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Leading People  
Building Organizations

Vol. IV, Issue 3, March 2013

Rs. 75

## POWER WOMEN

*People Matters'* account of how successful power women propel their professional karma from the ordinary to the exceptional with a blend of focus, belief, perseverance and an eye on the big picture

...

BIG INTERVIEW  
DR PRAJAPATI TRIVEDI

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## WHAT MAKES A POWER WOMAN?

A few months ago I read Anne Marie Slaughter's article in the Atlantic magazine, 'Why Women Still Can't Have It All' (a must-read for both men and women), on how the structure and ecosystem of organizational life makes it near-impossible for a woman to have both a fulfilling personal life and a high-powered career. In many ways, her confession reminded me of the challenges that women face in terms of access to opportunities that traditionally have been dominated by men, performing within the parameters traditionally defined by male-structures and maintaining the proverbial work-life balance. It takes great skill and unparalleled drive to juggle conflicting priorities and emerge successful in patriarchal workplaces. To celebrate women who have achieved this, *People Matters* embarks on a new initiative, Power Stories of Power Women, where we highlight the stories, achievements and wisdom of women who have managed to "include" themselves into a group where they were once outliers. Women who celebrate their diversity and leverage their unique perspective and skills for maximum value addition to their organizations, in whatever role or function they operate in.

Power Women is not merely about success measured by designation or of perceived achievement; it is about the ability of these women to transform their ecosystem and then have their stories inspire more women (and men). It is about women who are determined to realise their dreams, who believe in themselves and their goals and who take ownership of their career and plan it in a focused manner. "Power Women" is a journey to transform the workplace; a belief that gender inclusion is not about working with women or men alone but about working with the culture of the organization.

This issue also features a special story on appraisals as it is that time of the year when office-goers everywhere are grappling with their annual performance reviews. Our story examines the annual cycle of appraisals and stresses the need of the hour to shift the model from episodic reviews to continuous feedback. This shift is not easy; it requires, like any change management process, the involvement of everybody in the organization. It requires a revolution and HR has the opportunity to innovate and turn this process around. Appraising the Appraisal has a combination of ideas on how companies are overcoming the challenges of appraisals, new technologies emerging in the cloud space to make your process more employee-centric and a quiz on how you are likely to fair in your appraisal conversation this year. On the lighter side, we've also included a fictional performance review for Albert Einstein, analysing his performance as a patent clerk.

Join us in the amazing journey of celebrating our power women. Watch and share the inspiring videos on our Youtube channel, attend our events and participate by sharing your best practices – it is time we celebrate talent of all hues and genders and create the best environment for success. I leave you to read our cover story on our conversations with the first 7 power women, with Tony Porter's unforgettable words "my liberation as a man is tied to your liberation as woman".

As always, we welcome your inputs, your participation and engagement. Do email us at [editorial@peplematters.in](mailto:editorial@peplematters.in) with your feedback and suggestions. We look forward to hearing from you.

Happy reading.

**Esther Martinez Hernandez**  
Editor-in-Chief





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# APPRAISING THE APPRAISAL

March is that month when every employee has to face the annual performance review, and come up trumps. Why are annual reviews so universally feared and what can be done to address this?

By Deepshikha Thakur

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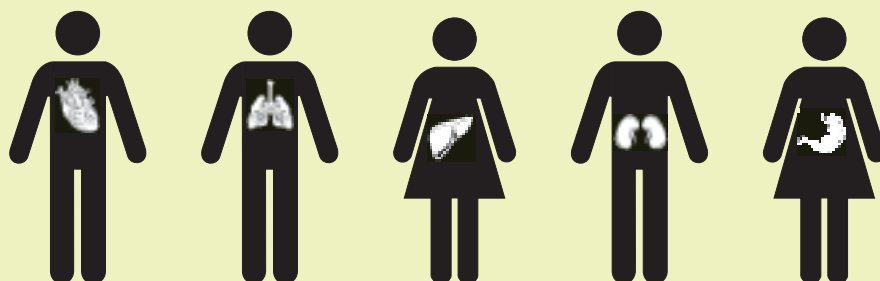
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# Letters of the Month

PEOPLE MATTERS VALUES YOUR FEEDBACK

We want to know what you think about the magazine, and how we can make it a better read.

February 2013

<http://peplematters.in/>



## Perfectly timed

Great job on the sexual harassment at workplace article (**Zero tolerance is the best policy, Gyanendra Kumar Kashyap & Rashmi Singh, February 2013**). Perfectly timed and well thought out, it gave the much needed clarity that will help the industry combat this sad situation. Good to know that organisations are taking the issue of women safety seriously and taking strict action to implement these policies.

— Anita Singh

## Performance based selection

A very insightful read (**Help, I need somebody, just about anybody, Elango R, February 2013**), especially the concept of moonlighting. I completely agree with the fact that performance based selection will lead to people voluntarily trying to improve themselves.

— Y Pratik Banerjee

## Selecting the 25 winners

Congratulations to the top 25 winners! (**HR's 25 most wanted, February 2013**) It is quite a diverse group. It would be great to see how they fare in the future. I hope the selection process also included some weightage for feedback from supervisors' and / or internal customers' too. If one can't translate their competencies into action and in turn keep internal customer's happy then everything else becomes slightly less relevant.

— Bhaskar Sharma

## How do entrepreneurial ventures do it?

I liked your article (**How to create an inspirational workplace, Prasenjit Bhattacharya, February 2013**). It will be great though if you can throw some light on how can smaller organisations (entrepreneurial ventures), that are often cash strapped, inspire employees beyond offering a good meaty role!

— Snehal (Online)



## Uniformity in execution is a big motivator

The article was very well covered (**Three big questions on total rewards, Vikramjit Singh Sahay, February 2013**).

I agree that one of the important aspects of a good rewards programme is uniformity in execution. This is a big motivator as highlighted and dispels bias to a large extent.

— Shikha Sangal (Online)

## Retention and managing talent

Elango, your column (**Help, I need somebody, just about anybody, Elango R, February 2013**) was a treat to readers as usual, but just a small dissent on the question of retention strategy and how one manages talent. Also, talking about 'keeping one hostage', this I have only seen happening in small organisations. Would be great to have your insights on whether this happens in large organisations as well.

— Saurabh Kumar (Online)



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@PeopleMatters2 Business heads taking on lot more - part in employee selection, motivation and now career dev... so how will #HR's role change?

Elango R @agastyasays

@PeopleMatters2 identifying them by elimination of manager bias and providing action learning

Anand Pillai @Anand\_Pillai

#talentconversation @RightUpdates @PeopleMatters2 Look within to develop your #Hipo before you hire

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# Corporate HAPPENINGS



## 68 per cent recruiters predict increasing their staffing in 2013

**B**ased on a survey of over 1200 employers, Naukri.com states that though recruiters are cautious, the hiring sentiment has improved marginally compared with July 2012, but is still lower than in the beginning of 2012.

According to the survey findings, around 68 per cent recruiters said that new jobs will be created in 2013 as compared to 62 per cent in July 2012 and 72 per cent in January 2012. While banking and IT sector recruiters have stated a positive hiring outlook for 2013, pharmaceuticals and auto sector have revealed low sentiments with only 59 per cent and 52 per cent opting for new jobs to be created in the year. A city-wise segregation shows that recruiters from Hyderabad and Bangalore were most optimistic with 74

per cent and 71 per cent stating that new jobs will be created in their cities.

With specific reference to pay hikes that organisations plan to give out in 2013, the survey states that for about 40 per cent recruiters the range will be between 10 and 15 per cent. 36 per cent employers said there will be single-digit hikes. Lowest increments were predicted by banking sector employees where 60 per cent said that salary hikes in their organizations will be less than 10 per cent in 2013. In a similar vein, Hay Group's annual General Industry Compensation Report covering all levels of management expects pay increases of average 11.2 per cent across job roles in 2013. This represents a slight reduction against an actual average salary increase of 12 per cent in 2012. **cm**

## APPOINTMENTS



General Electric (GE) has appointed **Banmali Agrawala**

as President & Chief Executive, Business Operations India effective April 2013. Prior to this he was the Executive Director for Strategy and Business Development at Tata Power.



**Shalini Pillay** has been appointed as Head of Human Resources

function for KPMG in India effective February 2013. She has been with the firm for over nine years.



Kimberly-Clark Lever has appointed **Calvin Lyngdoh** as the

Director, Human Resources for India. Prior to this, Calvin was the Head of Development, Leadership and Talent Acquisition at Nokia.



Tata Consultancy Services has appointed **Rajesh Gopinathan** as the

company's Chief Financial Officer effective February 2013. He will succeed S Mahalingam.



# Common thing among these Top Companies !!

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 A portrait of Christine Lagarde, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund. She is a woman with short, styled white hair, smiling at the camera. She is wearing a dark blue blazer over a dark top with small white polka dots. Her arms are crossed. The background is a blurred bookshelf.
 

## WOMEN ON TOP?

### CHRISTINE LAGARDE,

Managing Director, International Monetary Fund said at the World Economic Forum in Davos:

“Very often as a little girl, then as a young woman, I have suffered my share of discrimination. I was brought up with brothers, I grew up in a boys’ world. You have to elbow your way in. When you come with that sentiment of having been in a minority for a long period of time, then you are much more attentive to minorities... I listen more; I’m more attentive to those in the back of the room that sit in the dark and don’t want to talk but have a lot to contribute... [Women are better team players] because of our history, it’s because of our heritage, it’s because of what we’ve had to face.”

## WOMEN IN SENIOR MANAGEMENT: A LOOK AT THE NUMBERS

**Grant Thornton’s** 2012 International Business Report revealed that barely one in five senior management positions globally is held by women and that India has among the fewest women in senior management positions (14 per cent).

**A report by Mercer**, which covered 55 companies operating

in India and 663 in Asia-Pacific, states that women leaders hold only 5 per cent, or at times even less, of the top 100 senior roles in half of the Indian companies and out of the surveyed companies only 11 per cent said that they have more than 30 per cent women in the top deck.

**Mercer’s ‘Women’s Leadership Development Survey’** found that

67 per cent of the 450 European companies surveyed had no clearly defined strategy for developing women into leadership roles and lacked effective early career high-potential identification, diversity sourcing and recruiting, gender-specific learning and development experiences, to support the development of talented women as leaders.



