities' that will set up community colleges offering two year associate degrees which will create the missing mobility between certificates, diplomas, associate degrees and degrees. Besides these, there are dozens of training companies with ambitions of training millions in engineering, construction, manufacturing, retailing, insurance, banking services including microfinance, accountancy, hospitality, healthcare and other vocations, sprouting up around India. For example, Core Education and Technologies, an education company, plans to invest at least Rs.225 crore to open a chain of vocational education institutes across India to train some three million people over the next five years. Companies could do well to partner with such training companies to bridge their existing skills gap.

Dilip Chenoy, MD & CEO, NSDC, enunciates the multiple role the industry needs to play as outlined in the National Skills Policy

2009. He shares, "The industry should own the skill development agenda, proactively set up sector skill councils which will provide the labor market information system, the national occupation standard, the competency levels for people in different jobs not only in the current economic conditions but also in the future." He further points out that the industry should also accredit training organizations, certify the trainings, and get the industry to preferentially employ people who have been certified. T. V. Mohandas Pai, Chairman, Manipal Global Education Services, believes that there is an urgent need for reforms to bring the necessary amendments to the Apprentices Act. He explains, "Companies, hotels, business institutions can take apprentices up to 2-5 years and pay them a stipend. The government on its part can subsidize the stipend so that more people can be taken in by industry players." This will help people get trained and then absorbed or given a certificate in training.

The government's well intentioned initiatives as well as India Inc.'s newfound push on skilling could help it follow the footsteps of South Korea or even Germany where an intense vocational focus in education and training helped the countries rapidly expand their economies. If the dozens of training institutes mushrooming in India can deliver it a skills edge, the country could reap benefits of its demographic dividend.

The academia – industry alignment

85 percent of the respondents assert that educational institutes are not equipped to impart practical knowledge which can help students become employable. In light of this, education as it is falls short of empowering the youth for the competitive market scenario. Dr. Santanu Paul, CEO, TalentSprint, minces no words and says, "Quite frankly, the industry has been complaining for a long time that they can't find enough employable graduates and those they select need to be trained; college education isn't sufficient for them to be industry ready or employable." Further, studies too suggest that only a part of graduates are employable out of the enormous volume of the output of educated youths. If education has to strengthen its role and remain relevant to the world, it will have to render skills development an integral part of its endeavor. The challenge of skilling/up-skilling 500 million by 2022 will require both fundamental education reform across primary, secondary and

higher education, and significant enhancement of supplementary skill development. At present, in India, approximately 12.8 million people join the job market every year. The current skill capacity of the country is about 3.1 million - a deficit of more than nine million annually. To add to the woes is the quality of training, which has limited industry linkages and fails to meet the industry standards. This is further accentuated by the fact that the current academic curriculum is not aligned to industry requirements as concluded by 76 percent respondents. As the gap between skills, employment needs and the quality of the output continues to widen, there is a drastic need for a different strategy to bridge this gap and this requires the intervention of the government, academia and industry. Thus, the curriculum for training and skill development, which is critical for providing decent

12.8 MILLION
PEOPLE JOIN THE JOB MARKET EVERY YEAR IN INDIA. THE CURRENT SKILL CAPACITY BEING 3.1 MILLION, THERE IS AN ANNUAL DEFICIT OF MORE THAN
9 MILLION

employment opportunities, has to be evolved in consultation with and with active involvement of, the industries which require the manpower. An industry-academia team which understands the industry needs and thereby factors this in the teaching and curriculum must be in place.

The required mind shift

While education imparts one kind of training, industry demands another kind of skills set in job seekers. As a result of this - while there is manpower crunch, the degree holders who are seeking jobs are being denied the jobs. "The belief is that once you get a degree you are eligible to compete for a job; that has led to everybody aspiring for a degree, and having a degree even without a job" says Dilip Chenoy. This paradoxical situation is in a way reflective of the obsession with degrees and the white

THE IMPORTANCE OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION HAS BEEN CLEARLY UNDERMINED. FORMAL EDUCATION SYSTEM STILL REMAINS DIVORCED FROM VOCATIONAL TRAINING

collared jobs that they potentially secure. There is no perceptible effort done at the lower educational level to sensitize and orient the young to understand that it is a stigma that prevents them from entering the 'skill world' and thus, save them from the aimless pursuit of higher education. The importance and hence the acceptance of vocational education has been clearly undermined. As a matter of fact, formal education system in India still remains divorced from any sort of vocational education or training.

Skills development is going to be the defining element in India's growth story. There is a need to re-define the relationship of education, employment and skills development. Often, vocational education is even dismissed as good education. People perceive vocational education as something which one pursues when one cannot get into a mainstream course. It is believed that a vocational course takes one to a shop floor while a graduation will lead to a good office. People's perception needs to undergo a change.

The change in perception is all the more important as the prevailing higher education system in India is not churning out skilled individuals and thereby, affecting the employability quotient. There is also a dearth of quality institutions as compared to the number of students coming out of secondary schools and joining higher education. In such a scenario, vocational education can prove to be a lucrative option for students as it will skill them and help gain employment.

This is possible only when there is proper recognition for the various courses and acceptance of the same by the industry. S. Mahalingam, Chairman, CII Council on Skill Development and CFO & Executive Director, Tata Consultancy Services explains, "There

is very little promotion of vocational education and we need to create a positive environment for making people opt for vocational stream as people think that the only form of education is the formal higher education format. There is a need to promote vocational education as a form of education which is very critical to create employability". Further, vertical mobility options for students opting for vocational education at the UG and PG level is also essential, failing which students may not prefer it at the school level.

The way forward

In the present context of continuing demographic dividend, the unique problem facing the country is that of labor surplus and skills scarcity. The International Monetary Fund's April 2012 Regional Economic Outlook: Asia and Pacific, "Managing Spillovers and Advancing Economic Rebalancing" categorically states that India's continuing demographic dividend can add about 2 percent to the annual rate of economic growth, if harnessed properly. Hence, if India is to maintain its growth and prevent the economy from derailing, the 'skill gap' issue has to be addressed immediately.

However, the greatest roadblock continues to be as to who will foot the skilling bill? Manish Sabharwal reasons the dynamics of the challenge, "There is a bit of a market failure in skills; companies are not willing to pay for training or candidates but willing to pay for trained candidates. Candidates are not willing to pay for training but jobs." This problem is further accentuated by the fact the neither banks, nor microfinance institutions are willing to pay for training unless a job is guaranteed. As a result, training companies are unable to fill up classrooms because many deserving candidates cannot afford the fees. The criticality of the issue is such that the three payers - individuals, government and companies - will have to work together to find a financing solution that is scalable, sustainable, transparent and honest.

The global woes and India's own faltering economic indicators does raise a question on long term sustainability of the skilling agenda. Will the target be met? The 500 million skilling target is nevertheless herculean and so are the stakes. If it fails, India better get ready to deal with a demographic debt or in a worst case scenario, a demographic disaster. But at this juncture failure just cannot be an option for India. Is India on track?

ENTRY LEVEL HIRING
AN INDUSTRY VIEW

The People Matters Entry Level Hiring Survey 2012 reflects inputs shared by 174 HR and business professionals from a spectrum of industries and sectors

73 Builds internal talent pipeline

64 Brings new ideas & perspectives

52 Balances manpower cost

4 Top problems in today's education system

76% Curriculum is not aligned to industry requirements

85% Educational institutes are not able to give practical knowledge

85% Candidates lack exposure to workplace skills

54% Educational institutions lack proper technology infrastructure

Where does the problem lie when hiring for entry level?

Is it the quantity of candidates?

- 4% Can't say
- 30% Yes
- 66% No
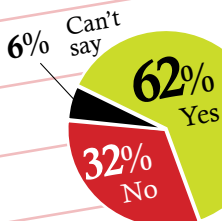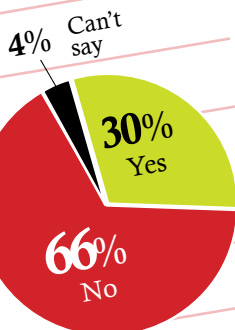
Is it the quality of candidates?

- 6% Can't say
- 62% Yes
- 32% No

Are educational institutes helping candidates become employable?

79% says "NO"

Entry-level talent is critical in business competitiveness

Why is it critical for business?

61% says "YES"

16 | Increases productivity

Do companies prefer to hire freshers with vocational skills?

84% says "YES"

82% say that mainstream plus vocational training help in reducing training time & cost. Here's why?

63 — They are trained in the basics skills required to perform the role

61 — They take minimum time to get accustomed to the job

49 — They have a better understanding of the role

42 — They can immediately get on the job

37 — They view job as a career

All figures in percent

How do companies train entry level hires?

97% says "YES"

Training is must to make entry level hires productive
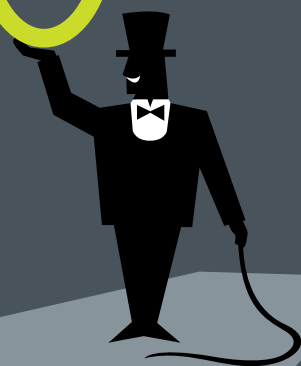
95% Have structured training programs

93% Have in-house training facility

21% Outsource entry level training

S.Y. SIDDIQUI
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER, ADMINISTRATION - HR, FINANCE, IT & COSL, MARUTI SUZUKI INDIA

As a growing nation, India has ample population of youngsters and given the presence of technical education in the country, quantity is not an issue, but the quality of talent that is joining the workforce is a concern. The knowledge & skill level acquired by a candidate while undergoing technical education like ITI and Diploma Engineering does not match with the skills and capability required by the industry – there is clear a gap. The reasons are: outdated course curriculum, lack of workshop practical training with new tools & machinery, lack of professional instructors, lack of modern infrastructure and low exposure and connect to the actual industrial environment.

At Maruti, we give preference to people who have either completed apprentice training at MSIL and for graduate engineers we prefer students who have undergone their vocational at MSIL as a part of their summer or winter projects. There is a one year intense training for Technician Trainees which includes induction training conducted by HR. Thereafter, these youngsters undergo basic technical training on the shop floor, on-the-job training and off-the-job training including classroom training. These cater to the skill enhancement and learning the operating processes, and other processes related to 3G, Kaizen, MOS, safety measures, use of PPE material etc.

SANJEEV DUGGAL
CEO & DIRECTOR, CENTUM LEARNING AND CO-CHAIRMAN, FICCI SKILL DEVELOPMENT FORUM

One of the biggest challenges faced with regard to skills development is that the cost associated with it remains high due to the unwillingness of the candidates to spend money on a training program despite knowing that it will benefit them in the long run. As you go to the bottom of the pyramid and into rural areas, it gets more and more difficult to get individuals to pay for skilling and development programs.

MEERA SHENOY
FOUNDER-CEO, YOUTH4JOBS

"The success of the skilling agenda will depend on a mindset shift as most Indians believe a degree is equal to a job"

The skilling agenda is proposing the possibility of a job without a degree, however the success of this model will depend on a mindset shift that needs to happen as most Indians believe a 'degree' is equal to a 'job'. So there is a need for an awareness campaign to promote these market-linked vocational courses that allow candidates a chance to get a job. And there is a need to reach those in the rural, tribal and the vulnerable areas of the society which forms 70% of India's population.

PRINCE AUGUSTIN
EVP - HUMAN CAPITAL, MAHINDRA & MAHINDRA

Our education system, curriculum, and the way we train people for the industry requires revamping. Knowing the scenario, M&M visits many engineering colleges to promote Mahindra as a brand through its unique initiative AQ (Auto Quotient) which positions M&M as a place where people who are auto passionate can create a career for themselves.

Various studies have shown that by 2022, the automobile industry will require 25–35 million skilled people. M&M and other OEM are part of SIAM (Society for Indian Automotive Manufacturers) which has proactively created a body of HR professionals called the SIAM Human Capital Group, which along with FADA, ACMA and NSDC has proactively created sector skills council called ASDC for creating an ecosystem to foster skills development in Automotive industry and this initiative has progressed very well.

"Studies have shown that by 2022, the automobile industry in India will require 25 to 35 million skilled people"

S. MAHALINGAM
CHAIRMAN, CII COUNCIL ON SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND CFO & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, TATA CONSULTANCY SERVICES

Given India's 8% growth rate, there are lot of skills that are required across sectors whether it is in construction, manufacturing, service related industry including hospitality, healthcare etc. The very scale of growth will demand an estimate of 500 billion people to be trained and retrained by 2022, as assessed by the government. And while we have institutions, we are focusing on rejuvenating them to create the employable pool. The focus is on getting the industry to take the responsibility to make a difference. There is an urgent need to develop the whole ecosystem for which the industry as well as the government will have to take ownership. And we need to create the ecosystem to provide for the needs of the different sectors, because unless we generate employable skills, we cannot really meet the demands of growth. Training of people will happen where the needs are as well as where the people are. In India, the economic advancement has not been uniform across the country. We need to train people in these places of under development so that they can migrate to places where they can get jobs.

T. MURALIDHARAN
CHAIRMAN, TMI GROUP

The model we follow focuses on three essential conditions – there should be minimum time gap between the training and the job; employer and job role should be identified in advance and as much as possible, give a guaranteed job before the training begins; and training should be customized to the role. Here, the employer has to make a commitment in advance and even pay part of the money, because the course is customized for him. The success of this model is measured in terms of whether or not the trained person is able to get and retain a job.