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# From Processes to Outcomes



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**Dr. Prajapati Trivedi**, Secretary, Performance Management in the Cabinet Secretariat, Government of India, tells **Gyanendra Kumar Kashyap**

**D**r. Prajapati Trivedi is a man in a hurry – and it is understandable. He has only a few months left as the Secretary, Performance Management, in the Cabinet Secretariat, an office he is scheduled to demit in August, 2013. But over the past four years, he has been busy driving the efficiency and productivity agenda in babudom.

He and his staff of about 60 have put together Results-Framework Documents (RFD) for 80 government departments, 800 responsibility centres, and 13 states of the Indian Union. They have managed to shift



the emphasis in performance evaluation from process-orientation to outcome-orientation, from subjective measures to objective measures, and managed to introduce performance incentives (which can go up to 40% of salary) for those who meet their objectives – changes that have long been on the agenda but with nobody to drive them, until Dr. Trivedi landed on the scene.

A distinguished academician, Dr. Trivedi worked for fourteen years (1994-2009) as a Senior Economist for the World Bank in Washington, DC. This is his second stint in the government, having been Economic Adviser to the government of India from 1992-94. He has published five major books on various aspects of public sector management and privatization. In this exclusive interview with *People Matters*, Dr. Trivedi talks about the challenges of introducing a professional performance management system in the government. Excerpts:

### What is the problem with the existing performance appraisal system for government servants?

The Fourth Pay Commission [notified in 1987] had suggested a performance-related incentive. This was endorsed by the Fifth and the Sixth pay commissions. But 25 years hence, we are still to implement it.

In fact, in every Pay Commission, two things are said: First, they have all said that they will increase our salary in Government to match the market structure, and second, that they wanted government employees to be held accountable for performance. One part of the recommendation is invariably swiftly implemented: we quickly raise the salaries each time. But the hard part – holding employees accountable for performance, is not.

When I joined the Government of India as Secretary, Performance Management, the Cabinet Secretary wanted to know why we can't do this, and I quickly discovered that the real challenge was defining what constitutes 'performance' in a government set-up. It's not an easy question to answer. And if you just don't know what the big goal is, then what is the appraisal for? It instead becomes an end in itself, and not a means to an end.



### Can you illustrate this with an example, let's say, the health department?

First of all, the minute you ask the Health Secretary what you are doing, typically, he might say, health is a state subject, I'm not doing much. Then what do you appraise him for? You ask him about the schemes, and he'll say the state governments are implementing it. There is a fundamental lack of clarity about the overall objective.



### So you think there is a lot of passing the buck in government?

That is there, of course. The other problem is one of multiple principles with multiple objectives, which are often conflicting. Everybody feels that they have a right to supervise the government department. This shouldn't be a problem, because in the private sector too, there are thousands of shareholders. The difference is that in the private sector everybody has the same bottom-line - profit or financial health of the company. But in the government, there are people working either for efficiency or equity or some other political goal.

So we have worked hard on clarifying what is meant by performance, and how we hold people accountable. Things are beginning to fall in place, and this has been the revolution we have been able to bring about.



### Have you tried to define performance in a generic sense, or is it department-specific?

Over the past 4 years, we have managed to codify performance measures for different government departments. We asked each department about their objectives, how they prioritise them, what actions they propose to achieve the said objectives, and what would be appropriate success indicators to measure the progress in achieving their objectives. This is a typical performance appraisal framework at the departmental level and is referred to as the Results-Framework Document (RFD). This then also reflects the expectations from the secretary to the government of India responsible for this department. Today, RFD policy covers

## CAREER GRAPH

1972

BA Economics (Hons), St Stephen's College, Delhi University

1972 - 1974

MSc Economics, LSE

1974 - 1978

Faculty Member, St Stephen's College

1978 - 1985

Ph.D. (Economics), Boston University

1987 - 1992

Chair, Professor of Public Sector Management & Director of Centre for Public Enterprise Management at IIM Calcutta

1992 - 1995

Economic Adviser to Government of India

1995 - 2008

Senior Economist, The World Bank

2009 - PRESENT

Secretary to Government of India

1979 - 2010

Economics Faculty, Harvard Kennedy School of Government





## “If you just don’t know what the big goal is, then what is the appraisal for?”

80 departments, 800 responsibility centres, and 13 states of the Indian Union.



**Can you sum up the three ways in which the Results-Framework Document (RFD) you’ve introduced will help bring about ‘result-orientation’ in departmental functioning?**

Thanks to the RFD, for the first time in the history of independent India, we have been able to define the results or outcomes for a given government department. If you don’t know what the results should be, then how can you have a result-orientation? Secondly, for the first time, we have institutionalised a system to make government departments result-oriented.

Due to lack of clarity in terms of what is an important result and what is not, the existing system has some fatal flaws in appraisal/evaluation. So, by prioritising results, we have brought in goal-orientation. People are now focused on the important results as opposed to the unimportant results. Let me illustrate this with a simple example. Say an officer is given 15 tasks to perform and he or she achieves targets for 12 of them. How are we to judge his performance? Well, it would really depend on which 12 tasks were completed successfully. If the three targets not met represented the core tasks, then it can not be considered good performance. By introducing prioritization for the first time, we have enhanced goal clarity in Government.

We have also done away with subjectivity in performance evaluation, which has been at the root of a lot of our problems. In Government, like many private sector organizations also, we have a practice of giving single point targets. We typically say that you have to build 700 KMs of road. Now if the officer completes 670 KMs of road, is it good or bad performance? In the past, the answer depended on the subjective judgement of the superior officer or manager. If he liked you, he would say that it is OK. If not, the same person could say something negative. People in Government quickly figure out that performance doesn’t matter and what matters is keeping the boss happy and therefore, they start doing things that, beyond a point, become unethical if not illegal.



**Is the primary objective of your performance appraisal system better career planning for bureaucrats (an internal need) or citizen satisfaction with the performance of government servants (an external requirement)?**

There is a difference between a performance appraisal system and a performance evaluation system. Appraisal is individual-centric, evaluation happens at the departmental level. In fact, it has been observed while all civil servants are marked ‘excellent’ in their individual appraisals, the department as a whole does not get the same rating.

### PMD QUICK FACTS

#### PMD

(Performance Management Division) set up in Jan 2009 under Cabinet Secretariat

#### THE VISION

“A results-driven govt machinery that delivers what it promises.”

#### THE MANDATE

To roll out a PMES (Performance Monitoring and Evaluation System (PMES) for govt depts.

#### THE METHOD

Preparation of a RFD (Results-Framework Document) for each dept



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This is because the alignment between the individual and departmental performance is missing, and there is no clarity on the overall performance of the department.

A performance appraisal system can begin only if you know what the department is going to do. This works automatically in the private sector, since everybody knows what to do, and one can be appraised. But if the larger objectives are not clear, how do you begin the appraisal? In such a case, you just hope that there will be good people who will do the right things, which has been the case till now.

**“Soon, all the departments are going to get an ISO-9000. We are re-engineering the process to cut down waste. We are sorting out redundant, duplicative and contradictory processes, so that the system becomes more efficient”**

**In one of your proposed reforms, you have suggested that as far as possible, the department should focus on outcome objectives. Isn't process equally important?**

Process is important. But, the reality is that citizens want outcomes (for example, reduction in poverty) not processes. During our research, we found that 66 per cent of the existing performance measures were process-oriented and only 33 per cent were outcome-oriented. Our goal is to make this 50:50, if not reverse it to 33:66.

**We have asked the departments to list their outcomes in Section 6 of the RFD. The question we asked every department is: 'If you did not exist, how would India miss you?'**

Soon, all the departments are going to get an ISO 9000. We are re-engineering the processes to cut down waste. We are sorting out redundant, duplicative and contradictory processes, so that the system becomes more efficient. Wherever a process exists it must be world class and benchmarked to the best.

**Does your proposed appraisal framework have scope for incorporating corruption cases/allegations against departments, when evaluating the overall performance of department?**

Our focus is on prevention. All the 80 departments have been asked to identify potential areas of corruption and suggest mitigation strategies. This year, we have asked them to implement the strategy. We should not wait for CBI, CVC or other authorities to fix the problem.


**For government employees who deal directly with citizens, (say, at BDO level or at passport office or RT0), should not the satisfaction or rating of a citizen be a part of the appraisal framework?**

Yes, in fact, many departments and states have incorporated citizen feedback as a part of the evaluation process. Those departments which address grievances quicker get extra points in the rating system. We have also asked departments to develop Citizens / Clients' Charters. They are all on our website: [www.performance.gov.in](http://www.performance.gov.in).

**Did you face any resistance from government officials in implementing your ideas?**

Forget resistance, every government department and officer has welcomed this whole initiative to reward good performance and hold everyone accountable – they want it far more than anyone else. This has made my job a lot easier – I did not have to do any canvassing or advocacy.

**Unless you get an extension, your term ends in August 2013. What are your immediate priorities?**

The top priorities will be: Getting the Citizen Charter in place, and properly evaluated by 'mystery' citizens; institutionalising the office of Secretary, Performance Management, so that once I am gone, there is a long line of secretaries wanting to take up the job; creating an ecosystem that will be self-sustaining; and mining the minds of colleagues for insights and putting it all up on our website. 





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**The art of assessment**



# The hiring manager's B-school agenda

As recruiters gear up to visit B-school campuses in 2013, what are the three key differentiators they would be looking at when assessing candidates?

BY NIDHI ARORA

The Employment Outlook Survey released recently in December 2012 by Manpower Group indicated that hiring activity will happen at a strong pace in the first three months of 2013. And going by the survey results, corporate recruitment teams seem to have their agendas set.

Most of them have a recruitment toolkit that includes everything from B-school rankings to specific curriculum details that help identify the most suitable candidates. But three elements are at the top of their list as they set out for the B-schools this year.

## Prior work experience

Recruiters *People Matters* spoke to reported that they prefer graduates with relevant work experience – acquired either before they enrolled in business school or at internships. According to the global Corporate Recruiters Survey 2012, conducted by GMAC, 75 per cent of the employers hiring from B-schools are looking for candidates with more than three years of work experience. And this is especially the case in sectors like retail, healthcare and hospitality.

“Since the retail industry is growing so fast, someone with prior experience in the retail business is given preference in hiring,” says Udit Mittal of Unison International. Adds Sunil Goel, Managing Director of Global-Hunt, “Tier A colleges are most often approached for strategic business planning roles. It is, therefore, critical

## Top 10 Desired Qualities

- >> Leadership
- >> Achievement and/or goal orientation
- >> Ability to deal with pressure
- >> Initiative
- >> Integrity
- >> Motivation
- >> Professionalism
- >> Innovation and/or creativity
- >> Adaptability
- >> Collaboration

for a candidate to have functional as well as industry experience.”


## Domain expertise

Most recruiters reach out to Tier B colleges for mid-level management positions. Candidates from these colleges are typically placed in research, sales or functional roles – positions for which they can be trained. Prior experience in a certain field definitely makes a management student a good fit for higher positions, since adapting to the work environment is relatively easier. It also cuts down the training costs of the company.

Furthermore, industry-specific knowledge and domain expertise on a subject are given a clear preference while hiring for specific roles. For instance, hiring managers from energy-services companies need MBAs to fill the same functional roles as in any industry. But in this economy, companies lean toward recruits with deep, technical knowledge of the industry, and experience in the field of finance (say, energy trading). Also, considering that a domain expert still retains that ‘hot skill’ – more often than not, the competition would also be chasing the same set of candidates, says Indrani Ghoshal, Assistant Vice President, HR at Amercian Express India.

## Analytical ability coupled with technological competence

The growth of the data industry has touched more than just the knowledge management space.

HR managers from across industries emphasize that analyzing data is as important as maintaining a system for it. Says Kristina Liphardt, Campus Recruitment leader at Ernst & Young, “It is important that candidates have the capability to take multiple streams of data and information, and extract from them what is important and relevant. Further, they should be able to use that information to make sound business decisions or business recommendations when we are servicing a client.” 

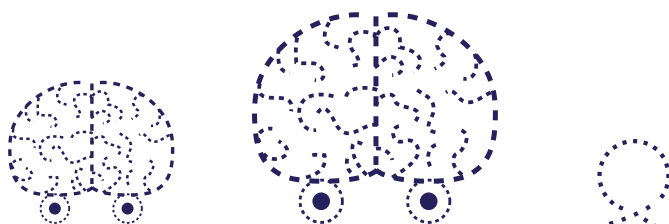
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# Shoot yourself into that dream job

For jobs where communication skills are critical, video resumes are turning out to be an important tool for recruiters

BY RASHMI SINGH

**M**athew Epstein, a 2008 graduate from the University of Central Florida, wanted to be a part of Google's marketing team. In 2011, to make his pitch, Epstein made a website by the name 'Google Please Hire Me', and uploaded on it a quirky video resume requesting Google for an interview opportunity.

The campaign went viral. Epstein's LinkedIn profile says, "A week after launching my campaign, I received over 400,000 unique visits and 430,000 YouTube views". Moreover, his candid video resume earned him interview calls from the likes of Amazon, Microsoft, Salesforce and Google.

A part of Epstein's success can be attributed to the widespread acceptance of video resumes in the US. There is a reason for this popularity: keeping the quirky or uber-creative experiments aside, the regular video resumes (VCV or Visumes) give the employer an idea of the potential candidate's communication skills, over and above the regular information about his experience and education. It has also turned out to be a cost-effective and efficient medium that has helped recruiters deal with two major recruitment constraints: cost and time.

In India, video resumes gained currency for the first time in 2006-2007. This was the year when Monster.com launched the video resume feature for its users. The trend, however, has caught on only in the last couple of years.

## Saves costs and time

Says Arunn K Asthaana, MD and CEO,



▲ Mathew Epstein in scenes from his zany video resume at [googlepleasehire.me](http://googlepleasehire.me)

Vvidia India "Nowadays, even at the stage of preliminary screening, candidates are judged on the basis of their personality and communication skills. Video resumes give recruiters a chance to analyse a candidate's skills during screening. It helps them save a lot of the cost and time consumed in organising a number of one-on-one interviews."

The Indian School of Business (ISB), Hyderabad, has made the video essay an essential part of the admission process. In a video address to aspirants, Shubhen Sarangi, Senior Associate Director, Admissions, at ISB, explains that the video essay helps one understand a candidate's "articulation skills and communication skills". Further, by enabling the recruiter to see a candidate, a video resume helps increase the efficiency

## IN BRIEF

Video resumes have turned out to be a cost effective & efficient medium that has helped recruiters deal with two major constraints: cost & time



and speed at which recruitment decisions are made.

However, though video resumes are gaining acceptance, this varies across industries. It is more popular in sectors that require candidates with good communication skills and pleasant personality. Jyotica Dhawan, co-founder and director of Helix HR, an executive search consulting firm, believes that right now there is only a limited audience for video resumes. She says, "IT companies and global MNCs welcome this form of screening; but for the others, unless the position is for top leadership or for a creative role, wherein the skills can be demonstrated, video resumes have had limited success."

### Locating data is a challenge

One of the limiting factors is the difficulty of locating data in a video resume. Unlike text resumes that HR professionals browse to zero in on the data that they require, in a video resume, the recruiter has to access the information as thrown in by a candidate. This requires one to watch the entire video, which may range from one to three minutes. Secondly, it becomes a little hard to filter these resumes on the basis of some specific requirement without watching the entire resume. Despite these shortcomings, video resumes are a better bet as compared to in-person interviews of all the candidates in the screening process.

Zubair Ahmad Chauhan, partner at Video Resume India, a video resume service platform, says, "Video CVs are more preferred by BPOs, KPOs, hospitality, aviation and other related industries, where command over language is given more weight. Retail is another sector that is opting for video resumes, as they need smart people with good communication skills."

### Large IT companies lead the change

The change is mainly led by MNCs and large IT companies. Many service providers have started upgrading their services to tackle the changing nature of demand. For instance, Helix is about to launch a portal of video resumes for the leadership candidates that they hire. Throughout this

## VIDEO RESUMES: DOs and DON'Ts

### DOs


- ❶ Talk about relevant skills and experience
- ❷ Try to make your resume lively. You can add a sound-track, image or graphic
- ❸ Make sure the video is of good quality and the sound is audible
- ❹ Follow up your video resume with a text one

### DON'Ts

- ❶ Don't talk about irrelevant things
- ❷ Don't make a very long VCV; 1-2 mins is fine
- ❸ Do not send a VCV to a traditional company
- ❹ Do not read out of a paper while shooting for your resume

As told by Jyotica Dhawan, certain dos and don'ts for candidates preparing their video CVs (VCVs).

portal, candidates will be able to record and submit their key credentials, job history, and personal responses to the employer's pre-screening questions.

Asthaana sees these changes as a sign that video resumes will become the next big thing in the recruitment market in India. Manisha Kushwaha (name changed), a senior HR professional with an advertising agency based in Delhi, shares her experience. "More and more candidates are sending us their video resumes, as it makes a stronger impression. In the last few months, we ourselves have started asking for video resumes. However, it turned out that only good video resumes leave a good impression. Lots of video resumes are badly done. Now we shortlist candidates on the basis of the text resume, and then see their VCVs before calling in a candidate for interview." This is probably the reason why consultants suggest reviewing the video resume along with the text resume. Video resumes could be treated as a 'sales pitch' to make one's case. Says Dhawan, "Video resumes can add to the text resumes, but replace them? Perhaps not!" 

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# Are you a slave to your inbox?

Unless you are vigilant, sending and receiving emails can easily hijack the agenda of your working day

BY VIKRAM CHOUDHURY

**Y**our working day can quickly become overwhelming unless you find a way to balance the conflicting priorities of e-mail and the daily work agenda

Manasi Ahuja is a mid-level manager in an MNC. Her typical workday goes something like this:

**7:00 am** Manasi wakes up and finds a red light blinking on her Blackberry. She checks her new e-mail and then gets ready for work.

**8:15 am** Manasi gets to work and opens her laptop. The first application she opens after her computer boots is Microsoft Outlook. She spends the next half hour skimming through the 100 odd e-mails she has received in the last 12 hours.

**8:45 am** Manasi gets into a meeting. Her Blackberry, meanwhile, continues to

blink every now and then, beckoning her to respond.

**6:00 pm** Manasi gets through the day responding to e-mails every time there is a little pop-up at the bottom right corner of her computer screen.

**6:30 pm** Manasi is home but continues to read, delete, or respond to her emails every time her Blackberry blinks.

**10:00 pm** Manasi is about to call it a day, when she realises that she has missed sending off her most important project of the day!

Every one of us has a day like Manasi's every now and then. Most of us react to the little pop-up and the blinking red light the way she does. Checking e-mails incessantly has become a part of our professional DNA. While one cannot undermine the central role that e-mail plays in conducting our daily business, research indicates that bad e-mail hygiene can quickly become the singular reason for heartburns and stress. Literature suggests that, apart from causing annoyance to colleagues and managers, excessive e-mailing may create an environment of politicking and mistrust, stifling productivity and efficiency within an organisation.

So here are five factors you could bear in mind so that you don't let emailing distract you from your daily priorities.

**1. Do not check e-mail first thing in the morning and the last thing at night**





Empirical evidence suggests that it helps to come in a little early, and get things in order before starting the work day. Checking e-mails the first thing in the morning shifts focus away from the 'important' to the 'urgent'. Similarly, checking e-mails the last thing in the night pulls forward stress from the next day. Prolonged stress is the single biggest reason for burnout and fatigue.

## 2. Do not plan meetings over e-mail

Planning a meeting on e-mail starts with a harmless e-mail soliciting responses from colleagues for a time and date. After everybody's schedules are mapped, a mutually agreeable time is decided. This is followed by a meeting planner that colleagues accept. Before you know, this process has consumed half an hour of your time and 20 fresh e-mails. What happened to the good old way of walking up to a colleague and asking for time?

## 3. Check e-mails in batches at scheduled intervals

Experts suggest that e-mails create a sense of 'manufactured emergencies' that conflict with broad priorities. Psychologists suggest that instead of checking emails incessantly, one should make a practice of checking e-mails in batches. Such a practice leads to lesser distractions, and helps one focus on the important rather than the urgent. While there are no magic numbers on how many time windows one should schedule for batch-checking e-mails, experts recommend that they should be scheduled at least 30 minutes apart from each other.