DILIP CHENOY
CEO & MD, NATIONAL SKILL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

For the FY 2012 –13, the NSDC has different sets of targets. The first relates to entities we have already funded. We have been given the mandate of skilling 250,000 people this year by the Prime Minister's National Council on Skill Development. The second is more than doubling the number of Sector Skill Councils (SSCs). Until 2011–12, the NSDC Board had approved the formation of 11 SSCs. We are aiming to get an additional 12 SSC proposals approved in the present fiscal year. The third pertains to attracting more skills training proposals. This financial year, we are looking at getting our Board to approve an additional 44 training initiatives, which would be capable of skilling 10–15 million people in diverse trades over a 10 year period, and also to create a combined per annum training capacity

"*Udaan* aims to provide skills and consequently employment to 8,000 youth from J&K per annum over a 5 year period in key high growth sectors"

of 5 million. Incidentally, our Board had approved the funding of 46 training proposals until 2011–12. The fourth relates an initiative of the Prime Minister, *Udaan,* which is an unique partnership between corporates, NSDC and the youth of Jammu and Kashmir. *Udaan* aims to provide skills and consequently employment to 8,000 youth from J&K per annum over a 5 year period in key high growth sectors. Some of India's largest companies are already seeing great value in this program. The support of more corporates is being garnered to scale it up.

ABHIJIT BHADURI
CHIEF LEARNING OFFICER, WIPRO

"Academic knowledge needs to be supplemented by soft skills, which we provide through training & coaching in the workplace"

As an IT company, the key skills set that we look forward to are analytical skills, problem solving, and communication skills along with a strong ability to learn. Subject matter expertise and technical depth in the area of study are critical. Programming skills are needed for the vast majority of software roles. Other roles need functional and professional skills as well. Academic knowledge needs to be supplemented by soft skills, which we provide through training and coaching in the workplace. On an average, it takes about 6 months for a fresher to become productive.

RAVI C. DASGUPTA
VICE PRESIDENT - GROUP HR, BIOCON

A majority of our hiring is done from campuses like IITs, BITS Pilani to name a few, and we also pick up people from various backgrounds including B. Pharm, M.Pharm, etc. The people we hire from these campuses essentially have the subject knowledge, but may lack some of the softer skills demanded of the job. It takes 6 months to a year before a person is well versed with the job.

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T.V. MOHANDAS PAI
CHAIRMAN, MANIPAL GLOBAL EDUCATION SERVICES

In the last one year, about 300,000 people have undergone skills training in various ways through the skill development corporations and in various companies, which offer skills training. The numbers are not very large as compared to our need. And most of the corporations that are engaged in skills training are not able to grow the numbers. This is true because people who come there are not able to make the connection between the jobs they want and the skills training that they get. On the one hand, candidates are not willing to pay for getting trained, while on the other, employers are still not able to assure these skills training providers that jobs will be available for the people once trained. Therefore, we need to get the ecosystem in place, which will enable the required connect between skill development and jobs.

"We need to get the ecosystem in place, which will enable the required connect between skill development and jobs"

The strategy at the national and state level is to start skill development corporations and provide required training, but all this needs to be dovetailed into one other large reform that is required for India. And this large reform is that skills training companies need to focus on providing actual work experience. Thus, there is an urgent need to bring reforms and amendments to the Apprentices Act so that companies, hotels & business institutions can take apprentices for up to 2–5 years and pay them a stipend, and the government can possibly subsidize the stipend so that more people can be taken in by the industry players.

PRABIR JHA
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT & HEAD - HR, TATA MOTORS

We run schemes which include both the apprenticeship model and elaborate skill building workshops that are done over 2 to 3 years. These are reasonably time consuming as well as cost money. Further, there is a need to invest in the infrastructure in the the workshops and in instructional designs, to ensure that these people come and work. If you do not do that, you will not have the skills which the company needs to be able to run a plant.

"There is a need to invest in infrastructure & instructural design, to ensure that candidates come and work"

DR. UMA GANESH
CEO, GLOBAL TALENT TRACK

Universities take time to adopt the curriculum and this requires imaginative approaches. Further, gaining the confidence and trust of the companies to absorb the people who are skilled through such programs, as well as getting the buy–in of companies to adopt these programs that would deliver the required talent also has to be done with utmost care.

Our interventions start even while the students are in the academic system to help them come up to speed with respect to the industry's expectations. The average investment required per candidate is anywhere between Rs.10,000 to Rs.50,000 which is borne in parts by, the student, the company and the government.

PIYUSH MEHTA
SVP - HR, GENPACT

There is a need for colleges and universities to identify how they can incorporate a curriculum that will help prepare students for the skills that the industry requires. Active internships during education programs can provide people hands-on experience even while they are studying. Thus, there is a need for the apprenticeship model to become active. Unfortunately, a B.Com graduate today is unable handle accounts payable because the B.Com curriculum does not expose them to an actual bill or how to process it. So, while they understand the theory, they do not know the practicality of accounting and therefore, the need for vocational education to make them productive on the job.

At Genpact, for every 100 people who apply, we would hire between 4 & 5 and we have a massive number of people applying. Our challenge today is that instead of hiring 5 from those who apply, we need to hire 6 or 7 people. And so we go slightly deeper into that pool of applicants. For example, at present, instead of keeping the cut-off at the best 5, we are going into the next 40 percent as well. Thus, the 6th and the 7th hire are those where we have to spend between 4 to 8 weeks in training them in order to deliver on our entry level needs.

"Active internships during education programs can provide people hands-on experience even while they are studying"

YASHWANT MAHADIK
VICE PRESIDENT & HEAD - HR, INDIA & INDIAN SUB-CONTINENT, PHILIPS

On whether or not we find the required skills in the applicants, the answer is yes and no. Philips operates in four different sectors in India – Lighting, Consumer Lifestyle, Healthcare and Research and Innovation (Software and Product development). Each sector has its unique demand of skills in new hires. It therefore, becomes difficult to find top talent especially in highly advanced areas like lighting design, healthcare informatics, etc.

"Each sector has its unique demand of skills in new hires"

ALOK NARAIN
SVP - HUMAN RESOURCES, QUATRRO GLOBAL SERVICES

The key competencies for the entry level are a function of the specific requirements within each of the business lines we operate in. The competencies we look for when hiring include problem solving ability, communication skills, and customer handling skills. We do find that we need to make significant investments even if it comes to generic or softer skills. A typical learning curve takes at least 3 to 4 months, before these entry level employees gain the requisite proficiency levels. The rigorous skill training program is divided into four phases, with certifications built into three phases – Foundation (contextual), Knowledge (process training) and Application (on-the-job training). The financial investments are significant and would amount to about 5 to 6 months of the salary of a frontline recruit.

JOHN YATES
CEO, MANIPAL CITY & GUILDS

Learners, traditionally, have not placed the same value on vocational education as on academic – the 'parity of esteem' issue. But this is changing. We are supporting the Government's efforts to create qualification frameworks that enable learners to jump off vocational routes onto academic ones and back on again if they wish, topping up their training as their life chances develop.

"Learners traditionally have not placed the same value on vocational education - the 'parity of esteem' issue"

SRINIVAS RAO CHEEDELLA
MANAGING DIRECTOR, LAURUS EDUTECH

As technology is evolving, it is important that the skilled resources are continuously upgrading their skills to be able to operate with new emerging technologies. India today has over 400 million people who are in the industry and need to go through skill upgradation. The biggest challenge is for these resources to be able to take that time out at the cost of their wages and up skill themselves. A candidate could get employable opportunities at an investment as less as Rs.5,000 for a 1 to 2 months program, while a higher end skills like that of working on automated CNC machine etc., could cost as high as Rs.50,000 and upwards.

"India today has over 400 million people, who are in the industry and need to go through skill upgradation"

SUKUMARAN P.P.
CHIEF PEOPLE OFFICER & BOARD OF MANAGEMENT MEMBER, GAMMON INDIA

In the past civil engineering was not a preferred option and the limited qualified and/or experienced construction talent had moved to jobs overseas especially to Singapore and the Middle East, which are still preferred locations for many Indians. Therefore, with a shortage of existing civil engineering talent in the country vis-à-vis the sudden spurt in the construction industry, we faced an acute talent shortage and so, needed to hire those who are not qualified for the job.

Gammon has an extensive 6 months training program, which is a combination of classroom and on-the-job training that strives to bring them up to speed to meet the real time industry needs. In my opinion, they are able to pick up the industry skills very quickly because they are quite clear on the theory part which has not changed much over the years for the construction business. So, the challenge is only about equipping them so that they are able to apply their technical knowledge and expertise to their work. By and large, within 2 weeks, these candidates are able start work as an understudy and contribute to productivity. The investment required on training is between Rs. 30,000 to 40,000, and the attrition in the first year is about 10–12%, which reduces to 6–7% thereafter and almost nil post that.

RIJU VASHISHT
EVP - PEOPLE, WALMART INDIA

At the stores where the entry level job is of a floor associate, the person is someone who can manage customer service, stock the shelves and make sure that the product is rightly placed and is able to address any query regarding a product in the store. To that end, we currently run 7 training centers to train entry level associates in our stores. These candidates are trained for 2–3 weeks where the idea is to pick up candidates from the underprivileged part of the community who could otherwise not get this opportunity. We provide scholarships to anyone who shows the right attitude towards customer service, is 18 years and above of age, and has an inclination towards learning. Our effort is to contribute to enhancing employability by placing these candidates either in Walmart or others companies.

Further, we also hire for entry level jobs in merchandising, supply chain management, which includes assistant buyers and merchandising assistant that are difficult to source because the concept of retail is new to the country and there is no readymade pool of people.

"Our effort is to contribute to enhancing employability by placing the candidates either in Walmart or others companies"

ARUN SEHGAL
EVP - HR, GLAXOSMITHKLINE CONSUMER HEALTHCARE

At the entry level, we hire business school graduates. Our attempt is to attract good talent and therefore, we have a rigorous process to assess and select. We assess the candidates against a criteria, which amongst other things, consists of high performance leadership behaviors such as 'building confidence', 'communication', 'enable and drive change' etc. We also look at the intellectual bandwidth and cultural fit.

"Our attempt is to attract good talent; therefore we have a rigorous process to assess & select"

DR. SANTANU PAUL
CEO, TALENTSPRINT

Students from Tier II and III towns need training not just in soft skills, but also in hard skills. One of the big myths is that people just need to polish up, as in a finishing school, assuming that core part of the cake is already baked and you just need to put some icing on it. But that's not really the issue. The issue is that there is no cake baked or otherwise. So, we need to work towards creating hard skills in the first place and then top it with the soft skills.

"We need to work towards creating hard skills in the first place and then top it with soft skills"

SRIKANTH KARRA
VICE PRESIDENT - HR, HP

Given the vast business spread at HP, the skills required for various entry level roles varies from R&D, to manufacturing, to sales, and BPO. Pertaining to the varied business spectrum we cater to, the critical skills that we look for include technology, business process and communication skills.

The absence of candidates' readiness to be productive on the job leads us to invest on training them on areas ranging from product knowledge to domain training, which is for a span of anywhere between 3 months to 1 year depending on the type of skill development demanded from the job role. The cost associated with such training

interventions required at the entry level ranges between 5000 USD to 25000 USD per person per year, which caters to meet the training need of entry level people falling in the salary brackets of 2.5 lakhs per annum for a simple graduate to 8 lakhs for high end technology skill roles. Given the scale and frequency of such training, most of the training is conducted internally and mostly relates to proprietary technologies or processes that are critical for HP.

"The absence of candidates' readiness to be productive on the job leads us to invest in training them"

AMIT BHATIA
FOUNDER & CEO, ASPIRE

The larger skill development problem can be addressed by making vocational and academic education Siamese twins as against caste system cadres. Students must be able to enter and exit either tracks. In academic education too, there are twelve bills which are pending in the

"We need less regulation on capacity building and a lot more regulation on the quality side"

Parliament. This creates environmental uncertainties and people are loath to investing. We need less regulation on capacity building and lot more regulation on the quality side. The ecosystem should enable employers that run large training institutions to convert those into universities. The government must let a thousand flowers bloom.

ASHISH SRIVASTAVA
DIRECTOR - HR, CANARA HSBC ORIENTAL BANK OF COMMERCE LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY

Insurance being a push product calls for additional time and effort and it was never easy to find people for the entry level job in this industry. A number of insurance companies work with institutes to provide them industry ready employees by guaranteeing 100 percent job for the courses; yet they are not in a position to get the required talent base. So yes, talent availability is a problem. The talent challenge in the industry is very

real but ours being a Bancassurance model, and the fact that we are small compared to others, our challenges are comparatively little less.
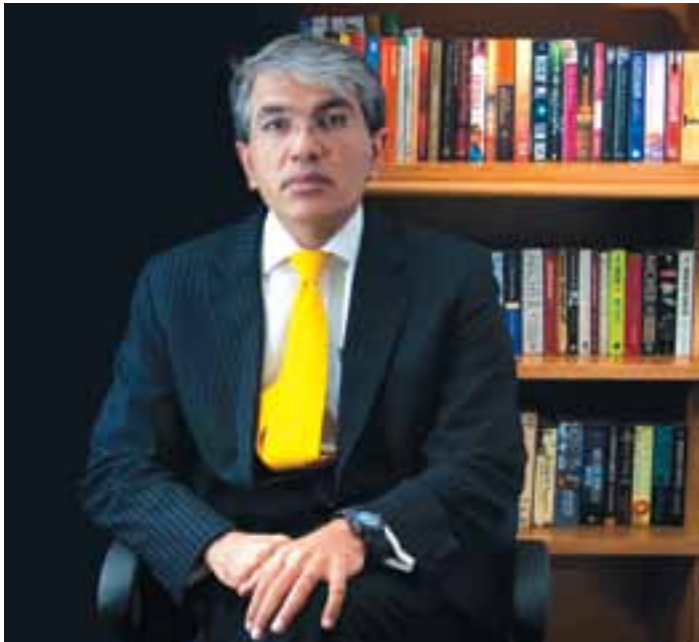
MANISH SABHARWAL
CHAIRMAN, TEAMLEASE

I think the biggest challenge for skills is who pays. There is a bit of a market failure in skills; companies are not willing to pay for training for unskilled candidates but willing to pay for trained candidates. Candidates are not willing to pay for training but need jobs. Banks or microfinance institutions are not willing to pay for training unless a job is guaranteed. And training companies are unable to fill up classrooms because many deserving candidates cannot afford the fees. So, the three payers; individuals, government and companies will have to work together to find a financing solution that is scalable, sustainable, transparent and honest.