## 4. Check the length of your e-mail

Web behavior analysts suggest that a reader

**Literature suggests that apart from causing annoyance to colleagues and managers, excessive e-mailing may create an environment of politicking and mistrust**


## How to maintain e-mail sanity

- >> Avoid prioritizing e-mails over your most important activities for the day
- >> Schedule meetings through collaboration platforms, such as IM or face-to-face offline
- >> Check e-mails in batches in regular intervals
- >> Avoid long e-mails
- >> Summarize the contents of the e-mail in the most appropriate subject line

tends to lose interest if the contents of an e-mail are more than one screen shot. E-mails are meant to be a communication tool, not a publishing medium. If the contents of the e-mail are too large to fit into one screen, it may be a better idea to put it all together in a word document and send it as an attachment.

## 5. Subject matters

A 'Hi' is short for 'Hello' and it ends there! Most of us tend to focus on the contents of the e-mail without worrying too much about the subject line. Sheryl Lindsell-Roberts, Principal of business writing firm Sheryl Lindsell-Roberts & Associates, argues that the subject line is the most important part of an e-mail. Unless the subject line is captivating and directed, one cannot expect an immediate response.

Empirical evidence suggests that bad e-mail practices can be a primary source of stress and anxiety for an individual as well as his/her co-workers. The key to good e-mail hygiene, perhaps, lies in adopting a disciplined approach, which will help reduce stress and anxiety to a great extent. 

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**A**bbie Conant, who used to play trombone for the Royal Opera of Turin in Italy got one response out of her eleven applications for orchestra jobs across Europe—the Munich Philharmonic Orchestra. There were thirty-three applicants and each played behind the screen. Conant was number sixteen. She played Ferdinand David's *Konzertino* for Trombone, which is the warhorse audition piece in Germany, and missed one note (she cracked at G). She gave up and went backstage to pack up and go home. But the committee was floored. Conant was the one they wanted. She came back and stepped out from behind the screen, only to hear the Bavarian equivalent of whoa. Trombone is a masculine instrument and they didn't expect a woman to be playing it. There were two more rounds of auditions which Conant passed and got a place in the orchestra. However the prejudice against women played up and she was demoted in a year based on her abilities. Conant took the case to the courts, fought for eight years and prevailed on every charge. Because the man questioning her ability had listened to her in

perfect objectivity, and in that unbiased moment, he had said, "That's who we want!" Abbie Conant was saved by the screen. (*An adaptation from Blink by Malcolm Gladwell*)

How often do we hear stories of a woman getting overlooked for a job position where gender perceptions dictated decisions more than merit? While sociologists continue to debate over the reasons for the demographic inequity and lower representation of women in the workforce, it is no secret that our country fares among the lowest in gender ratio numbers on the planet.

### **No country for good women**

Workforce studies reveal that less than 35 per cent of the economically active workforce in India is comprised of women. The statistics become even more harrowing for executive boardrooms. Catalyst Inc.'s 2012 study 'Women in Labour Force in India' places India at 31 out of 44 countries on board diversity.

The slim representation of women in the workforce forces us to ponder over some key inefficiencies that we, as a nation, have come to accept as a way of life.

# POWER

**BY VIKRAM CHOUDHURY**

The path to a successful career for a woman is often strewn with obstacles that transcend aptitude and competence; it is a path rife with prejudices, perceptions, competing priorities and traditions. Women who have defied the tide to chart out successful careers reveal that it is about time we, as individuals, as organisations, and as a nation, took charge of the demographic potential



A woman with brown hair, wearing a black coat and a bright yellow scarf, is smiling and looking to her left. She is holding a bright yellow umbrella. She is surrounded by a dense crowd of black umbrellas, which fill the background and foreground, creating a strong contrast with her yellow accessories. The scene appears to be outdoors on a rainy day.

# WOMEN



### The un-fair sex

Perhaps the largest professional obstacle that a woman faces in India is the problem of prejudice. These prejudices are either systemic (pertaining to the society at large) or endemic (within certain demographic sections). Research by the Center for Talent Innovation (CTI) on women professionals in emerging markets finds that women encounter bias in the workplace, severe enough that large numbers (55 per cent in India, 48 per cent in China and 40 per cent in Brazil) disengage or consider dropping out altogether.

The endemic prejudice of the typical male psyche is severe on the careers of their female peers. Often, women are left fighting heroic (and often lone) battles against attitudinal prejudices of men, including assumptions of weakness, subordination, and vulnerability.

The qualifying traits of high performance management in most organisations are described by adjectives such as assertive, dominant, decisive, ambitious, and self-oriented. Behavioural scientists argue that corporate performance assessments are inherently biased to suit masculine traits and lead to disadvantages for women. The problem, therefore, is more deep rooted than meets the eye. Perhaps the true organisational response involves not just provisioning careers for women, but also grooming the men and weaving a cultural fabric conducive to create a level playing field for talent. The buck does not stop at creating

By the time a woman puts behind her biological options and refocuses on her career, the gap becomes unsettlingly wide for many. It is in this phase of life when a woman feels disillusioned, viewing the gap as a career setback while falling behind peers.

Despite positive growth that the economy has witnessed in the last few years, the latest World Bank data on labour force participation (LPR) reveals that representation of women in the workforce is among the lowest in the world.

In the same vein, research from analyst firms such as Catalyst and McKinsey reveals that organisations in developed economies with higher representation of women demonstrate more than 30 per cent higher return on equity and total return to shareholders. This raises a key question—‘Are we, as an economy, failing to reap the demographic dividend for sustainable growth?’

Many wonder if there is a secret recipe for becoming a successful power woman. How do successful power women propel their professional karma from the ordinary to the exceptional? People Matters’ conversations with women from our Power List reveal some consistent trends.

### Dream big, own your career

One of the most defining traits of successful women would undeniably be their ability to

**The buck does not stop at creating robust policies; we need concerted effort through systemic changes in assessment methodologies, cultural campaigns and opportunity creation for the organisation to demonstrate commitment**

robust policies; it needs concerted effort through systemic changes in assessment methodologies, cultural campaigns, and opportunity creation for the organisation to demonstrate commitment.

### The biological divide

Career experts remark that the period of a professional’s highest potential growth also coincides with the most transitional phase of a woman’s life. The stage of the professional career, when a woman transitions from junior to middle management level, conflicts with other life-altering priorities such as marriage, family and childbirth.

chart their career graph. They have travelled different paths – a few have climbed the traditional corporate ladder, a few zigzagged upwards by switching, and a few started their own enterprise; yet each one cultivated their own success story by being the champions of their respective ideas and landscapers of their careers. They have built their success through sheer will and determination. While it is true that they had the skill, they put time in it and more important they had the desire to do something different.

Says Leena Nair, Global Senior Vice President, Leadership and Organisational Development, Unilever, “Personally, I have



Organisations in developed economies with higher representation of women demonstrate more than

**30%**  
higher return on equity

always dreamt big. When I started my career, I wanted to be the HR Director for the company I joined.” She says that though her colleagues initially mocked her, it was this dream and the will to realise it that made her successful.

### **Believe in yourself**

Research shows that women wait to be recognised rather than being proactive in seeking out recognition for their accomplishments. Successful women in business find appropriate ways to summarize their achievements and take credit for their performance. Leena Nair concurs, “I find that women, more than men, lack self-belief. Women should put their hand up and request for what they think they deserve. I think women are not putting their hands up enough.” Anuranjita Kumar, Country HR Officer at Citi, makes a similar point, “In this competitive age, it is increasingly important to be able to articulate your accomplishments to an evolving opportunity as you grow within your organisation.”


### **Treat career breaks as opportunities**

Most women take career breaks to attend to their family responsibilities, and there is nothing inherently wrong in doing so. However, it is observed that post the career break there is a feeling that they are not paid as much as their peers who have stayed on the career ladder. However, successful women argue that there is no need to be apologetic about the break one has taken but look at those breaks as great learning opportunities. They advise that women must see the larger picture and not underestimate the life moments they have lived in the break. Shalini Pillay, Head HR, KPMG, says, “Our life is like a race, and for me the breaks you take are those pit stops along the way to refuel and make a few adjustments and move on. The fear of losing out on one lap has never bothered me – in a long career, like in a long race, those 5 or 6 months, do not really matter, at some point it all balances out.”

**Research shows that women wait to be recognised rather than being proactive in seeking out recognition for their accomplishments. Successful women summarize their achievements and take credit for their performance**

### **Plan strategically and remain focused**

“Caught amidst different roles, women are sometimes unsure and feel guilty of what they want professionally,” says Kumar. It is thus important that women have clarity of purpose and plan their career chart strategically. She adds, “Be it a new role or a transfer, to be effective, one needs to be disciplined and be prepared for it in advance, like everything else in life.” Dr. Reena Ramachandran, Former CMD, Hindustan Organic Chemicals Ltd and Founder President of Women in Public Sector (WIPS), elaborates on this, “It is equally important to make changes and take charge. If the organisation is not able to make changes on their own, either because they do not have the positions available to give you exposure or because they are unable to rotate people to provide the opportunity that you need, then you will need to look for it.” Being focused is yet another key ingredient that determines success. Says, Kerrie Peraino, Senior Vice President, International HR & Global Employee Relations, American Express, “In order for me to be good at what I am doing right now I have to be able to focus.”

The battle between ambition and duty, between aspiration and prejudice, between the mind and the body is a battle of continuance. While we wait for the system to change, for organisations to implement the policies they espouse and for men to throw off the shackles of bias, it is about time the women take charge. As Martin Luther King aptly puts it, “Change does not roll in on the wheels of inevitability, but comes through continuous struggle.” 



# The advantage of being underestimated

Sue Marks



*“Do not settle, if you love what you do then it is not like work”*


When I started in business thirty years ago, I was completely underestimated. There weren't many women entrepreneurs and I was just written off; nobody believed that I would be competition. It was fantastic. There was no competitive response to anything that we did, and it was quite remarkable that we could make one competitive move after another and there was no reaction from the market.

I believe that women today are still underestimated. Although I tell my daughters that, 'you are going to have to be better, smarter and work harder than anyone else, it is a gift.' It is a gift to be underestimated and take advantage of it. Do not complain about it. Life is not fair, so stop expecting it to be. I had very strong role models in my parents and grandparents, and I knew I was smart, hard working and collaborative. Then, as today, I live following my own rules - I guess that meant I had to be an entrepreneur.