Employers think differently about stock (existing employees) and flow (new joinees at the bottom). There is a model for short term upgrade of existing employees and we work with many employees in sales and IT hardware. The challenge lies in fresh joinees because there are three holes in the bucket; you pay for training and the candidate does not get a job, you pay for training, the candidate gets a job but is not productive. Or, you pay for training, the candidate gets a job, is productive but leaves. So, if you factor for learning, productivity and attrition risk, employer funded programs at the bottom of the pyramid have several challenges. The employer funded programs that will work are apprenticeships (they are willing to fund stipends) or reimbursement programs (candidates pay for a program that guarantees jobs but employers reimburses the fees over the first two years of employment).

SEEMA ARORA NAMBIAR
DIRECTOR, PEOPLE RESOURCES, McDONALD'S INDIA (WEST & SOUTH)

"We face difficulty in cutting through the cultural bias of working in the restaurant business as it is not considered a great career option"

Being in a business where we need to interact with people on an everyday basis, each employee is required to have good communication and people skills. At the entry level, we look for employees who have the willingness to learn, the ability to think, along with the social skills and attitude to work together with other employees. We have some difficulty in cutting through cultural bias of working with the restaurant business as it is not considered a great career option.

SANTOSH KUMAR CHOUBEY
CHAIRMAN & MANAGING DIRECTOR, AISECT

India is lagging behind developed countries and even countries like China sorely when it comes to skilling. Only 2% of our workforce has formal vocational skills. Further, it is estimated that to benefit from the demographic dividend that India boasts about, an additional 250 million people need to be skilled by 2020. Be it technicians, sales officers, retail staff, banking operations staff, data entry operators or office assistants, the infrastructure required for training such a huge mass is currently not available. A big challenge is that there are hardly any conversations between the industry and the skilling organizations, resulting in largely unproductive output.

Do you worry about a talent crisis in your organization?

Do I have a ready option to fill the recent exit?

What if my selection turns out to be a mistake?

Have I identified high-potential individuals in my organization?

Do I have a competent leadership pipeline in my organization?
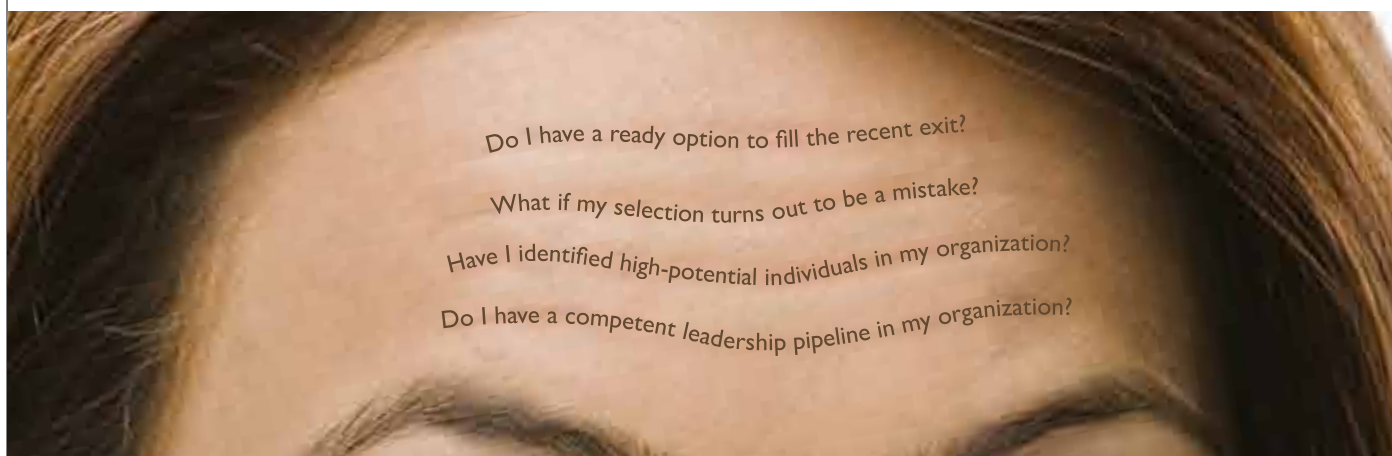
Create your organization's talent pool proactively. And beat the crisis of unexpected exits in critical and leadership roles.

Dealing with a sudden exit at any level is one of the biggest worries for an HR professional. Replacement decisions made without adequate preparation more often than not will result in poor job outcomes. We help HR professionals create a reliable talent pool using our scientific and data-driven assessment lenses. Our lenses will help you identify, nurture and keep ready a reliable talent pool to bank on in times of such crises.

Use our assessment lenses to:

Identify and nurture high-potential individuals

• Raven's Advanced Progressive Matrices: Measure learning agility, problem-solving and the ability to think clearly in complex situations.

• Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal: Evaluate individuals on critical thinking which is related to leadership qualities such as good decision-making.

• SOSIE: Understand if your candidate's value and motivators are aligned with her role and your organizational culture.

Develop leaders

• Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal: Enable self-reflection of strengths and shortcomings related to critical thinking, through a comprehensive development report.

• Golden Personality Type Profiler: Provide your leaders opportunities to understand their leadership styles related to team handling, communication and reactions to stressors.

GURMEET SINGH

AREA DIRECTOR, HR - INDIA SUB CONTINENT, MALDIVES & PAKISTAN, MARRIOTT INTERNATIONAL

In the hospitality industry, it is attitude and not aptitude for service which is the key to measure the effectiveness of service. At Marriott, we hire for attitude and train for skills. Sourcing and selecting service professionals is a tough task; while we do get a lot many applications from applicants, the strike rate for us is around 40 percent. For sourcing of candidates, we take recourse to referral & relationship, online applications, campus recruitment, walk-in interviews and consultants.

All entry level hires go through an extensive program which prepares them to move from the college mindset to industry realities. There are various training modules including orientation to company philosophy and policies. We also emphasize upon on-the-job training. Besides the fact that the college curriculum provides enough exposure to both theory and practical inputs; a six months on-the-job training in every semester as an integral part of the curriculum, provides for a great platform. As a part of our talent acquisition strategy, we identify and make offer to interns during the internship stage itself. Thus, they become productive say in 6 to 8 weeks time.

"We hire for attitude and train for skills. Sourcing & selecting service professionals is a tough task"

ANURAAG MAINI

EVP - HR & TRAINING, DLF PRAMERICA LIFE INSURANCE

If I look at the number of institutes, the supply side is increasing as they are churning out large number of students but not necessarily quality students, especially in tier two and tier three cities. Therefore the efforts required to help these students find a job are going up. With respect to quality of candidates, the problem is still very large because many institutes do not necessarily have the required experience or depth to produce people with the required skills. Hence skill development is increasingly becoming the responsibility of the organization.

DR. ANITA BANDYOPADHYAY

DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE - CORPORATE HR, RAYMOND

While Raymond as a brand personifies class and premium, the entry level talent that we find from various graduate courses do not have the required polish. They lack English speaking skills, basic operating skills, persuading skills and most importantly, the ability to connect with customers. Therefore, we spend approximately 2 to 6 months on training in order to make them productive. We have a 'train & place model' where we have tied up with institutes and NGOs, to identify talent, train them and place them accordingly. There is a challenge in sourcing people, which is further magnified because of the high attrition in the company which is to the tune of 30 percent at the entry level.

A. SUDHAKAR
SENIOR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - HR, DABUR INDIA

We hire in large numbers; for sales and distribution we hire close to 400 employees every year. The fundamental problem is the numbers are far too many as compared to the availability of such people in the market place. And even once you start meeting the people, the ratio of those who qualify is one to ten. So the employability of these people is a big question mark.

The problem is firstly due to the absence of clarity on the part of these candidates on what they want to do or what they seek from their job. Secondly, while we are not asking for more than basic ground level skills, most candidates fail to deliver even that. The skills that we look for are basic mathematics and computer skills which we are not able to find easily. Most of the candidates fail to cross the first hurdle of our simple tests.

We run a program called FIRST (Field Staff Induction Reference and Sales Training) which is a two week program to orient employees towards the organization, its sales policies and procedures, sales IT infrastructure and skills that they must acquire to perform well in their roles. We also have audio visual modules which enable us to scale these training initiatives across the various locations where our field staff operates.

6 Steps

to integrate social communications

Integrating social communications into business strategy will help the better prepared organizations outperform their peers

BY HIMANSHU GOYAL

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Himanshu Goyal is responsible for Social Business Evan–gelization and Sales for IBM Collaboration Solutions at IBM India/South Asia

Just a few years ago, businesses found it standard practice to communicate solely through telephone calls and face-to-face meetings. But with the evolving nature of business and expanding global reach of companies, tools for communication need to equally progress to enable companies to stay competitive in today's marketplace.

Interactions with colleagues, customers and partners are now much more complex and fluid. Competitive pressures, combined with easy access to information online, especially from smart mobile devices, have set the expectation that collaboration occurs instantaneously. Questions are answered in seconds rather than minutes or days, as people from all around the world come together as if they are in the same room. Typing speeds on devices are now further advancing the human ability to type with advanced software capability to predict words as they are typed.

It is clear that the way employees interact is fundamentally changing. To drive greater success, organizations need to unify their traditional communications infrastructure and channels with a broader mix of collaboration tools, including social networking and social media.

Enter social communications

Social communications involves the marriage of traditional communication tools such as telephony and video, with newer social networking and social media tools. This integrated approach is helping to take enterprise collaboration to the next level, and revolutionizing the ways that people and businesses communicate.

Social communications makes it possible for geographically distributed employees to work together seamlessly, and is efficiently changing the way businesses operate and ultimately respond to their markets.

Here are six steps to easily integrate social communications into business strategy:

1. Determine which social tools are being used

Are people in your organization tweeting? Are they on Facebook or LinkedIn? If so, then good news: you have already taken the first step. Look around and you will see people traveling with their tablets, taking calls on their smartphones and tweeting with colleagues and friends.

2. Determine how to best manage this interaction

Ask yourself, "How can I help people actually get work done, better and more efficiently, across their social networks?" The key is real-time communication. Helping to conduct an expertise search, based upon people in your social networks, allows work to be done more quickly. The analytics tools in the social network helps identify people who should connect and work together on a particular project based upon their knowledge of a certain subject, whether it be legal matters or pricing issues.

The real-time aspect allows users to see who's available right now. It eliminates the need for sharing conference call information and coordinating schedules. This can also be useful for bringing in an external counsel. If you connect with someone via a social network, you can invite them to a meeting and use a tool with co-editing features to collaborate on a document - a contract, for example. Something that would have taken hours, perhaps even days, is now completed in a matter of minutes.

3. Ensure the social tools your organization uses provide seamless integration features

When deciding which social tools your organization should use, keep in mind that the most important factors are seamlessness and integration. Make sure you choose social tools that will work with your telephony systems. Do you have video investments? It should integrate with those, too. Since the mobile workforce is expected to reach more than 1.19 billion people by 2013, mobile support is especially critical. The various operating systems that support today's smartphones, tablets, and other devices need to integrate with your social communications strategy.

4. Be aware of security and privacy of information

Email and instant messaging come with their own risks – such as viruses, spam and phishing attacks. Similarly, social

networking opens up its own risk of information leakage risks. Encourage adoption by educating people on how to properly use their social network. Not everything should be posted publicly, and employees must be shown what is and isn't okay to share in public domain. Many products offer control mechanisms that assist in compliance by allowing some posts to be blocked. And be sure you have archives so there is a historic record of what has been said.

5. Hone in on the benefits of social

If you want to measure the benefits, look at overall productivity and efficiency. If someone can more easily find another person via social connections, then they are more likely to ask for information. The net result is that the task at hand takes less time, and also that important materials are subject to additional review. A proposal, for example, can go out the door having undergone scrutiny by more sets of eyes. Overall collective decision making is facilitated for multi skill teams geographically placed all over the world to come together and collaborate.

6. Understand the cost savings

There are additional cost savings around managing communications cost. Everything adds up: desktop phones can sit unused if an employee is remote or travels often. The cost of international calls can get sky high. So can data plans for mobile devices. Eliminating these costs produces tangible savings that can be easily quantified.

It is clear why social communication is critical for today's always open, always connected, organization. Communications challenges are no longer just about connecting people for a one-on-one conversation, but rather using the wide variety of social networking and analytics tools to determine the best way to reach a person and ensure faster access to information.

With seamless access to new, social tools that make it even simpler to connect, it is now easier than ever to assemble a group, regardless of location, and make a decision almost immediately with collective thinking minds.

Moving on to Social Business

As we are aware, social or Web 2.0 technologies represents a change in the way we use the Internet as consumers. Customers have high expectations and low tolerance for websites that are not engaging, intuitive, interactive and mobile. Businesses must remain nimble to respond to market conditions quickly to remain competitive. Research of global leaders has found that outperforming companies are almost 4 times more likely to be investing in and encouraging collaboration as compared to their competitors. These companies will activate networks of people that apply content and expertise to improve and accelerate how work gets done, delivering unprecedented return for the time invested.

The ways individuals and communities interact, form relationships, make decisions, accomplish work, and purchase goods are

A SOCIAL BUSINESS RECOGNIZES THAT PEOPLE DO BUSINESS WITH PEOPLE & OPTIMIZES **HOW PEOPLE INTERACT TO ACCOMPLISH ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS**

changing the way business is done. A social business embraces and cultivates a spirit of collaboration and community – internally and externally – delivering unprecedented returns for the time invested. A social business recognizes that people do business with people and optimizes how people interact to accomplish organizational goals:

- Deeply connecting individuals in productive, efficient ways
- Providing line of sight across traditional boundaries and better aligning actions to needs
- Speeding up business with insight to anticipate and address evolving opportunities
- Unlock new opportunities to rethink business processes

Overall, organizations that realize the value of Social Communications as they evolve into a Social Business will outperform their peers. [Pm]

How good is your idea?

Measuring the 'Return on Idea' can help business predict the success of the idea

BY RAKESH KOCHHAR

What an idea, *sirji*, these iconic lines got me thinking about how often I have been asked, 'How do I know this is a good idea?' Can you remember the number of times you have agonized and debated over the value of your idea? How do I take my dream, turn it into an idea and action it into reality?

There is a certain dread in dealing with the uncertainty one faces when deciding upon which opportunities to pursue. Good ideas can boost value but bad ones can destroy it. This leads to a peculiar situation, when we can end up potentially taking one of the two defensive positions categorized fondly by me as "The Head Scratcher" and "The Ostrich".

The Head Scratcher is characterized by statements like,

"I have this idea but I don't know what to do with it."

"How do I know when I get a good idea?"

"How do I know my idea will work? How can I predict the future?"

On the other hand, the Ostrich makes statements like,

"I am too busy fire-fighting to be thinking of new things at this point of time!"

"I still need more information/data to make a precise decision!"

"Why should I take the risk? How will it impact me should I fail?"

Both types of these species can be found amongst us, corporate leaders and entrepreneurs, who at times make copious excuses to avoid committing ourselves to predictions of future business value of an idea. These range from lack of data, rapidly changing markets and lack of accuracy of previous predictions. However, nasty surprises can be expected when ideas are launched without proper testing, modelling or predicting results.

It is said that there are two things that make the difference between success and mediocrity - a great idea and a purpose driven action on that idea. An idea to be successful in the business context must create financial value. From 'imagining' an idea, to 'validating' the idea, to 'profiting' from the idea, it is essentially about putting a process in place for predicting the value of the idea and then implementing it to ensure the actual or demonstrated value is equal to, if not higher, than that predicted. This in short is the 'Return On Idea' (ROI).

The idea benefit cycle

The idea benefit cycle illustrates the process required to validate the authenticity of an idea and assesses its financial value and business relevance before implementing it.

Imagination: Ideas are sparked through imagination. Look at social trends, consumer behavior and competitor products to uncover potential opportunity. Tata Nano illustrates this well.

Predict value: These ideas then need to be ranked by predicting the future value that each idea will contribute. The initial screening of ideas can be quickly done by empirical methods. They should be assessed for their financial contribution and not selected based on wish fulfilment.

IN BRIEF

Launching ideas without adequate testing can land businesses with nasty surprises

Validate: The top two or three ideas need to be further filtered through prototyping, testing and refinement. For example, 'ChotuKool' at Godrej is an innovative cooling solution for masses, wherein Godrej worked closely with potential consumers to get insights on their needs, desired solutions and barriers to consumption, before launching this product. Where it is too expensive to prototype, analyze the patterns of the past to provide clues to extrapolate to the future. Also look for analogies and draw insights from available data.

Customer response: The primary test any idea must pass through is answering the question, 'Why will the customer buy the product or service?' This involves investigating on those factors causing strong customer responses and avoiding or eliminating those that are weak; sometimes evidence is strong and at other times judgement has to be used to find answers to, "What are my impacts?", and focus on those which add value.

Similarly, scan the business environment in terms of ease of business entry barriers, regulations, competitor activity, and other external factors, using them to refine ideas and calibrate predictions. At this stage, the final selection or discarding of the idea will take place.
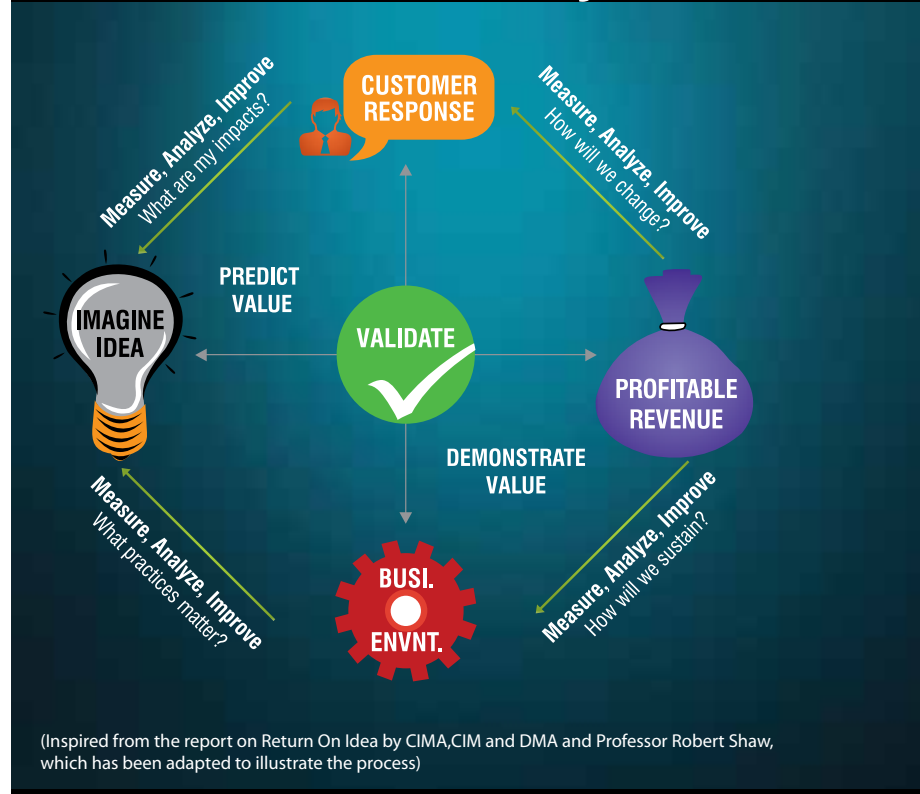
Demonstrate value: Now the project is ready to be commercialized and by this time, dependencies with internal and external partners would have been mapped out, teams put in place, issues identified and processes put in place. Tatas demonstrated this well by collaborating to make their product "TATA Swach", a nano-tech water purifier with a patented purifier bulb to make safe drinking water accessible to have-nots.

A mechanism for feedback to gather credible evidence for review and enable improvement in future ideas and predictions, is also required.

Once the revenue starts, it will help answer the question,"How will we build and sustain the benefits?" and "How will we change?" in response to new consumer behavior to continue delivering profitable revenues. Greater the accuracy in "predicting the value and demonstrating results", greater will be the confidence in implementing new ideas.

However, this process is not without *risks.* One has to deal with a whole lot of uncertainty and there is a need to understand and mitigate the risks involved.And sometimes, even the best research can fail, for example, New Coke or Pepsi Blue. But this should not dissuade a true entrepreneur.

Idea Benefit Cycle

(Inspired from the report on Return On Idea by CIMA,CIM and DMA and Professor Robert Shaw, which has been adapted to illustrate the process)

THE 'IDEA BENEFIT CYCLE' PROVIDES A PROCESS TO EVALUATE THE VALUE OF IDEAS. THERE IS NO REASON TO HEAD SCRATCH OR BEHAVE LIKE AN OSTRICH WHEN YOUR NEXT IDEA COULD BE A WINNER!

While the failure rate of ideas can be reduced through this process, the same cannot be eliminated. This model provides an adaptive learning process, where the hypothesis can be tested as early as possible and as inexpensively as possible, thereby giving the maximum ROI. Thus, the Idea Benefit Cycle provides a process to evaluate the value of ideas and there is no reason to head scratch or behave like an Ostrich when your next idea could be a winner! 🄿🄼

Rakesh Kochhar is a Business Performance & Executive Coach. He represents CoachNme (www.coachnme.in). He can be reached at rakesh.kochhar@coachnme.in

M&As: Considering the intangible

Keeping with the business leaders' continued focus on inorganic growth, organizations must evaluate the value of intangible capital to ensure their investment pays off

BY GAURAV LAHIRI

The past couple of years have been a busy time for Asian dealmakers. According to news reports, merger and acquisition deals in 2011 grew by more than 40 percent over the past year, amongst which the lion's share of inbound deals was lapped up by the Asia Pacific region (excluding Japan). The bullish outlook means we can expect further consolidation among Asian industries, with companies hoping to increase market share, enhance competitiveness and improve bottom lines through inorganic growth.

However, buyers should beware. M&A deals are inherently risky and anyone planning a merger or acquisition needs to ensure that their substantial investment pays off. One of the most serious stumbling blocks is that typical methods of deal evaluation are flawed; neither investors nor their advisors evaluate the intrinsic value of intangible capital – the non-monetary assets that cannot be seen, touched or physically measured, and so, are hard to quantify or value, but which include most of the key drivers of deal profitability.

Research conducted by Hay Group's global R&D center for strategy execution in 2011, in collaboration with Harris Interactive, identified the key elements of intangible capital that have the greatest impact on post-merger integration and on the ultimate success of M&A transactions. The study reveals that business executives do not spend enough time assessing the value and 'fit' of a target's intangible capital in the early stages of a transaction. As a result, they fail to identify the risks attached to it, and are unable to mitigate these risks effectively during post-merger integration. Most M&A failures can be attributed to this lack of attention to the human capital.

Evidently, focusing on deal-related intangible capital will pay big dividends in the longer-term through increased shareholder value. Executives and their business advisors need to quantify the intangibles for better management of such capital.

Essentially, intangible capital covers three areas: organiza-

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
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tional capital, such as management processes and organizational culture; relational capital, such as brand position, customer management, partnerships and networks; and human capital, including knowledge, skills, leadership and employee engagement.

It is vital to assess these intangible elements in addition to tangible assets as early in the deal lifecycle as possible. As per the research, two-thirds of executives believe that an increased and earlier focus on intangible capital during the M&A process would have improved the success of their mergers. Furthermore, just over half of executives say that failing to audit non-financial assets such as governance, brand image and client relationships increases the danger of making the wrong acquisition.

Executives often assume that intangible capital is static and retains its value throughout the deal's lifecycle. In reality, its value fluctuates in reaction to internal and external change. A target firm's intangible capital is usually at its strongest in terms of value and stability at the start of a transaction. However, as the market hears rumors of a poten-

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IN BRIEF

Attention to human capital during the early stages of an M&A deal, increases the chances of a successful integration and boosts shareholder value

tial buyout, aspects such as client loyalty, brand image and employee commitment begin to destabilize, decreasing with each step of the pre-deal process. By the time the deal completes, intangible capital is at its most volatile and the proportion of shareholder value at risk is at its greatest.

The biggest challenge then would be - assessing an asset that has no physical form.

The answer lies in identifying those elements that have the most significant impact on the value of intangible capital. While it is vital to close the gap between the intangible capital of the target and acquirer companies, management needs to devote its attention to the 'core drivers' of intangible capital, rather than to intangible capital itself. Our research suggests that there are two such core drivers that can make or break any M&A deal – the extent of alignment of the leadership of the two companies involved, and on the alignment of their respective cultures.

FAILING TO AUDIT NON-FINANCIAL ASSETS SUCH AS GOVERNANCE, BRAND IMAGE & CLIENT RELATIONSHIPS INCREASES THE **DANGER OF MAKING A WRONG ACQUISITION**

The first, leadership alignment, is essentially a meeting of the minds on both sides. Early in the post-merger integration, executives should take the time to align their individual and collective expectations around the key focus areas, such as: brand positioning; client relationships; ownership and management; and, the new governance model.

Equally important is leadership decision-making behavior. Two-thirds of respondents to Hay Group's M&A pulse surveys said that slow decision-making was a key barrier to effective integration. When decision-making roadblocks occur, leaders need to display the ability to overcome these situations – and quickly. In order to show colleagues and counterparts how the business will be run, right from the start, leaders need to be clear about: who is responsible for which decisions; how decisions will be made when executives cannot agree; and, what approach will be used to analyze decision-making obstacles.

The second aspect, the alignment of cultures, is a matter of the attitudes towards

agility and risk-taking. Merging firms that have comparable organizational cultures are more likely to understand and support each others' actions and decisions. However, Hay Group's research suggests that executives targeting companies for merger or acquisition typically focus their due diligence efforts on the wrong issues. When asked if they conduct cultural analysis during the pre-deal phase, only 38 percent of executives surveyed said they did. And while executives are not blind to the value of carrying out a culture due diligence study, nearly 60 percent said they struggled to obtain information about the culture of the target company. Consequently, the majority (54 percent) admitted that failing to audit business culture increased the danger of making the wrong acquisition.

Culture is a strong driver of merger performance for primarily two reasons – the attitudes to risk-taking and organizational agility. While M&A is intrinsically a risky business, firms with the same relative tolerance to risk-taking are better able to deliver merger objectives. Culturally, it is imperative that both firms display a common positive appetite for risk-taking so that critical actions can be taken. Our research has also found that an agile culture is more likely to win the M&A game. During a merger, executives tend to consult widely to ensure everyone's interests are considered before decisions are made, in an effort to display cultural sensitivity. But not making any decision is a decision in itself, and one which could jeopardize M&A success. In an agile culture, leaders understand the impact of timeliness and decisions are made as quickly as possible, on the basis of sound information, judgement and experience.

A successful M&A strategy depends on application of the right insights: first to identify the best transaction and second, to create value as quickly as possible. Having a clear understanding of what you are buying and how it 'fits' with your existing company through intangible capital analysis will help you achieve both of these goals.