When I reflect on what has made me successful, first it is that I am an extremely hard working person. I can produce an extraordinary volume of work. I am good at doing things right and doing the right things. You really need

Without a doubt, one of the best-known figures in the Recruitment Process Outsourcing space globally, **Sue Marks** is a creative innovator, who writes her own rules, and in doing so, impacts the market. An eternal optimist, she is the CEO of the leading RPO firm, Pinstripe.

both to be efficient, to be effective and to win in the market.

I think as women, we sometimes create our own obstacles. I am a very optimistic person – the glass is always half full – 'no' means 'not now'. If I cannot get something done today, I will get it done 'tomorrow'; I just do not look at obstacles as final. They are just hurdles that we need to go over. I do not think much about it. If one looks at failures as learning opportunities or obstacles as opportunities to be more successful, one's outlook changes. Do not settle. If you love what you do then it is not like work, it is part of you and you are making a difference. Never settle; life is too short. 





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# Brand, aspiration and sponsorship

Kerrie Peraino



*“We need to teach women to declare their ambitions and to present their brand”*

To drive the diversity agenda at American Express, we have embraced the concept of sponsorship. While one can ask for a mentor, one needs to earn a sponsor. A sponsor is an advocate, a person that will promote your growth and help you make those career leaps. We use sponsorship as a true talent management tool. We have leaders who are grooming the next generation of talent (both women and men) through sponsorship.

We have workshops for both women and men to create pathways to sponsorship, but we also have a program that is specifically for women, because we recognize that women are earning it at a lower rate than men.

There are two factors that lead to lack of sponsorship - brand and ambition. Executive presence, the notion of how you communicate, and the leadership you display, factor in the creation of your brand as a professional. Ambition is the way you declare it, the way you make people aware of your aspirations. Men seem to be better than women at both brand and aspiration so we need to teach women to declare their ambitions and present their brand. Eventually these are the factors that will determine whether or not you will

An advocate of executive sponsorship and the role it plays in career advancement, **Kerrie Peraino**, mother-of-three and Senior VP, International HR & Global Employee Relations with the financial giant, American Express, has her strategies to make the best of time at work and at home.

earn the opportunity of sponsorship, and once achieved, organizations obtain a level playing field.

Like many working mothers, I have got strategies that have helped me in keeping the proverbial balance. In order for me to be good at what I am doing, I have to be able to focus. When I am with you I am really with you and not thinking about other things happening in my life, or feeling guilty about them. This is also true when I am at home with my four-year-old daughter playing little people, I am with her, I am not checking my Blackberry, I am not worried about other things. Applying that focus has given me a coping strategy that seems to be working for me. **PM**



# The gender cliff

Leena Nair


**G**ender inclusion is not a women's issue, it is a business issue. To bring balance to the numbers, you have to change the men, you have to change the women, and you have to change the culture. We need all three to happen for progress. The mistake we do is that we try to work on the women, we work on making them assertive and confident; they are not the problem, the culture is not accommodating of their different style of working and the men need to be engaged for them to feel that this is an important issue for the business.

Personally, I have always dreamt big. I remember when I joined HUL I wrote my own vision; I wanted to be the HR Director for the company. I remember my colleagues laughing and saying that I was dreaming foolishly, no woman had ever

Dream big and go for it, **Leena Nair**, Global Senior VP for Leadership and OD at Unilever exhorts women. She's firm that gender inclusion and the gender cliff is a business issue that has to be addressed by changing the men and the culture.

reached that position, and no HR person had actually ever lead the HR portfolio. It had always been technical people. That was my dream and it happened when I was 36.

The second important quality to create impact is self-belief. I find that women, more than men, lack self belief. Women should put their hand up and request for what they think they deserve. I think women are not putting their hands up enough. The third important element for women to succeed in the workplace is to find mentors. Men traditionally build wide networks and different groups of networks; women tend to build deep networks, they find people they align with and get closer to them. To grow in the organization, one needs both and that is how you get mentors. Mentors will advise and support you and are essential for career growth.

I think women who have managed to grow in this ecosystem, should make the path easier for those after them. Within one month of being made HR Director India, I extended maternity policy, I introduced the flexibility policy to work out of home; these came from the belief that we need to make life for women and men easier. When I joined HUL, women comprised only 3 per cent of the workforce there. Today, 30 per cent of employees are women. 

*“Women who manage to grow in the ecosystem should make the path easier for the ones after them”*





# Get ready for the race

Anuranjita Kumar



*“You need to believe that your intuition and passion will lead you to the right way”*

To know what you want and being passionate about the work you do, differentiates between the good and the great. Caught amidst different roles, women are sometimes unsure and feel guilty of what they want professionally. Once you have clarity of purpose, comes planning. Be it a new role or a transfer, to be effective; one needs to be disciplined and be prepared in advance like everything in life. Finally, as they say ‘Rome was not built in a day’, perseverance is the virtue that let’s you accomplish all that you plan for. It has worked for me because when you take risks, odds cannot be avoided and it is that constant inner dialogue that says ‘believe in yourself’ which not only encourages you to continue on your journey but finally leads you to your destination.

I find that many women struggle to seek advice as they constantly hesitate to put a foot in the door for a dialogue on their next career move. They expect others to recognize their work and feel uncomfortable about proactively talking about their achievements or networking. In this competitive age, it is increasingly important to be able to articulate your accomplishments to an evolving opportunity as you grow within your organisation. In a tough environ-

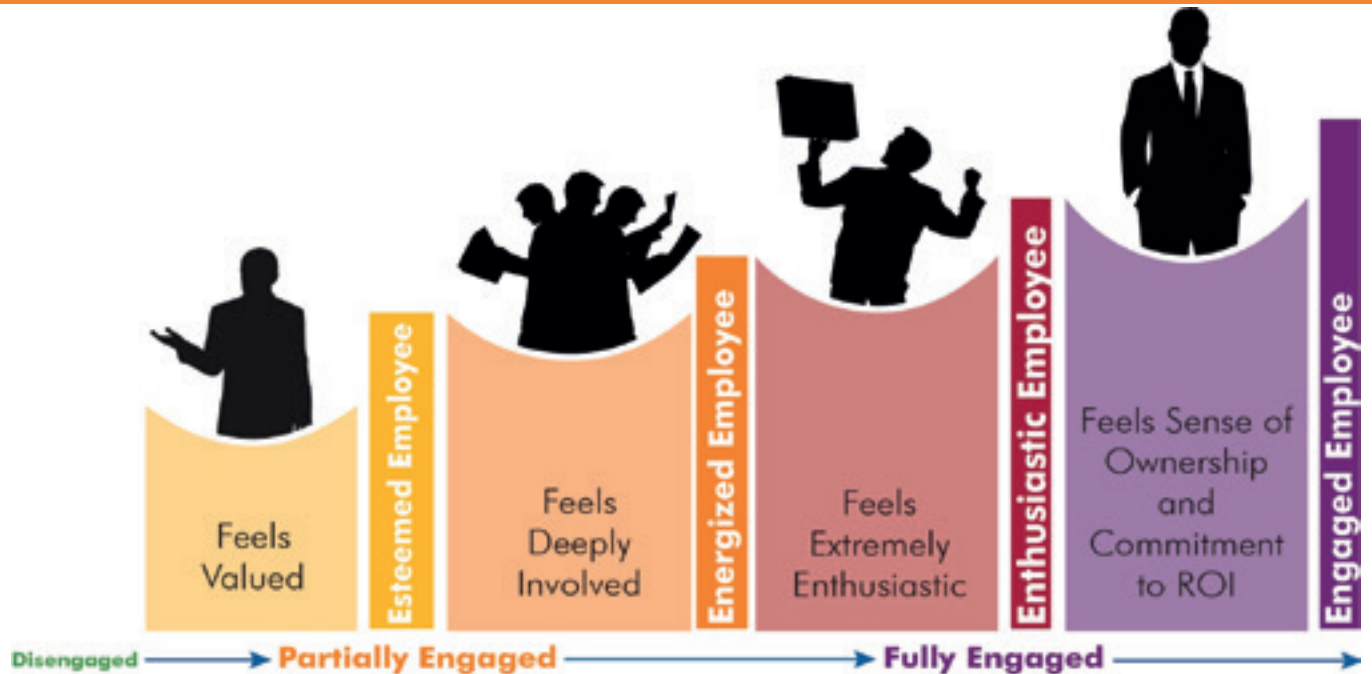
**Anuranjita Kumar**, Country HR Officer at Citi says that the rules of the game change as you ascend the corporate pyramid. Clarity of purpose, disciplined planning, perseverance and a life partner & family who cherish your success are critical elements that support you through your journey.

ment, where rules are often rewritten, you need to be prepared with your support structure to take on the challenge and explore the depths of the corporate world.

Growing up the ladder poses tough challenges. Similar to moving from the shallows of a sea to the depths of an ocean, the new environment at times may feel intimidating. But, I believe that the problem resides also in our mind. How you are able to hold your own defines the length and success of your journey. What keeps you going is your inner strength and conviction – the extent to which you believe in your own competence and the confidence to feel deserving of every achievement. **pm**



# What do you want your employees to feel?

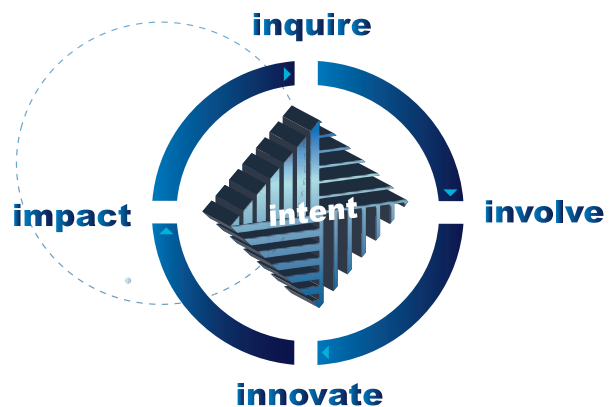


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# Flexibility is a must for everybody

Laura E. Kohler



*“Being part of the management, the ownership and the family structure, my job never ends”*

I think sometimes life is harder for women professionals who are also promoters in the firm where they hold management positions. Being part of the management, the ownership and the family structure, my job never ends. It is 24 by 7. Even when I had my children, I only took two weeks off. Sometimes, being a Kohler at Kohler Co makes it harder.

As an executive, I have had more flexibility to be a working mother. For instance, as an executive, I have the freedom to take my children to the doctor's appointment and come back to work. I had the flexibility to work at night if I had to leave early to help at the school. Because of this flexibility, I really appreciated being an executive when I was bringing up my children. On the other hand, it must be very hard to be a working mother in a factory environment, or in a place where you have no flexibility to leave, to see your children, or go if somebody is sick.

The important thing is that everyone at the management level is held accountable to the same result. How they get their results could be different. So, you might have one person who just wants to work nine to five, and she is really productive in those hours. You might have others who need a little more

**Laura Kohler** is a dynamo who drives the people management agenda for Kohler Co – a name synonymous with luxury bath fittings. The senior VP HR of a 140-year-old global giant with a staff of 30,000 plus, Laura is a businesswoman with an HR agenda.

flexibility. They may leave at three, but they will deliver the results at night, or from their home. They are still high performers – but they just manage their work differently. It is about allowing flexibility in the work environment, and about the results. So how you work doesn't matter; the results should be the same, and should be at par.

In the US, you see more stay-at-home fathers than other parts of the world. We also see more fathers who want to be a part of their children's lives. So, fathers ask for more flexibility. They want to leave at three to coach their child's soccer team, but they still have to deliver their marketing plans or their product launches on time. That's how I think we are seeing flexibility becoming a requirement for everyone. **PM**



# Learning outside of work

Shalini Pillay

As one moves up the career graph, there are predictable points where you see women dropping off. That time coincides with them moving up the career ladder, getting into managerial and upward roles where the expectations of the job go up significantly; at the same time, from an age perspective, this is the time that typically women are getting married or starting a family. More often than not, the inability to strike a balance between managing higher targets and job expectations vis-à-vis pressures at home is what


Learning happens across many spheres of life, not only at work. **Shalini Pillay** was the first woman in KPMG India to move up the ranks of the consulting business and make it to partner in 2008 and has just been appointed Head of HR. She believes that the career breaks that women take are like pit stops in a race and provide great development opportunities.

makes women put their professional aspirations on the back seat.

Since the beginning of my career, 19 years ago, my work has always been an integral part of my life. I just cannot imagine it in any other way.

Our life is like a race, and for me the breaks you take are those pit stops along the way to refuel and make a few adjustments and move on. Every time I have taken a break, I have made use of that time and come back with new energy. The fear of losing out on one lap has never bothered me – in a long career, like in a long race, those 5 or 6 months, do not really matter, at some point it all balances out.

To me, even when I took maternity leave, while my peers might have been a year ahead when I came back, I felt that what I have achieved with motherhood was nothing short from what they had achieved, maybe even more in many ways. Some of what you learn outside of work can be very valuable for your career. I have always seen those breaks as great learning opportunities.

That is where the supportive and flexible organization and ecosystem play a very important role in helping women balance it out. That is critical from the policy, culture and the working environment perspective. 

*“Everytime I have taken a break, I come back with more energy. The fear of losing out on one lap has never bothered me”*





# Take charge of your goal

Dr. Reena Ramachandran



*“Policies alone are not going to make a difference. The people who execute the policy make all the difference”*

There are two fundamental reasons for gender imbalance in PSUs: first, because of the nature of the work and requirements of the job, we have far less women who come to the table for selection. The number of women who are available for a selection panel is far less, and as a consequence, they get screened out, unless the woman happens to be an exceptional one. Additionally, PSUs are also losing out to private sector opportunities that might be seen as most favorable for women. The second challenge is that to move up the ladder, there are certain pre-requisites in terms of rotation, exposure to assignments and functions; these are value additions that prepare you for a higher position

What I have seen is, even when women want to take on these challenging assignments they don't get these assignments because of the risks that the assignment might entail and the unwillingness of the company in taking responsibility for that woman. This, of course, works against women moving up the ladder, because you need this exposure to grow and one becomes a less ideal candidate without it. While we have equal opportunity

**Dr. Reena Ramachandran,** Founder President of Women in Public Sector (WIPS), believes that diversity improves decision-making. As former CMD, Hindustan Organic Chemicals Ltd, she is one of the few women who've gone on to become the CMD of a Public Sector Undertaking (PSUs)

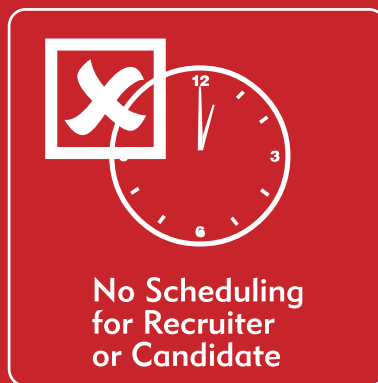
policies, the problem is that policies alone are not going to make a difference. The people who execute the policy make all the difference; how you see the policy and how you apply the policy is what matters. Women need to strategize their upward movement. It is equally important to make changes and take charge. If the organization is not able to make changes on their own, either because they do not have the positions available to give you exposure or because they are unable to rotate people to provide the opportunity that you need, then you will need to look for it. **pm**



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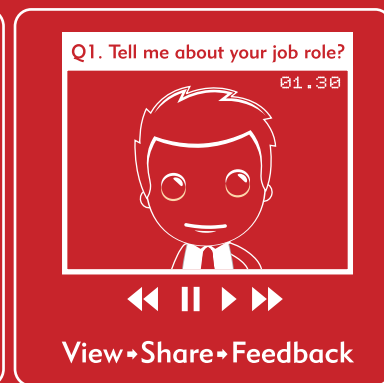
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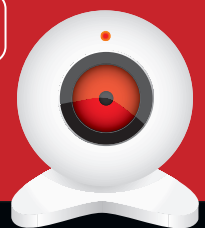
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# You've come a long way, baby-ji

But there's still some way to go before anyone can speak of gender parity in the boardroom

**Shinie Antony**

**A**s far as the Indian corporate scene goes, the alpha male is sitting pretty. The man to woman ratio in most company boards shows that the boss is a he. The number of female honchos can be counted on the fingers of one hand in many, many companies. For instance, in the IT sector, they are down to below 10 per cent at senior levels and are approximately zero sometimes on boards.

Developed countries are ahead only by a whisker, with one report putting female board members at around 15 per cent. It would seem that corporate boards would agree: *mooch nahi toh kuch nahi!*

When did a baritone become a must for a board member?

## Neither having nor eating the cake

For every Chanda Kochhar and Kiran Shaw, there are thousands of women who halt midway up the corporate ladder. Theoretically, women have come a long way, but for all statistical purposes, they prefer a plateau to a peak. Ambition is unceremoniously and without warning replaced by a mellowing at any stage, which in turn engenders exits. Suddenly they begin to doubt if pay and perks and position can make up for missing a school play and feel compelled to take a call: be a go-getter role model or a hands-on parent. Both of course come with wily baggage.

Traditionally and globally, working women have always had to walk the fine

line between friendly and flirty, between sounding assertive and hormonally haywire. And in boardrooms all over the world, they are the only gender that can hear the biological clock tick.

Sometimes gently and sometimes politically totally incorrectly, female applicants are quizzed on their matrimonial plans, if any, and on multiplication tables, if already married. Just like a male author is rarely asked if his wife 'lets' him write, the male applicant's marital/paternal status is never an issue. While hiring most companies are clear on the subtext: women can disappear on them. That is the elephant in the room, a wedding invite from the bright young thing before them -- who can choose husbands from another city, country or cosmos, and demand to be transferred or relieved overnight.

Prospective employers view uteruses as little bombs that can blow up anytime into indefinite MLs (maternity leave) and SLs (sick leave) and every available CL (casual leave) there is.

## Baby factor

More degrees mean late marriages mean later babies, with a large percentage of pregnancies falling under the 'oops' category. Most admit that with promotions, deadlines, work pressure, office politics and a lack of leave, they never get around to actually planning families, leaving it to chance, accidents or divine intervention.

## IN BRIEF

Statistically, women may have come a long way but they are still far from being considered an equal in the boardroom



This derails not just their plans but also that of their workplace.

The breakaway from joint families means more work for the working woman. Travel is a pain and she compulsively calls and calls the babysitter. She can bunk a business conference anytime, but not a PTA meeting. Child becomes career and the rest just a hobby.

Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg apparently had a chance to join social network LinkedIn as CEO when she was with Google in 2006. But Sandberg, who joined Facebook two years from then, prioritized a second baby over this offer, going by excerpts published from her forthcoming book 'Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead'.

Anne-Marie Slaughter, a mother of two, was the director of policy planning at the US State Department from 2009 to 2011. At the end of her public service leave, she writes in *The Atlantic*, she happily went back home to become a normal working mom – as a professor of politics and international affairs at Princeton University – instead of seeing her kids only on weekends when she was director of policy planning.

### Women who step out

But there's something new brewing this Women's Day: a turtle-slow movement to bring the better half of the workforce back. Corporate culture is currently in the process of altering itself ever so slightly to suit hibernating women, of elasticising routines to accommodate the self-exiled.


The comfort levels for a woman going through a difficult pregnancy or a new mom in the office largely depends on the goodwill earned by the said woman prior to mommification. Freelance assignments and conditional provisions to work from home are offered on a whimsical basis, rather than any fixed company policy. If you have a proven track record at work, they are prepared to overlook this little misdemeanor of the womb. Also, there has to be the general promise of returning to work fulltime at the earliest hanging in the air.

When one family member has a high-flying career while the other stays at home,



**Prospective employers view uteruses as little bombs that can blow up anytime into indefinite MLs (maternity leave) and SLs (sick leave) and every available CL (casual leave) there is.**

a hierarchy happens. It alternately suits and does not suit, decisions are revoked, lost ground is lamented, but in the interim the inevitable occurs: colleagues and teammates have zoomed past. The 'gypsy bee' has to work doubly hard to buzz her end of the beehive, to prove she means business. The bottom line is this: male colleagues have overtaken.

Where corporate climbs are concerned, it would seem that women are content to be on cloud 8.9. Cloud nine is thick with cigar smoke. 

*Shinie Antony is the Bangalore-based author of Barefoot and Pregnant and When Mira Went Forth and Multiplied. She has put together the anthologies Kerala, Kerala, Quite Contrary and Why We Don't Talk. She is the co-founder of the Bangalore Literature Festival and mother of two teenagers.*





# So, what bad things have you heard about us?

Why don't today's campus aspirants spend more time researching the companies they are applying to?