Executives who pay active attention to intangible capital are more likely to create the right conditions for deal success and to deliver significant shareholder value from their acquisitions. This will be particularly valuable to their organization in an unpredictable economic environment, where growth is increasingly dependent on effective strategic decision-making. ▣

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Identifying hi-pots

Understanding the nuts and bolts of identifying high potentials & their readiness to take up future leadership positions can put an organization on a fast track

BY TACY BYHAM

Many forward thinking organizations are developing succession plans and systems to identify 'high-potentials' (existing employees who may have what it takes to move into future strategic leadership roles) within their organization. However, one of the most critical factors is the definition of high potentials which is more often than not confused with high performers. What is generally observed is the fact that performance management is clearly missing a clear definition of high potentials. There is thus, an urgent need to calibrate a common definition of high potentials. The process of identifying high potentials is an advanced talent development process, wherein people who are in the organization for the last 3 years, have a good track record, have the potential factors, and have an orientation towards development, are nominated. The barrier comes as they move up the ladder; one needs to look at complexity, visibility, span of control, change – these changes are exponential. They need to be conceptual. There has to be a clear understanding of the criterion and conversation. A good track

record performance is the basic followed by leadership, value and culture. Identification of a high potential is similar to a good interview for a critical role.

Sadly, all too often these decisions are based on subjective data, wherein there is an overemphasis on experience, assuming strong verbal skills as a sign of strong leadership skills, evaluating leaders on the behaviors and skill sets that are not necessary for success in their role and overlooking leaders with potential to succeed at higher levels. Apart from these are the common follies that organizations make in rewarding commitment over ability, overemphasizing one skill or ability, safely assuming that those who excel at the tactical level of an organization will perform well at the strategic level too, and all together neglecting the importance of linking the business strategy to the tools used for assessment. It is critical to understand that accurate assessment information is indispensable in determining a high-potential's readiness for future leadership positions. There must be a calibrated and consensus based decision. Organizations should opt for a robust diagnosis of specific, individual development needs in relation to the target level they may eventually occupy, so as to reduce the risk inherent in these critical decisions. Thus, having identified the so called high potentials, the next critical step is to make crucial development and deployment decisions.

Understanding the nuts and bolts of identifying true high potentials and their readiness to take up future leadership positions puts an organization on the path to succession success. As a multi-faceted, long-term strategic effort, succession management and planning are critical. As it is a costly affair, there should be no inherent mistakes. Committing to a robust, customized process that identifies the key competencies for success and accurately assesses future leaders, provides the foundation for long-term success in developing the leaders to meet the organization's future challenges. For instance, if an organization says that 60 percent of the workforce will be eligible for retirement, then it needs to have in place a significant effort to seed a leadership pipeline; they must promote and stretch talent. Seeding leadership is critical, which implies having right talent at the right place and at the right time. There are five components: the first being – alignment with the strategy (people strategy with business

strategy). For example, if an organization is aware of the fact that it will grow by 20 percent, it needs to figure out where they can find the people who could take on the critical roles. In such cases, HR will do a disservice if they cannot do this for the organization; they need to acknowledge that tactical is not strategic. The second – to ensure clear definition of what is high potential with respect to skills, there needs to be a clear and differentiated definition in place. The team should understand what is CHANGE and more importantly adapt to the changes. HR will need to ensure the same in a seamless fashion. The third point is – identifying the high potentials: a clear differentiated investment is required to move into their roles and an accelerated learning program could be of help. The fourth is development of leaders and the fifth factor is the focus on execution. Herein lies the challenge for HR, to initiate as well as actively participate in the execution.

IF AN ORGANIZATION HAS 60 PERCENT OF ITS WORKFORCE ELIGIBLE FOR RETIREMENT, THERE SHOULD BE A PROCESS TO SEED A LEADERSHIP PIPELINE AND PROMOTE TALENT

There are a number of development programs, however, the best development program helps understand and capture the minds of the people; it helps them move up the value chain and 360 degree feedback captures the heart. To capture the head, there has to be in place a system for formal learning, WebEx training, coaching, mentoring, and development in the ratio of 70:20:10. All facets of success - competencies, knowledge, experience, and other personal attributes should be systematically evaluated to assess the individual's readiness for future leadership positions.

In this entire episode of identifying high potentials and developing succession plans, one of the key challenges is that HR is not positioning itself as being strategic. It is neither redefining nor reinventing itself. HR needs to spend more time on fixing these problems. ▣

Tacy Byham is the Vice President of Executive Development at DDI

Innovation
at work

Innovation, in process or in product, is the greatest source of organizational value creation in the dynamic new age economy

BY AMIT BANSAL

Innovation is often the most misunderstood and misused management concepts. While common belief tends to relate innovation to product innovations alone like iPad, iPhone, Walkman, Facebook, etc. and such examples would have one believe that innovation is an extremely rare phenomenon and is very difficult to accomplish. However, innovation in organizations goes much beyond these examples of 'Radical Innovation'.

Being the greatest source of organizational value creation in the dynamic new age economy, innovation is in fact possible either in the process or in the product. And depending on the industry, the pace and quantum of innovation may vary. In some industries, polishing existing processes might be enough, while in others one may need innovation that changes both the product and the business processes.

Some of the key areas in which innovation in product and processes can create value for the business:

Product

New product: The change in products offered can be incremental or radical. For instance, when Dettol, an antiseptic lotion, launched Dettol soap, it was an example of radical product innovation where Dettol delivered the same value proposition of antiseptic/anti-bacterial in a new product category. However, the launch of the liquid soap variation of the soap was an incremental innovation. In both cases, Dettol changed what they were selling, leading to a positive impact on revenue.

New customer: In this case, the innovation is centered around finding new users (target audience) for an existing product or service. Blackberry, which was mostly used by business users, repositioned itself as a phone for the youth with the campaign of new Blackberry Boys. The same product was sold to a new target segment leading to higher revenues.

New place: Newness can also be introduced by selling an item using new technologies to reach out to a wider audi-

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ence. Product catalogs on TV, online shopping portals, sending money over mobiles, are some of the examples of innovation in this category.

Process

New delivery method: Innovation in delivering things differently to the customers aims at providing better customer experience or cost efficiency. In the training industry, delivery through a mix of VSAT based lectures and learning portals is an innovation using new delivery methods. It brings cost efficiency along with bringing better experience for the customer.

Technology leverage: The world is full of innovations in this category, starting from ERP and systems, to ATMs, and the use of robotics and automation in production. Leveraging technology is the lowest hanging innovation that can be driven easily in an organization.

Smarter processes: This is another area where incremental innovations lead to significant cost benefits and efficiencies in the organization. While there are lot of standard business

IN BRIEF

Innovations in organizations can go much beyond the examples of 'radical innovation' to help create value for the business

processes that can be implemented across businesses, innovation with new processes needs to be industry or company specific. For instance, the concept of self-check-in by airlines led to a significant efficiency in the check-in process.

Essentially, innovations around the product category have a direct impact on revenue, whereas innovations around the process category have an impact on the cost and agility of the organization. In order to the get innovation working for an organization, following areas would need to be worked on.

Organizational strategy for innovation

The first step in the process is to create a strategy for innovation for the organization. Different industries and organizations at different stages of evolution within an industry need different levels of innovation (incremental or radical), across the parameters mentioned above. If one is an aspiring leader in an industry where the leader is well established, implementation of radical innovation would be needed in order to get to a leadership position. Similarly, certain industries where technology is part of the product offering itself, the need for innovation is very high. Once the employee understands the types of innovation that his organization needs, the next step is to structure the company for innovation.

Organization structure must support innovation

The organization needs to be structured well for nurturing innova-

tion. One of the important steps is to capture the business value of the innovation, thereby balancing the act of creating something new and the business value.

Organizationally, individuals should be able to voice new ideas. The organization should have a mechanism to identify good concepts from all the new ideas. There can be an interdisciplinary, inter-unit team that implements this step. Since innovation involves change, there can be resistance from certain sections against the innovation. Leadership has to be conscious of the same and should avoid falling in the trap of killing an idea just because it is 'not how we do things'. The team needs to identify the good concepts and grade them on the amount of business

include the costs incurred at each stage and the output of each stage. The cost includes both direct as well as indirect cost of resources. While the incremental innovations are easier to quantify as the gestation cycles are smaller, the radical innovations are more difficult to measure during the development phase. However, we can capture the value in terms of intellectual property and project stages completed, rather than in terms of financial numbers alone.

Reward innovation

Four major factors feed motivation: vision, passion, recognition and economic incentives. While the employer needs to articulate a vision for innovation and create a

IN SOME INDUSTRIES, POLISHING EXISTING PROCESSES MIGHT BE ENOUGH, WHEREAS IN OTHERS, ONE MAY NEED INNOVATION THAT CHANGES BOTH THE PRODUCT AND THE BUSINESS PROCESSES

impact - from incremental to radical. The organization then uses transparent communication processes so that people know what innovations are underway. Clearly explain the value of the innovation so that everyone understands how innovation creates a positive impact on either the revenue or the cost.

Measure innovation

The famous philosophy by Peter Drucker applies to innovation as well - you cannot manage what you cannot measure. Metrics are essential for guiding innovation. The metrics should account for both objective as well as intangible measurements. Metrics should capture data at each stage of the innovation process, from creating ideas to capturing value. The metrics

culture that allows employees to be passionate around innovation, this alone may not be sufficient. The recognition and economic incentive is important too.

For incremental innovations, the economic incentives work better, whereas the radical innovations need to be rewarded with recognition more than just monetary rewards. Using the right blend of the rewards to motivate employees lies at the axis of innovation.

The relative weight one places on different types of innovation should match the innovation strategy that fits the organization and the industry. However, one must recognize that in order to establish a leadership position in a respective domain, innovation is a necessary condition to succeed. **pm**

Leadership on course

Golf can enable individuals to push the boundaries while continuously equipping themselves with new standards of performance

BY G. RAVINDRAN

Golf is one sport that lends itself easily to leadership lessons. It is an individual game that allows unhurried conversations in an open, uninhibited environment. No wonder it is the preferred game of business leaders, globally, to build networks and relationships outside of closed normal office environs.

Learning and development is an advanced science but how it is delivered is more of an art. Training is commonly about skills, and development connects growth, advancement and improvement at a broader level. Formal programs aimed at development, often rely on case studies and simulations, which by definition imply they are hypothetical and dated. While simulation based learning is relevant in certain contexts, when we look at leadership development, there is a felt-need to push the boundaries and explore new frontiers for real-time learning. Leaders today need less of artificial input-feeds and more learning in a live setting to create internalization.

The experiential learning from the game of golf allows space for introspection and enables sharing of insights as the practice & play sessions act as an opportunity to take the learning onto the course for real-time application. Golf allows participants to experience the power of new insights that often enable them to push the boundaries while continuously equipping themselves with 'more' and 'next' to create new standards of performance.

The objective of integrating golf as a leadership development tool is anchored on many gelling points. One of them is to seek and give expression to the 'child' in each of us. In the formality of adult learning, many leadership programs tend to overlook the inner child that seeks outlet and expression. Facilitators therefore 'tap' into the 'child in us' to encourage experimentation, risk-taking, creativity and discovering new ways of doing things. This can help reduce inhibitions, and increase free expression, allowing for a lot more experience sharing and invaluable insights. Golf, as an individual sport, is ideal to showcase ambivalence. It is easy to see how limitations and capabilities co-exist in the same person; how challenges and opportunities go together; how skills, technique, strategy, stance, experience, innovation are all there, but come crunch time, the player has no one, and nothing else to blame – not the club, caddy or the course. Leaders and golfers know that once they step onto the green, once the leadership stance is taken, the only thing that is available is 'I'.

As a leadership development program, golf enables enhanced self-awareness and provides varied insights into leadership fundamentals like authenticity and integrity. Played over solitary periods, golf, as in life, constantly tests the conscious, for example, between playing by the rules and taking shortcuts. Understanding the real purpose, knowing why we do what we do, and the desire to re-chart the course of life, our work and the game, is the inflexion point for any change, growth and development. And all change or growth begins with the self, the big 'I'.

Another takeaway for leaders from golf is the power of positivity. Often when a golfer has a bad shot and senses a let down by the game, he/she looks around, takes in some fresh air, hears the wind whistling through the trees and reminds themselves that they are doing something they really love! Similarly, leaders should pause, motivate themselves, and enthuse their teams to believing in themselves to tackle any challenges that may come their way.

There is a lot that leaders can learn from golf as it focuses on renewing the body of knowledge to proactively prepare leaders for the 'next' challenges. In this light, 'Golf & I' is an experiential learning program which is an innovation by SHRM India to use newer settings for 'learning and development' that provides leaders a platform for self-reflection and development. **pm**

G. Ravindran is CEO and MD of SHRM India, as well as Member of the Global Leadership Team of SHRM responsible for the MEA and Asia Pacific Region

IN BRIEF

An individual game like golf allows opportunities for unhurried conversations in an open environment, which enables leaders to introspect and share insights

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Dr. Anil K. Khandelwal
Former Chairman and Managing Director,
Bank of Baroda

CEO - The first 100 days

A focussed plan of action for the first 100 days can put the organization on the speed highway of change

BY DR. ANIL K. KHANDELWAL

Conventional wisdom suggests that CEOs must understand the organization inside-out within the first 100 days before they unleash any concrete action. Is this valid anymore? Given the competitive pressures of modern times, a CEO's task is cut out from day 1 and his challenge begins from that very day. During the transitional period, CEOs are expected to create the desired momentum, build credibility and secure some early wins to lay a firm foundation for firm success. Whether the CEO is leading a startup company, a well performing organization, or an organization under turbulence, he is expected to initiate a dynamic agenda for change in the first few weeks, to send out the right signals to the market.

However, when a CEO has moved to an altogether new industry or line of business, it is only fair to expect that he would spend a few days gaining deeper understanding of the nuiances of the new industry, before he embarks upon a new strategy.

More particularly, CEOs of organizations facing turbulence need to develop a 100-day agenda for pursuing change, in order to be able to manage the stakeholders' expectations. This is a period for creating a sense of urgency and achieving some perceptible quick wins. Depending on the kind of problems facing the organization, the CEO has to develop a checklist of issues that warrant swift diagnosis and quick action, through wider consultation within the Board and the top management.