BY ELANGO R.

**I**t's 2:45pm. I am on my fourth interview for the day. And I start the probe again.

"What have you heard of MphasiS?"

"You are an over a billion dollar company, with a global presence. Your CEO..."

Yawn...

"So why do you want to join MphasiS?"

"It is a great company...employee first culture... wonderful policies..."

More yawn...

"Tell me some not so nice things you have heard of MphasiS?"

"Huh? What?! (Sheepish smile -- are you for real?? Rise of eyebrows, and post some major brain wracking)... Actually it's the fact that MphasiS is performance-driven (What?!)...more insane explanations... yawn... I am ready to sleep... sorry, move!

I just played back in my head the 40 interviews over the last 4 weeks that we'd conducted in the best campuses around the world. Yep! Its campus time again and I love it. Every year I meet bright, talented and "hungry" students looking to make a name for themselves in the world. And for the most part, I always walk away feeling proud of today's youth and a little paranoid about how much time I have left in my career before one of these bright sparks knocks me out!

But every year, I find it a little

disappointing that such smart people, who take so much time on their betterment – whether it is through education, adaption or compromise – fail to spend even a little time in getting to know about "the other side of the table".

My yawn moment was these three stock questions that I asked the prospectives for this prestigious programme! My objective was to find out how much they think through their important decisions.

For a moment, let us forget about jobs. What would you do if you were buying a new phone?

- Decide what you want the phone for: calls and text? Office emails? FB and videos? All of the above? If you are like my friends Lui or NN (all real names, much to the glee of their spouses), you just want change, and the only constant is how to convince the spouse!
- How much are you willing to pay? An equivalent of a night out or 'an arm and a leg'?
- Once done with this, you zero in on options.
- Now what? Research:

- a. Talk to people who are already using the phone
- b. Google like your life depended on it, to read all reviews from CNET to Mouthshut

## IN BRIEF

The cost of a bad decision can mean a few years of derailment, disillusionment, and missing out on the fun of working in a place you love



■ If you are not confused by all the data, you buy the phone, and hopefully you are happy.

If this is what most of us will do for a phone, then why not for a job you would spend most of your waking hours in? I don't know the answer for that, but I know the answer for what happens when you don't!

You have to look at this question or answer in the context of where we are in the job market! The world around us has dramatically changed. The corporate life style is no longer categorised by cushioned entries, ensured promotions, and the inevitable onsite opportunity. Every level of the corporate pyramid has its own set of woes. The cost of a bad decision can mean a few years of derailment, disillusionment, and missing out on the fun of working in a place you love, with people you enjoy, and doing the work that makes you feel good even if it is 80 hour weeks!

To help you make the right decision, research is KEY. Here are some research tips.

**1 Reach out to your alumni.** Trust me, alumni allegiance runs deeper, and you will get honest feedback.

**2 Ask the right questions for you!** A great place for someone may be hell for you. Instead of, "Are you happy", ask questions such as, "How do decisions get taken around here? What work hours do you keep? How flexible is the organisation?" The questions should be designed to get the data you want.


**3 Check the internet.** When I posed this question on twitter and FB, Gautam Ghosh (@gautamghosh) promptly responded with check glass door. Spot on, and he should know! But be cautious here: I recommend this not to take your decision but to frame your research and your questions.

**4 Check their Senior Management.** Rahul Anandani (@rahulanandani) from Deloitte had this to say on Twitter:

Check out their profiles on the website, Google their names, and dig deeper on LinkedIn. You will get a feel of how the company functions, and what drives them. The same thought was echoed by Sumeet Salwan of KPMG on Facebook. Go beyond the obvious. For instance, a company that frequently changes their Head of HR, or has their CEOs through revolving doors may ring some alarm bells.

**"It is disappointing that such smart people, who take so much time on their betterment – fail to spend even a little time in getting to know the other side of the table"**

**5 Network.** Talk to neighbours, to your gym buddy, and have those general cafeteria discussions. You will be surprised by the flood of opinions sans any vested interest that no internet search will ever give you.

Of course, all this research would have been for nothing if you don't know what you want. If you want just another job, don't waste your time. A standard question that I ask on campus is, "Tell me three things you would like to have ticked off in your to do list, 3 years from accepting this job." The answers say a lot about what the candidate's priorities are. You must ask yourself the same question as you start the search. By the way, this is not just about external job searches. Given the size of some organizations, this holds good even for an internal move! 

---

*Good luck and as always would love to hear your feedback. For those of you gearing up for the interview season, I recommend you also check out my April 2011 column, 'An Interviewlogue: No Method In The Madness' (<http://tinyurl.com/d8qv2et>).*



# APPRAA THE APPRA

**March is that month when every employee has to face the annual performance review, and come up trumps. Why are annual reviews so universally feared and what can be done to address this?**

**By Deepshikha Thakur**

**A** survey conducted by Achievers, a San Francisco based consulting firm, found that 98 per cent of the respondents felt that performance appraisals were an unnecessary waste of time. Interestingly, 24 per cent of the respondents were HR managers, 9 per cent were CEOs and the rest, employees. For all of us who have spent your waking hours in the last few months living and breathing annual reviews, the survey finding should be an eye opener. Why does a process that is meant to build better-performing

organisations trigger such extreme reactions? As a matter of fact, few aspects of management stir up more controversy than the performance appraisals. While the proponents believe performance appraisals to be the most critical aspect of an organisational life cycle, opponents have gone to the extent of saying that the process is so inherently flawed that it may be impossible to correct it.

The most commonly-leveled criticisms against performance reviews are that they are time consuming, bureaucratic,



# RAISING

# ANNUAL

counter-productive and de-motivating. L Gurunathan, professor of Personnel Management and Industrial Relations at Xavier Labour Relations Institute (XLRI), Jamshedpur, finds the basic assumption behind annual reviews flawed. “Why wait for the entire year to give feedback? It is an added burden on organisational resources to bear with employees who aren’t performing up to the mark. Imagine a coach who would wait till the season ends to give feedback to his players. Most managers are non-confrontational, and

keep delaying feedback, even if they are not satisfied with their team member’s level of output. As a result, employees are almost always surprised and unhappy if the review is not positive.”

In fact, people also tend to question the idea of force-fitting rankings. Managers find it challenging to have performance review conversations, and hence annual review process tends to become a box-checking exercise in which conversations are generally one-sided, with no scope for dialogue. Further, managers and subordinates

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generally work at cross purposes during performance review discussions. While the manager talks about development opportunities, performance highlights, etc, the subordinate wants to put his best foot forward in the belief that he is negotiating pay, because ratings are linked to pay. Invariably, they end up talking past each other, instead of talking to each other. In the end, it is a failed discussion, and impacts their relationship later. Amitabh Kumar, Head-HR, NEC India Pvt Ltd observes, “Managers tend to look at annual appraisals as a tool to decide an individual’s increment, variable pay, etc., which are more tactical. They don’t look at it primarily as a development tool. This lackadaisical attitude translates into employee apathy regarding appraisals.” Anurag Aman, Principal, Leadership & Organisational Performance, Mercer, echoes similar view as he says, “Performance appraisals typically lead to unhappy employees due to misaligned expectations.”

The other pain point is to do with the lack of clarity as to what constitutes KRAs (Key Result Areas). Not knowing how to and on what parameters to measure the performance of an employee, gives ample reasons to argue that the review process is biased. Says V Krishnan, Executive Vice President-HR, Dabur India Ltd, “The KRAs, on the basis of which performance is evaluated, hardly cascade from the top to the individual level. Even if they do, the same is not communicated to employees. There isn’t any clarity on what is to be measured, and how it is to be measured. This makes the review process susceptible to personal biases of managers.”

### Belling the Curve

Is the ‘Bell Curve’, that holds that most phenomena occur around middle points and a few around the higher and lower extremes, true for performance appraisals too? How does the inherent assumption of the model such as the ‘acceptable rate of failure’ and the ‘average performer’ impact the appraisals?

During performance reviews, only

**38.11%**

of the outstanding performers are satisfied with their ratings.

(Impact Achievement Group Survey)

Gurunathan says, “The Bell Curve was introduced in performance appraisals by GE as an ‘initial constraint’ because managers weren’t able to objectively review performance and give a distributed rating.” However, he also maintains that there is a statistical violation in the way Bell Curves are implemented in the performance appraisal process. He explains that, for a Bell Curve to make sense, the sample size should at least be 35. But in reality, few managers have a span of control that wide, and hence the misapplication of the Bell Curve. Apart from a minimum sample size, there are other criteria such as the growth stage a business is in, the business environment, etc for Bell curve implementation to be effective.

Interestingly, the forced ranking system when introduced was called the vitality curve, where managers had to identify their direct reports on three categories – the top 20 per cent, the vital 70 per cent and the bottom 10 per cent. The nomenclature ‘vital’ for average performers clearly meant that employees rated as ‘average’ were essential to the existence of the organisation. However in the current reality being rated as ‘average’ translates into a perception of being ‘not so good’.

And since people generally tend to think that they are above average, conversations tend to shift from feedback and development to justification if they do not get the highest rating.

### Should increments be linked to reviews?

Given that there is a perception that reviews are biased, does it make sense to link increments to reviews? “Pay is a function of many components, with performance levels being one factor. Linking it to annual reviews makes it seem as if performance is the only driving factor, which is not true. Also, the motive behind giving feedback is defeated when it is linked to compensation. People cannot receive constructive feedback objectively when they realise that it will have a direct impact on their pay,” asserts Gurunathan.