In my experience, some of the key steps that leaders are required to take during the first 100 days would include:

- Getting the Board of Directors excited and committed to the new vision
- Setting a new prioritized agenda and planning for some quick wins
- Building a core alliance of management which would deliver results
- Dismantling the bureaucracy which hinders business growth
- Creating a new temporary organization, where necessary, that tracks and monitors progress
- A powered communication strategy to energize and excite employees and other stakeholders

In March 2005, when I took over as the chairman of Bank of Baroda, the situation was rather grim. The bank had slipped from number one position to number four position amongst nationalized banks in just 5 years from 2000 – 2005. Industry analysts wrote adversely about the bank such as 'the bank which does not decide', 'a bank which is poor on technology and credit growth, etc.'. One analyst termed the bank as a 'bad apple in the public sector basket'. Here was a 97 year old bank with enviable international presence and

impeccable financial credentials, facing possibly the worst market reputation in its life. While the competing peer banks had kick-started on new technology and ATM expansion with full fervor, Bank of Baroda was struggling to implement new technology and expand its ATM network.

We needed to quickly put an end to the complacency that had set in, shake the entire organization inside-out and firmly move forward on technology and business agenda. We also needed to arrest the despondency and bring in a new sense of confidence in our employees. We had to send out clear signals both within the bank and the outside world that the bank is firmly back in business and that it will implement technology solutions without loss of time to improve its services.

The top agenda for the bank

1. To put technology implementation on a speed track
2. To provide a new identity, refreshingly a different one, through rebranding
3. To be firmly back in credit business and recoup the lost ground quickly
4. To make the bank market oriented and customer centric
5. To catapult international operations to a new high level
6. To double the business mix of the bank in the next 3 years

With manifold initiatives taken, we achieved the following landmarks in the first 100 days:

1. Kick-starting an IT-enabled business transformation program by finalizing and signing a 'System Integrator Agreement' with HP
2. Rebranding of the bank by introducing new logo 'the Rising Sun' and engaging Rahul Dravid as the bank's brand ambassador
3. Introduction of 12-hour banking - 8am to 8pm - in over 500 branches and 24-hour banking (human banking) in select branches: a

The first 100 days are like a probation period for CEOs; that is the time to set direction for long term change & transformation. Probably half the battle is won or lost by the CEO in the first 100 days

pioneering initiative by a public sector bank
4. Commissioning 400 new ATMs including launch of 201 ATMs on a single day
5. Restructuring the credit department and delayering the decision making process in credit, with a view to boost credit growth

Achievements and quick wins of the first 100 days boosted everyone's morale and fuelled our will to do even more. A new sense of confidence could be discerned in our employees who were encouraged to undertake many more changes. Customers too began to feel that the bank is changing in tune with the times and soon, will catch up with the best in class.

Based on my experience, I propose the following for leaders who take up their new roles:

- *Establish very quickly what you stand for*: Every person will have some unique strength and at the same time, will lack a few things that others have. It is critical to establish very quickly what he stands for and what he brings to the table that the organization would not have otherwise had. In my case, my unique proposition was to bring in cutting edge problem solving, based on facts and insightful analysis that the organization needed.
- *Figure out who are your engines and who are your blockers*: This is very important for a CEO to 'smell' very quickly. He needs to align his plans with the ones who will take it forward and also decide what he will do with the ones who will block. I, being an insider, had little difficulty in identifying the engines at various levels.

- *Drop your agenda at the start*: CEOs often come in with their own outside-in plan, though without having the full context of the organization. I had good knowledge of problems and the reasons thereof, and it took me little time to prepare a plan of change. This helped me a lot since most people wanted change.

Accelerating the transition by devising a focussed plan of action for the first 100 days is something that can put the organization on the speed highway of change. The role of the leader piloting such a change is indeed quite daunting. High degree of personal motivation apart, leaders driving quick change, need to demonstrate positive restlessness for results, create processes that break the barriers and put the entire organization on an achievement mode and create project teams to accomplish quick wins. The benefit of a focussed first 100 days agenda and its successful implementation enhances the personal credibility of the CEO, energises the management team, engages the field functionaries, gives confidence to customers and other stakeholders about future performance and finally, and sets the company on a performance mode to get extraordinary long-term results.

The first 100 days are like a probation period for the CEOs and that is the time to set direction for long term change and transformation. Probably half the battle is won or lost by the CEO in the first 100 days. **m**

Dr. Anil K. Khandelwal is an HR professional who made it to CEO of Bank of Baroda (BOB), a staid large public sector bank and turned it around in a short tenure of 3 years. His book *Dare to Lead* (Sage 2011) captures his experience of the turnaround. Dr. Anil Khandelwal can be contacted at akk1948@gmail.com

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THE COUNSELOR

Managing the gaps between expectations and reality

I work as a sales manager for a manufacturing organization and have been working here for the last 5 years now. I have enjoyed my tenure in the company, but a recent instance has left me disturbed. The sales incentives and bonus for the last FY was announced recently and while the organization has done well and that led us to have different expectations, the numbers do not look very encouraging. The same is at least 35 percent less than what we expected, and this has upset my personal financial plans for the year. While I understand the organization has valid reasons for its decision, how do I deal with this dilemma that I am faced with?

Gap between the expectations and reality always leads to various emotions, frustration being one of them. Basis for expectations many a times can be wrong. You need to figure out what was the basis for your assumptions on what you are likely to get? You have also stated that "you understand the organization has valid reasons for its decisions"; this indicates that the company's decision was not necessarily unfair or wrong.

The dilemma that you are facing has to be sorted out first internally within yourself. Learn to set the right expectations. Remain connected with your bosses, get involved with management processes, and become aware of the logic and rationale that your company has while making decisions.

This will ensure that in the future you will have a high degree of realism while setting expectations.

<p align="center">***</p>

Changing culture

I am a senior consultant in a leading consulting firm in India. The high attrition faced by the company in the last few years has resulted in new talent joining the company. Often people have been hired at a very short notice and being a constant in the organization for 8 years plus now, I am saddened by the depleting talent quality that is increasingly becoming a part of the workforce. The new talent pool has changed the work culture of the organization and the newer employees do not have the same values that we once stood for. This has also led to increased work pressure for seasoned people like me. This scenario has been bothering me for some time, but I do not know how to address it at my level. Do you think I can bring this to the management's notice? Is that the right thing to do?

What you have stated is not unusual. High attrition rates leading to continuous induction of new talent, always leads to new issues and challenges. It is a normal feature in today's world. We cannot allow ourselves to get saddened with the changes that we witness. This is the time for senior employees like you to rise to the occasion and figure out and articulate with your management team, the culture that you need to build in the company. The culture

has to be anchored to few core values that are crucial for the company. The processes, tools, methods and the performance measures have to continuously evolve as per the changing circumstances, new expectations of the workforce, new expectations of the customers, etc. Do not become slaves of the past practices and ways of working; get anchored only to the core values. The practices have to be continuously challenged, questioned and changed as necessary.

Instead of getting saddened, as a senior employee, you should become a buddy to the new people, help them become aligned to the company's values and work with them to evolve new methods of work suited for the changing environment. Work closely with your management in identifying what can be changed and what should not. Volunteer to be part of the induction and assimilation of the new talent. Propose building of the talent pipeline to combat the high attrition.

I am not sure if the quality of new talent is depleting in your organization, may be it is different from the past, and it should be different. Younger new people from diverse backgrounds bring in fresh thinking. Learn to listen to them, these new people will, I am sure, bring in the breath of fresh air in the company. Learn to segregate values from practices, many a times we become slaves of our past methods, rituals and the practices leading to the downfall. A strong culture flourishes with a clear set of values and norms that actively guide the way for a company.

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Is it right for my boss to follow me on Twitter?

I work for an IT company and I am very active on social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook. While I tweet for my personal satisfaction and on topics that are of interest to me, my immediate boss has started following me now and that has made me uncomfortable, as on several occasions, he has commented on my personal tweets. It is almost as if he is keeping a tab on my activities outside of work. This is an invasion of my personal space, but he is my boss, so I am not sure how I should address it. Please advise.

DO NOT BECOME SLAVES OF THE PAST PRACTICES AND WAYS OF WORKING; GET ANCHORED ONLY TO THE CORE VALUES. THE PRACTICES HAVE TO BE CONTINUOUSLY CHALLENGED, QUESTIONED AND CHANGED AS NECESSARY

By becoming active on social media, you have decided to go public on your thoughts, beliefs and whatever that comes to your mind. Now, to state that your boss should not read what you state in public and also not talk about it, is kind of unrealistic and unfair. To state that it is an invasion on personal space may not be right, since you have chosen to go public. You should remember that we do not live a dual life. What we do in public space will always become known to officials in the company and it is but natural for them to chat/discuss the same.

I am glad that your boss talks about your tweets with you directly rather than speak about the same behind your back. As we spend time in a company, we do develop both formal and informal relationships with our bosses as well as colleagues and others. Such conversations/comments are but natural. May be you are making an issue out of nothing. I will suggest you introspect, develop a positive attitude towards such matters rather than assuming things. **pm**

Vivek is a Senior HR professional with over 35 years of experience, ranging several leadership positions, in India and abroad. He leads his consulting practice since 2003 and presently works as a Strategic HR Advisor to Reliance Industries, and is also an independent Director on the Board of Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd. Prior to this, he was based at Singapore for several years where he was Director HR – Operations at Hewlett Packard for the Asia Pacific Region.

Allow Vivek to clear your career and professional dilemmas by writing to us at ask@peoplematters.in

MASTERCLASS: CREATING GREAT WORKPLACES

Stay Connected

Seema Arora Nambiar, Hardcastle Restaurants (McDonald's), shares with Basuri Dutta, what drives the new workforce and their need to focus on the purpose of their job

Q What does the new generation joining the workforce expect from the workplace?

The need to be able to see the direction in which the company is going would be at the top of the list for Gen Y employees. Today, an employee's need to know 'why I do what I do' is a lot more critical than it was even in our time. Quite often, senior people have discussions, that in their time they did things only because their bosses asked them to do. Today, employees want to know what their energies are going to yield. I have a slightly radical view on Gen Y & Gen Next, that they are a lot more result focused and contrary to the commonly held belief, they are not too focused on money. Their focus is really their purpose and whether they have work-life balance. The new generation is no longer willing to work 15 hours a day for the first 10 years of their lives. People, who joined us when they were 18, require a lot of hand-holding once they get married. I have had conversations with employees, who would have just been married, around how they would plan their finances and whether they have thought about building assets for the future. They need to be given this well-

rounded perspective and they appreciate this kind of relevant actionable advice. So, that is the personal touch at work that they need. They don't just want you to be supportive about work and contrary to popular belief, they are not as transactional as they are made out to be. As a culture, India is very emotionally bonded, where the workplace is a large part of our social circle, and our boss and colleagues are probably friends, unlike the West, where friends and office colleagues are clearly differentiated. The Gen Y is extremely confident of their skill levels and they do not want functional feedback. And that is what I love about the McDonald's competencies, that do not talk about functional competencies, but clearly talk about the eight behavioral competencies that are expected from people, and that is what most employees want feedback on.

Q What is the one characteristic that every people manager should possess? Why?

One critical need is the ability to stay connected with the frontline. That is a non-negotiable characteristic. Recently, we did an exercise when the entire corporate team took

IN BRIEF

Unlike popular belief, the new generation is driven, by results and also values of the workplace, and not led by money alone

FOR EMPLOYEES, IT IS NO LONGER ABOUT WHAT SALARY AND BENEFITS THEY GET FROM THE JOB; BUT IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT THAT THE EMPLOYER IS SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE AND DOES WHAT IS ETHICALLY RIGHT

over the operations of the Bandra restaurant at peak lunch time. The head of supply chains was working French fries, the head of design was working on the grill and they kept me for taking orders, because all the customer complaints happen outside. We later found out that the complaints were more, because we were not as fast as the regular crew. This process allowed us to connect with the crew who were 18 or 19 years of age. Just the energy that they brought to the place was phenomenal and it was what made the business click. So, as a people manager, if you are not connected to the frontline, you cannot run the business effectively.

Q What change has the employer-employee relationship undergone in recent years?

In the employer-employee relationship, the 'values' piece has become very critical. For employees, it is no longer about what salary and benefits they get from the job; but it is also about the way the leadership deals with issues, whether or not the employer is socially responsible and does what is ethically right. Today's employees do take you to task as an organization if they think that there is a value mismatch. For example, if someone has been injured off the job, the managers are very clear that they will help the employee and the organization is expected to support the decision. They never ask you for financial support, but they expect you to support the decision. Managers feel that they are responsible for each and every employee. We faced an instance, where an 18-year-old employee in Mumbai was traveling by train and met with an accident, resulting in a head injury. He was the youngest in his family of eight children and the only earning member. I was amazed at the quick reaction from the entire

organization where an email was sent out seeking contribution to support this employee and they collected about a lakh and a half overnight.

At another time, when we were stuck in Ahmedabad during the riots and there were employees stuck in the restaurant, the only thing our then CEO did at that time, was to try to get everybody out of the city. That is the kind of caring environment that employees look for and that is essentially the other change that has come about in the employer-employee relationship. The other piece is leadership and the credibility of the leadership team. These days in interviews, we have candidates asking us questions on whether or not the company is making money as a business and is it profitable. We admire people who have the gumption.

Q Please share an example of managing people, which has been personally rewarding and meaningful for you.

One of the nicest things in managing people is having conversations with them on what they want to do. I have had people coming up to me and wanting to understand what their opportunities are, what should they do for the next couple of years and what should their individual development plan be. I am not sure if I can talk about any one instance, because there are so many, but ultimately it is the fulfillment of working with this one large group of people, who look back at the organization and say that this organization has given them a lot. We have an alumnus, who is a CEO of his own organization today and he always says that McDonald's is the foundation for what he has achieved. There is another person who is currently a very senior resource in a large IT company and still swears by the brand. There are many such instances where people have gone into multiple avenues and yet they continue to be brand ambassadors. We hire people at McDonald's when they are just in their late teens having passed their 12th class and we truly believe on acting on the 'skills for life' philosophy.

Q If you had to hire the entire workforce by asking just one question, what would that be?

'What drives you?' And based on the response I get, I will make my decision. **pm**

IN BRIEF

Quick tips to stay out of the 60 second trap to 'judge' people, stereotype them, decide to like, dislike and activate our mental filters

Yes, that is all it takes to judge, condemn, like or reject! I recently tested this hypothesis with a group of young management graduates at the Accenture XLRI HR academy.

I breezed in for the meeting in a beige linen jacket, shushed away the audio visual gent who was attempting to assist me with the collar mike, kept tapping my fingers through my introduction and even before the person had finished the last sentence I jumped straight into my discussion.

After some perfunctory introductions, I requested the audience to quickly make note of the adjectives describing me in the last few minutes. I deliberately threw a few leading examples and went on with my session.

Half way through the session, when the audience had warmed up, were smiling, and throwing questions, I requested them to pull up the chit where they made notes and share their first impressions!

Decisive, man in a hurry, arrogant, stubborn, knows what he wants… was a little put off with your brusque behavior, loved your speed and getting straight to the point, was a little uncomfortable, etc.

After a lot of laughs and shaking of heads, we realized how stupid we all were, we had 'judged' in less than 60 seconds, stereotyped, decided to like, dislike and activated our mental filters!

The truth is this is what we are doing every second with every new character who enters our life. We are quick to judge, stereotype and react. This may have had its use in our foraging and hunting days, but now does it make sense?

A good debate for another day, but if this 60 second fallacy is true, let us look at how we can leverage this to our advantage and how we can work around this.

Firstly, let us see how we can proactively design our 60 seconds so we get a great start. A good start is half the deed done, right?

Busting the 60 second fallacy

We are quick to judge, stereotype and react to people at first instance. While this may have had its use in our foraging and hunting days, does it make sense now?

BY ELANGO R.

Here is an extract from the chapter "Slit Chillies on the Rocks" from the book "You Don't Need a Godfather" to get us to that great start. I call it the homemade recipe for starting you off on designing the three senses that influence your brand.

What others see?

They see your clothes, your gestures, your walk – all the aspects that form the visual quotient. You have to design what others see, keeping in mind the brand you want to believe and portray. By thinking through the clothes you are seen in, your walk and your posture, you can proactively design the first 60 seconds. You don't need designer clothes, a fancy hairdresser and a fashion choreographer to design this for you. A little common sense, some decent pairing of clothes, matching for the occasion and an easy confident walk is all you need. And ofcourse lots of practise and good friends who will help you.

DON'T FALL TRAP TO THE 60 SECOND FALLACY - ENJOY READING OF NICE DOCTORS, SWEET AUTORICKSAW DRIVERS AND LEARN HOW TO BUILD AN ENDURING PERSONAL BRAND

What others hear?

You can go all dressed dandy, but you open your mouth and…

The words we use are very powerful signals. Phrases like 'I think', 'maybe' give the listener an impression that you are not convinced. On the other hand phrases that begin with 'I am convinced…', 'I believe…' indicate strong conviction and confidence.

And while you are at it, don't worry about your accent and language – as long as you are confident, know what you are saying and say it in an engaging manner, people will listen.

What others feel?

While a lot of what you heard earlier starts the brand perception, what makes it enduring is what people experience regularly. Even if you don't get the 60 seconds right, getting this right will help you establish a solid brand.

While a great start is half the deed done, a good middle and a solid ending will more than make up for a bad start. Just be constantly aware and shape the experience.

Authenticity

A key however is to remember to remain authentic throughout. Don't try and be somebody or something you are not! It will all unravel eventually!

What are you known as – dependable, trustworthy, diligent, undependable, gossipy, lacks detail – it is all about what you do and what you don't.

Go on, start designing your brand from managing the 60 second fallacy to setting up your 60 year legacy!

While you are at it, remember that you are also indulging in a 60 seconds judgment and falling prey to this fallacy. Who knows you may have missed an important byte, a terrific person and the next big opportunity because you were too quick to judge.

Here are some quick tips to stay out of the 60 second trap:

1. Observe but don't judge – give it 6 minutes not 60 seconds before you brush them away or embrace them
2. Actively engage – ask those questions, say hello, engage them to actively participate, don't just wait for the other party to get you over.

Let me leave you with a story that taught me to go beyond appearances and stereotypes.

Many years ago, I broke my arm in a fall. After a night of suffering pain, I met an orthopaedic in a leading hospital. He was very sweet, took extra pains to explain to me what bone was broken, how was he going to fix it, etc… What more, I get home and in the evening, I get a call to check if I was ok and if the cast has set in and was I still in pain!

Guess what I did – the next day I went to another orthopaedic to ensure this chap had done the right thing. My logic – why is this guy so sweet, that too a doctor, maybe there is something wrong!

It turned out that this doc had done a great job and it also turned out that he was a fairly well known senior orthopaedic and the second one I met nearly stood up when I mentioned his name!

That was my 60 second fall – I always remind myself of this. Even when an autorickshaw driver is nice and offers to help, I am wary, but yet not ready to pass judgments!

Good luck and as always leave your comments and discover new people and relationships by breaking the 60 second fallacy! **pm**

Elango R, is the Chief Human Resources Officer at MphasiS and author of the book "You Don't Need a Godfather". You can read his blog on www.ElangoR.com and follow him on Twitter @agastyasays

THE BEST
LEARNING
ORGANIZATIONS OF ASIA

The L&OD roundtable will showcase the Learning Organization Stories of the 9 finalists in the Best Learning Organizations of Asia Study 2011

The L&OD roundtable initiated a pioneering Study in association with ItsMyAscent.com, aimed at capturing the journeys of learning organization in Asia. The objective was to enable member organizations and the larger community of learning professionals to understand what makes these organizations distinctive. The Best Learning Organizations of Asia Study, undertaken in June 2011, received an enthusiastic response from 34 leading organizations, of which 19 made it to the first shortlist. A very eminent jury of accomplished thought leaders, authors and practitioners have identified 9 finalist organizations which will now share their path-breaking stories with the larger L&OD community on 7th June 2012, at the Best Learning Organizations of Asia Seminar, scheduled to be held at Mayfair Rooms in Mumbai.

India Inc. and the rest of Asia has witnessed significant challenges in the area of human capital management, resulting from the challenges of a growing macro-economy and the pressures in terms of product innovation, cost efficiencies and customer satisfaction. The talent dynamics emerging from these fast paced changes have compelled organizations to relook their talent management and development strategies, step up on creating knowledge management platforms and enable knowledge transfer to enable continuous improvement. This has led organizations to focus on managing discordant information and feedback from employees and customers, and most of all, act on the knowledge gathered, to gain a sustainable competitive advantage. The 9 finalist organizations that have emerged from the Best Learning Organizations of Asia Study show distinctive evidence of having taken definitive steps to become Learning Organizations.

The upcoming Best Learning Organizations of Asia Seminar will witness the 9 finalist organizations present their learning organization stories. The finalists include Tata Motors, Dr. Reddy's Laboratories, Hindustan Petroleum Corporation, Allied Blenders & Distillers, Bayer CropScience, in the large scale category. In the Medium/Small-size category, the presenting companies include BRAC (Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee), Mahindra & Mahindra Financial Services, SGS India and NTT Data.

The seminar promises to be a treat for

learning and Strategic HR professionals given its lineup of distinctive thought leaders like Andrew Jefferson (CEO, Fort Hill Company, and co-author of the best-selling "The 6Ds of Breakthrough Learning: How to Turn Training and Development into Business Results"); Murray Sargant (VP-Asia Pacific & Japan, SuccessFactors) and Dr. Ric Roi (Global Head-Talent Management COE, Right Management). The CXO forum will see leading HR heads of top Indian and Multinational organizations deliberating on the strategic imperatives for learning in present times. This CEO forum will feature Dr. Santrupt Misra (CEO, Carbon Black Business and Director - Group HR, Aditya Birla Group); Adil Malia (Group President - HR, Essar Group); Dr. Chandrasekhar Sripada (VP & Head - HR, IBM India & South Asia); Yogi Sriram (Sr. VP - Leadership Planning & Talent Acquisition, L&T) and Prabir Jha (Sr. VP and Head - HR, Tata Motors).

The stellar attraction for the day will be the 9 finalist organizations presenting their compelling stories on how they evolved to become 'Learning Organizations', their strategic imperatives, and some of the best practices that made their journeys distinctive. The panel will be moderated by Dr. Ganesh Shermon (Partner & Country Head, People & Change Practice, KPMG Advisory Services), Judhajit Das (Chief Human Resources, ICICI Prudential Life Insurance Company Ltd), and Dr. Sujaya Banerjee (Chief Learning Officer, Essar Group).

The evening will see the glittering celebration of endeavor and accomplishment of veteran champions of learning and change, and will also see many learning experts being honored with the 'Learning Luminary Awards'. **:m**

LEAD SPEAK

"Learning is the only real-time renewal and insulation for an enterprise wishing to thrive in volatile market times. Organizations need to make serious investments in its People and Learning Strategies… leading on the edge of chaos, discerning organizations prioritize their learning agendas."

- Adil Malia, Group President - HR, Essar & Founding & Governing Council Member, L&OD Roundtable

"When studying Learning Organizations, one thing I look for is the ability to take into account the needs of all stakeholders, and look at how learning can help the individual, the business, as well as the customer. In some of the best learning organizations, I found there was a strong focus on all these stakeholder groups, which had been built it into the culture."

- Sarah Cook, MD, The Stairway Consultancy, and author of "The Essential Guide to Employee Engagement: Better Business Performance Through Staff Satisfaction"; Jury Member, Best Learning Organizations of Asia Study 2011

"The companies that will continue to enjoy success in the future will be those that celebrate and invest in learning of all kinds - formal, informal, on-the-job, active, and reflective. They will be the kinds of companies whose profiles we were privileged to read as jurors in this study."

- Dr. Roy Pollock, Chief Learning Officer, Fort Hill Company, Co-author, "The 6Ds of Breakthrough Learning: How to Turn Training and Development into Business Results"; Jury Member, Best Learning Organizations of Asia Study 2011

Jobs of the week

Fiserv
Sr. Manager / General Manager
Location: Noida, Pune
Job ID: 11463543
Description: Ability to create strategic Workforce and Resource Management plan and execute through Processes & Tools enablement.

Amdocs
Organizational Development – Manager
Location: Pune
Job ID: 11305429
Description: Looking for Organizational Development – Manager Position at Pune location.

CedarCrestone Software India Pvt. Ltd.
HR Manager
Location: Hyderabad
Job ID: 10580260
Description: Minimum of 6-8 years generalist HR experience in a growth oriented organization with at least 4 years with the IT industry.

Jindal Steel & Power Limited
SAP e-recruitment Consultant
Location: Delhi
Job ID: 11239900
Description: Require SAP HR e-recruitment consultant, who have at least 4- 6 years of experience in e-recruitment SAP Module.

ABC Consultants Pvt. Ltd.
Manager Corporate HR
Location: Gurgaon
Job ID: 11323636
Description: MBA ('05-'06 batch), having experience in Talent Management, Performance Management, Organization design, Training & Development within a MNC environment.

ADP Pvt . Ltd.
HR Manager
Location: Hyderabad
Job ID: 10006539
Description: Candidate must have comprehensive knowledge of the principles and practices of Human Resource administration in general and employee compensation & benefits in particular.

Avtar Career Creators
HR Manager
Location: Mumbai
Job ID: 11391533
Description: Minimum 5 – 6 years management, supervisory, and/or team leadership experience.

Fujitsu Consulting India Pvt. Ltd.
Training & Development Executive
Location: Noida, Pune
Job ID: 11313774
Description: Looking for someone who is having below the skills as primary: Good Communication, Excellent English language skills.

Jobs of the week

WNS Global Services Pvt. Ltd.
Training & Development - Head/ Mgr
Location: Pune
Job ID: 11339887
Description: Responsible for handling pre process training (Voice and Accent, Soft Skills and Culture).

Firstsource solutions Limited
HR Manager
Location: Patna
Job ID: 11109818
Description: The holder of this role manages and oversees the Employee Engagement and Retention activities of the process.

Jobzebra
Training & Development Executive
Location: Bangalore
Job ID: 11339088
Description: Experience in training & consulting, soft skill & behavioral Motivation.

Manokam
Training & Development - Head/ Mgr
Location: Baroda / Vadodara
Job ID: 11393872
Description: Looking for Mature, Self Motivated, post graduate in MSW or MBA-HR person with minimum four years experience in manufacturing organization having multi tasking skills.

Nous Infosystems
Recruitment - Head/ Mgr
Location: Bangalore
Job ID: 11372680
Description: Extensive experience in identifying, interviewing, qualifying, evaluating and negotiating rates for applicants.

Oracle India Private Limited
Payroll/ Compensation - Head/ Mgr
Location: Bangalore
Job ID: 11135311
Description: The job incumbent will report into India C&B Lead and manage C&B of large business verticals.

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Building India Inc. The People Agenda

Celebrating the NHRDN Silver Jubilee

The National HRD Network (NHRDN) celebrated its Silver Jubilee on the 25th and 26th of May in Kolkata. From a journey that began in 1985, the NHRDN was founded to spread the movement of Human Resource Development (HRD) in India. A networked founded under the able-guidance of Dr. T V Rao, Founder President of NHRDN, Late Dr. Uday Pareek and HR professionals from enterprises such as Larsen & Toubro, Bank of Baroda, TVS Group, Steel Authority of India and academicians from IIM Ahmedabad and XLRI Jamshedpur, celebrated its 25th year anniversary in an event hosted by the Kolkata Chapter.

The two day conference, on the theme of 'Building India Inc. - The People Agenda' had several sessions and panel discussions on the following topics - the journey and evolution of human resources in India; leveraging India's human capital in current global economic scenario; building sustainable & inclusive businesses; role of skilling youth and aligning with inclusive growth, and developing the global Indian managers.

The celebration of this unparalleled network of the HR community also hosted an evening of felicitation of HR thought leaders, organizations and people, who have built and mentored the network. Other highlights of the event were the session by B. Muthuraman, Vice Chairman - Tata Steel on what courage means in today's business environment and the need for holistic leaders, who have a balanced left and right brain. He explains, 'business leaders need to focus on developing their right side of the brain and the corporate sector needs to ensure that there are opportunities to do so.'

The event had a rich diversity of speakers, from business leaders like Muthuraman from Tata Steel, Hemant Kanoria from SREI Group, among others; HR veterans like S.Y. Siddiqui, Arvind Agrawal, Santrupt Misra, Rajeev Dubey, P. Dwarkanath, Aquil Busrai, N.S. Rajan, and many more; to personalities from entrepreneurship, academia and the spiritual world.

NHRDN has been focusing on projects of human resource development through its 30 Chapters and national initiatives across India. This silver jubilee was an opportunity to reflect and celebrate the 25 years of commitment to the development of the profession of human resources in India.

From R to L: Pankaj Bansal, Sourav Daspatnaik, N. S. Rajan, P. Dwarkanath, Santrupt Misra, S. Y. Siddiqui, Aquil Busrai, Arvind Agrawal and Sujoy Banerjee, during the felicitation of HR Thought Leaders

People Matters & NSDC Conclave on

India Skilling

- Skilling initiatives at the macro level
- Bridging the gap – Employers' best practices
- Future of skilling – Scaling through technology

18 JULY 2012 | NEW DELHI

The India Skilling Conclave will provide a platform to discuss the pressing issue of skills gap facing employers in India. The confluence of thoughts from the government, academia, and industry will showcase best practices that will help align all stakeholders to work towards the target of skilling 500 million people by 2022.

People matters
Leading People | Building Organizations

N·S·D·C National Skill Development Corporation

For more information, contact Puneet Varma at
puneet.varma@peoplematters.in
08285634274, 0124-4148102

Talent Acquisition Conclave

*P*eople Matters and SHL in association with HiRe Pro, RupeePower.com, Shine.com and StaffOnContract.com hosted one of the biggest events in the talent acquisition space in India, the Talent Acquisition Conclave at ITC Maratha, Mumbai on May 16, 2012. The conclave created a platform for knowledge sharing and discussion around innovations in talent sourcing, alternate platforms for hiring in the new era and inclusion of new practices to make talent acquisition relevant to the business strategy.

The event started with a key note session by Adil Malia, Group President HR, Essar Group; Gautam Chainani, CPO, Aditya Birla Financial Services Group; Sharad Gangal, EVP HR, Admin, IR and Member of Exec Council, Thermax India; and Ester Martinez, Founder & Managing Editor, *People Matters* who shared their views on aligning talent acquisition strategy to business strategy. Other topics discussed at the conclave were - Recruitment Best Practices: A comparative analysis; Recruitment 2.0 and Talent Acquisition – the evolving trends. Some of the other eminent speakers at the conclave were Shalini Kamath, Managing Director, Human Resources and Corporate Communications, Ambit Holdings; Anubhab Goel, Business Head, PeopleStrong; Chetan Indap, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, StaffOnContract. com; Sandeep Bhushan, VP–Digital, HT Media; Gaurav Mishra, Asia Director–Social Media, MSL Group; YVL Pandit, Managing Director, SHL India; Amitabha Sen, Executive Vice

President-Human Resources, Kotak Mahindra Bank; Bijay Sahoo, President and Chief People Officer, Reliance Retail; Judhajit Das, Chief Human Resources, ICICI Prudential Life Insurance Company; Prabir Jha, Senior Vice-President and Head Human Resources, Tata Motors; & Rishi Das, CEO & Co-founder, HiRePro Consulting. The event witnessed an august gathering of more than 150 people who came together to learn, interact, share their thoughts, insights and ideas, on a common platform.

Assessment & Talent Management Conclave

Door Training & Consulting India in collaboration with YOMA Multi-national Solutions, LLP organized a knowledge event, "Assessment & Talent Management Conclave" at The Grand, New Delhi on May 3, 2012 to understand, appreciate and integrate the latest the world has to offer on talent assessment and talent management. The conclave aimed to provide a platform to share and exchange expertise and experience in establishing and implementing the best practices in the key areas of assessment and talent management. The event witnessed more than 200 delegates from HR & senior leadership teams gathered together to discuss and debate the issues and challenges prevalent in the field of assessment & talent management. At the conclave, the psychometric assessment tool "LuminaSpark" was introduced in India where Steven Mark Fine, MD, Lumina Learning, UK facilitated the launch. *People Matters* was the media partner for this event.

HR Outsourcing Conclave

NHRDN & TiE Delhi NCR, in association with ElenchusHR, organized a one-day conclave on "HR outsourcing - Value Added HR Outsourcing for Market Leadership" at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi on May 4, 2012. The Conclave focused on the futuristic and existing trends and the patterns emerging worldwide and the shifts in approach needed in the Indian business context. The panelists explored, in depth, the understanding in the emerging trends in the various sub domains of HR outsourcing - be it the existing transactional or the emerging

Panelists during the Talent Acquisition Conclave 2012

transformational HR outsourcing services. Some eminent speakers at the Conclave were Sanjeev Bikhchandani, Founder & Vice Chairman, Naukri.com; Pankaj Bansal, Founder & CEO, PeopleStrong; Ajit Singh Vig, Executive Vice President-HR, Network 18; Debashish Das, Founder & CEO, ElenchusHR Solutions; Rajendra Vaidya, MD, Remunance Systems; Rohit Sarin, Founder Partner, Client Associates; and Ketan Dewan, Founder and Managing Director, KRD vision.

The panelists shared insights on issues like 'The 3Ws of HRO - why to outsource, what to outsource, and when to outsource; types of HRO - transformational HRO and transactional; global trends in HR outsourcing services; change in business requirement; change in business leadership capabilities; HRO not only to manage scale but also to manage complexities of business; and keys to a successful HRO partnership. The session received an overwhelming feedback and witnessed participation of around 150 professionals from across industries. *People Matters* was the magazine partner for the event. **pm**

Panelists during the HR Outsourcing Conclave

UPCOMING EVENTS

EVENTS	DATES	LOCATION	ORGANIZED BY
The Best Learning Organizations of Asia Seminar	7 June	Mumbai	L & OD Roundtable
Social Media in Talent Management Conclave	13 June	Bengaluru	People Matters & Alliance University
2nd Automotive SIAM HR Conclave	14-15 June	Mumbai	SIAM
HR Convention 2012	15 June	Vadodara	CII
38th National Competition for Young Managers	25 June-18 Aug	Kolkata, Mumbai, Chennai, New Delhi	AIMA
The Asia HRD Congress 2012	10-12 July	Bengaluru	SMR Group
People Matters Conclave on Skilling in India	18 July	New Delhi	People Matters
NASSCOM HR Summit 2012	25-26 July	Chennai	NASSCOM
National L&D Summit	27-28 July	New Delhi	AIMA
9th National Competition For Management Students	13 Aug-8 Sep	Kolkata, Mumbai, Bengaluru, New Delhi	AIMA
L&D Insights Conference	22-24 Aug	Mumbai & New Delhi	ASTD & DDI
2nd Annual Coaching Conference	30-31 Aug	New Delhi	OD Alternatives

Note: Please note that this list is not exhaustive. We update this information on a regular basis. Please visit our website www.peoplematters.in/events for more information on events. If you wish to share information about upcoming events, please contact Pushkaraj Bidwai at pushkar.b@peoplematters.in

ROBIN SCHOOLING
http://hrschoolhouse.com

The devil you don't know

I'm a big fan of behavioral interviewing and have been for virtually my entire HR career. I use it, I preach it and I train others in the process. While I think there's room for a bit of hypothetical questioning during the interview/conversation, I still come back time and again to behavioral interviewing as my preferred go-to-model.

As anyone who uses BI knows, the style is based on the premise that 'past behavior predicts future performance' and relies on the fact that humans are creatures of habit, so that if they've done something one way in the past, they're fairly likely to do the same in the future. The perfect solution? No; of course not. But I've interviewed thousands upon thousands of candidates using BI and have found it to be pretty accurate – the proof (if you will) coming when the person is actually hired and you can see them in action.

But in addition to one's own past behavior predicting how one will react in a future job, there's other stuff people bring with them, which affects their performance and their adaptation to any given work environment – the lessons they've learned from how other people behave and treat them. An employee who has worked with the back-stabber, the office gossip or the irritating manager brings the memories of hellish experiences and some hard-earned battle scars with him into every subsequent role, organization or interaction with co-workers.

***

Once upon a time, when joining a new organization, I inherited a team, which had reported to one such irritating manager. Over the course of her tenure managing this department, she had bullied and belittled; she had yelled and screamed. She expected her staff to be in place from 8am to 5pm (not 8:01 and not 4:59), yet she came and went as she pleased. On one occasion, when the office shut down early due to inclement weather, she high-tailed it out the door without passing the word on to all her team members that they should go home. Another manager happened to stroll into their office when he saw the lights were still on and asked them, incredulously, *"Why are you still here? Everyone else in the building has left."*

They were afraid to ask her for anything – terrified to ask to schedule vacation time or request time off to attend to medical appointments, because, as you could imagine, those PTO days were sometimes denied because the Queen Bee wanted to be out of the office. The mood was "let's keep our heads down, stay quiet and maybe she won't notice us."

The little dictator eventually left. The team breathed a sigh of relief, but wondered, quite naturally, is it better to face the *devil you know* or the *devil you don't know?*

And in strolled the unknown – me. I went about my usual way of operating –

communicating with the team members. Asking for their ideas and input. Learning their jobs so I could back them up; showing them more and more of the things I did, so they could not only assist me but learn, grow and develop. It was, in many respects, wildly successful.

But one long-tenured employee never quite got over her trepidation about how to deal with a manager – any manager. She had been burned a few times too many and I found myself constantly reassuring her that I was different. I never wanted to be the person who said aloud how *crappy my predecessor was and therefore, wasn't I just marvelous by comparison.* But over time – via my actions, my words and my treatment of this employee (and the others), I believe I showed them how I valued them through my behavior.

***

There's an important lesson in all this: it is critical for managers and leaders to be aware of the historical (past) experiences of their staff members. It can be a mental shorthand for incoming managers to jump to conclusions or categorize employee behavior as obstinance, resistance or plain-old insubordination. When it can be much more than that.

Had I not taken the time to understand what had occurred in their past, I would have been unable to assist in their present… or their future. **PM**

AN EMPLOYEE WHO HAS WORKED WITH THE BACK-STABBER, THE OFFICE GOSSIP OR THE IRRITATING MANAGER, BRINGS MEMORIES OF HELLISH EXPERIENCES AND SOME HARD-EARNED BATTLE SCARS

Robin is an HR professional who has travelled through a variety of industries, geographies and organizations. She is the Vice President of Human Resources, Louisiana Lottery Corporation

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The Facebook Effect

David Kirkpatrick, meticulously discusses the ubiquitous social-networking site, Facebook, and the people who lifted it from a late-night college project to a Silicon Valley powerhouse

An idea deliberated upon and conceptualized by Mark Zuckerberg and his dorm mates of Kirkland house is today known better as Facebook. The idea, now a hit social networking site, commands a net worth of around $105 billion.

David Kirkpatrick, a veteran technology reporter, in his book *The Facebook Effect* brings out the inside story of a company which is amongst the fastest growing companies in history. The book is divided into two halves; the first part is a fascinating corporate history, starring Facebook's reticent creator, the Harvard dropout Zuckerberg; the second is a thoughtful, even-handed analysis of the website's impact. The author chronicles the story of Facebook's success, its missteps and takes the readers through a journey of what Zuckerberg and his team at Facebook did to connect the world to the extent that one could believe in gift economy and openness of sharing information on a virtual platform.

A great idea can do wonders; the author, who had the full cooperation of Facebook's key executives in researching this fascinating story, lucidly shows how Zuckerberg never compromised with the long term vision. Facebook had its own share of trivia; the author provides insights into a few such dramatic instances in its journey of success. One such instance is one of its co-founder Eduardo Saverin suing Zuckerberg and facebook.com for diluting his share holdings in the company.

Kirkpatrick, provides for the most complete assessment of the chief architect of Facebook – Zuckerberg – who has been instrumental in the company's remarkable ascent. He says Facebook is a "platform for people to get more out of their lives"; a "technological powerhouse with unprecedented influence across modern life" and an "entirely new form of communication."

The author cites references as to how veterans from the industry quit their job to join a revolution called Facebook. A case in point is that of Sherly Sandberg who left Google to shape Facebook's business model and since then, the company has progressed miles being successful. He skillfully tracks the rise of commercialism on Facebook. There are vivid accounts of how people have raised revolutionary movements by posting their thoughts on the network; such is the power of Facebook. Kirkpatrick cites one such example in the book, that of people agitating against Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia FARC.

The story of Facebook makes one believe in the power of ideas. "The Facebook Effect" leaves the reader with a deep understanding of Facebook, its philosophies and, most startlingly, its power. pm
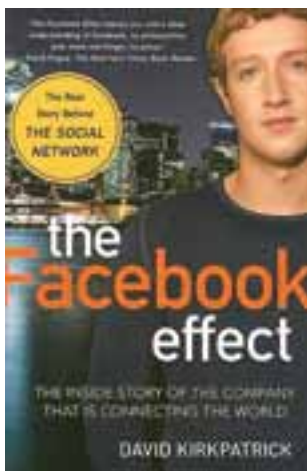
The Facebook Effect
The Inside story of the company that is connecting the world

Authored by:
David Kirkpatrick

"THE FACEBOOK EFFECT" LEAVES THE READER WITH A DEEP UNDERSTANDING OF FACEBOOK, ITS PHILOSOPHIES AND, MOST STARTLINGLY, ITS POWER

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