However there are others who believe



# Rating yourself in performance reviews

Answer the following questions, created in consultation with **Prof. David A. Dunning**, social psychologist and professor at Cornell University to know whether you are likely to overrate or underrate yourself in your self-review

## 1. How do you tend to base your opinions while rating yourself?

- A** I lay greater emphasis in conforming to my personal expectations
- B** I lay greater emphasis in understanding what my boss and peers expect out of me
- C** I aim to identify the gaps between my personal expectations and other's expectations from me

## 2. What successes do you usually refer while rating yourself?

- A** Recent successes, or big wins in the past 1-2 months
- B** Successes across the span of my professional career
- C** Successes across the last 12 months

## 3. Which setbacks do you usually refer while rating yourself?

- A** Setbacks across the span of my professional career
- B** Recent setbacks, or failures in the last 1-2 months
- C** Setbacks across the last 12 months

## 4. How would you rate your skills and competencies?

- A** I have skills and competencies that are niche and difficult to acquire commonly
- B** I have skills and competencies that others can easily acquire
- C** I have skills and competencies that others can acquire with effort and experience

## 5. How would you rate skills and competencies of your peers and superiors?

- A** I can easily acquire the skills and competencies of my peers and superiors
- B** My peers and managers have skills and competencies that are extremely difficult to acquire
- C** With effort and experience, I can acquire some of the skills and competencies of my peers and superiors

## 6. How would you rate your cognitive intelligence (grammatical skills, logical reasoning, and humor)?

- A** I possess greater cognitive intelligence than my peers and superiors
- B** My peers and superiors have greater cognitive intelligence compared to mine
- C** My cognitive intelligence is dependent on my experience and exposure to key areas of my occupation

## 7. How would you rate the quality of your education and past experience?

- A** My education and past experience is superior to my peers and superiors
- B** My peers and superiors have worked and studied in larger and more renowned establishments
- C** I work for an organisation where most others have similar education and past experience

## 8. How would you rate the social stature of your family?

- A** My family is more prosperous and educationally accomplished compared to my peers and superiors
- B** My family is less prosperous and educationally accomplished compared to my peers and superiors
- C** I work for an organisation where most others come from a families with a social stature similar to mine

## 9. What do you feel about the development gaps in your last review?

- A** I strongly feel that I have bridged all development gaps that reflected in my last review
- B** I feel that some development gaps still remain
- C** My manager and peers are on the same page as I am about my development gaps

## 10. How do you feel about the work that your team and your organisation does?

- A** I believe that my team and the products and services of my organisation are rather mediocre
- B** I believe that my team and the products and services of my organisation have always been the best-in-class
- C** I believe that my team and the products and services of my organisation are at par with the rest of the market

**Score**

More **A** s: likely to over-rate

More **B** s: likely to under-rate

More **C** s: likely to be balanced



that linking the two is the right approach. A Compensation & Benefits Head from a large organization, who did not want to be named, begs to differ as he says, “How else do you motivate your star performers?” “They are not always good enough to be promoted to the next level. But you need to give them some carrot to keep them engaged until they are ready for the next level, and differential pay is that carrot,” he added.

### Next is what?

Digital media giant Adobe had its last ever annual performance review in 2012. In an interview with a business daily, Donna Morris, Senior Vice President, Human Resources, Adobe, said that the decision was triggered by employee grievances every year. In the new system, managers will give regular feedback to the team

instead of waiting for the year end. The \$16.2 billion Minneapolis based medical technology company, Medtronic has also replaced its annual performance review system based on ratings and bell curves with a quarterly ‘performance

acceleration’ process that focuses on forward looking goals, has no numbers or ratings and includes a one page summary sheet.

While few companies have actually gone to the extent of abolishing annual reviews completely, and we will know if the Adobe experiment is a success only in a few years, many are finding ways to make the existing process more engaging, and less dependent on managers. This begs the question, is there a secret recipe to effective reviews?

### What is the secret ingredient?


While some companies have abolished the process completely, the bottom line is that, in some way or the other these reviews play an important role in defining the culture of an organisation. Sandeep Kohli, Director HR, Ernst & Young Pvt Ltd., says, “A holistic performance management system that focuses on goal setting, feedback, coaching, authentic conversations, is absolutely critical

and indeed is the secret to high-performing companies.”

People are not complaining about the idea of reviewing performance but implementation of the process, and the inefficiencies that arise because of the gaps in implementation. Krishnan agrees, “You cannot simply blame the process; a lot depends on how you implement it. The secret lies in demystifying the process, making it simple and transparent, keeping the conversations going and not avoiding difficult conversations.”

Manmohan Kalsy, Head of HR, Xerox deciphers the approach at his company, “In order to ensure that employees are aware of their targets and are not surprised at the end of the year, we calibrate goals every quarter. We also have a monthly pay-out of variable pay. And since people need to be paid, they also need to be assessed, and hence the system puts pressure on the manager to evaluate performance on a monthly basis.” He, however, added that a monthly assessment is possible only because HR had ensured that teams are not very large, and each manager has a reasonable span of control.

Google, meanwhile, has made peer-reviews an integral part of the process. Besides self-appraisals and manager reviews, employees need to nominate three to eight peers to write their reviews. Managers also assign peers to do their direct report’s review. This makes the process more objective and less dependent on the manager, who might be influenced by personal bias.

Anil Sharma, Vice President-HR, ITC Hotels Division, sums it up, “The secret to a successful performance appraisal process is finding the right fit for your organization, making the process inclusive, being actively involved, aligning individual objectives to organizational objectives, finding the right linkages and evolving with the organisation. The final thing is that successful review system is not about which form or process you use but with how much rigour and fairness you do the appraisal, and it doesn’t happen overnight, it takes continued commitment to build a credible system.” 

# 90%

of performance appraisal processes are inadequate.

(Salary.com)

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# THE APPRAISAL READY RECKONER

## WHAT APPRAISERS SHOULD REMEMBER

### THE DOs >>

- Evaluate employees against pre-defined performance elements. These should be in the form of quantifiable and measurable goals.
- Normalise the appraisal process to ensure consistency in performance reviews done by different managers. Train managers to help them have a similar approach to performance review processes.
- Consider the arguments made by the employee about why he/she deserves a good increment.
- Make sure that your employees know about the criteria on the basis of which they are being evaluated.
- Judge an employee's performance against his KRAs and not by comparing his performance to another employee's.

### THE DON'Ts >>

- Do not base appraisals on third party feedback or hearsay.
- Do not focus only on the weaknesses of your employees while rating their performance.
- Do not ignore an employee's feedback on his performance.
- Do not base your appraisal ratings on the high or low phase of an employee's performance.
- Do not trash an employee's suggestion during the appraisal meeting without listening to his side of the story.

## WHAT APPRAISEES SHOULD REMEMBER

### THE DOs >>

- Discuss with your manager about your past performance. Give clarifications on the low performance areas and highlight your high performance areas wherever the need be.
- Reach out to your HR for clarity on your KRA and the points on the basis of which you will be appraised.
- If you think you deserve better ratings, talk to your manager with sufficient data points to substantiate your claims on your performance.
- During self-appraisal, highlight your initiatives that have benefited the organization. Mention examples or instances of your work contribution under relevant categories.
- Before the appraisal discussion, recall your performance over the last year and make notes about both the high and low performance areas.

### THE DON'Ts >>

- Do not rely on your memory to help you remember the highs and lows of your performance during the year. Document it.
- Do not refuse to sign the appraisal form. If you disagree with your appraiser on certain points, clarify it during the appraisal discussion.
- Do not get into self-praise mode or compare your performance with that of your colleagues. Give fair rankings to yourself.
- Do not fill self-appraisal form as a mere formality. If you cannot make your case, do not expect your manager to do it for you.
- Do not root for your appraisal on the basis of your traits. Performance management is an evaluation of results and not traits.



## WHAT ALBERT EINSTEIN'S MANAGER WOULD HAVE SAID

Einstein's genius cannot be questioned, but if he'd had a performance review in his job as a patent clerk, it might have looked like this, says Peter Norvig



Employee's Name:  
**Albert Einstein**

Supervisor's Name:  
**Dr. Freidrich Haller**

Title: **Patent Clerk  
Third Class**

Location:  
**Bern Patent Office**

Year: **1905**

Overall Rating: **Average**

### Describe the employee's duties and responsibilities and indicate relative priorities of key elements.

This is a patent office, Albert. Your job is to transform written patent applications into clear and precise language and to study applications and pick out the new ideas of an invention. These are the priorities, not rewriting the rules of universe, unifying space and time, unifying radiation and matter or demonstrating the existence of atoms.

### List aspects of the employee's approach that contribute to his/her effectiveness at workplace.

Albert does a good job of processing patent applications. He seems to enjoy his work and is competent. However this year he has devoted much of his time publishing a series of papers. While this is not his primary responsibility, I have to say that he has done reasonably well in this respect.

### List aspects of the employee's approach that require improvement for greater effectiveness at workplace.

You seem to lack the flair for self-promotion. Fortunately, our PR department stepped in and changed your  $L/C2$  equation into a much more marketable  $E=mc^2$ .

### Is the employee ready for a promotion? If yes, please explain.

Based on his performance as a patent clerk, I cannot recommend Albert for a promotion this year.

### Does the employee need additional training? If yes, please explain.

Congratulations for completing your doctoral dissertation in April. I was impressed that Prof. Alfred Kleiner wrote, "Einstein has provided evidence that he is capable of occupying himself successfully with scientific problems." Hence you need no more formal education.

However, based on your file photo above, I would suggest you sign up for "Dress for Success" class. Really, a striped shirt with a plaid suit?

*Adapted, with permission, from Peter Norvig, Director Research, Google Inc.; [www.norvig.com](http://www.norvig.com)*





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# IT IS HARD TO LOOK INTO THE MIRROR

**Imagine the plight of the manager who has to appraise the group that has an inflated view of their skills, writes Abhijit Bhaduri**

**T**ry this out in your organisation some time. Ask the employees how many of them would rate their performance and skills in the 90th percentile or more. Statistically speaking, that should be no more than ten percent of the employees who have been asked the question. But real life is very different from this. A very large percentage will see themselves as members of the hallowed group.

Now imagine the plight of the manager who has to appraise the group that has an inflated view of their skills, and get them grounded.

It's not just in the workplace that we judge ourselves generously. When the weighing

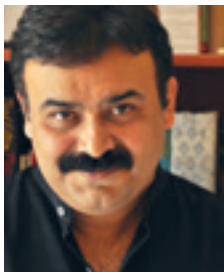
scale tells us that our weight is more than what it ought to be, we blame the scale. When a psychometric instrument tells us something about ourselves that we are uncomfortable with, a person will question the design of the instrument.

In an assessment centre feedback, leaders agree vehemently with the strengths that have been identified. When it comes to the developmental gaps, they will question the sanity of the psychologist who designed it.

Performance appraisals are, perhaps, the most controversial of all processes. Not only is it a time when someone sits in judgement about the quality of your work, but eventually, reward and recognition gets linked to it, and so does the development effort that companies are willing to invest. No one likes to be left out of the room when money is being counted. The goals that we set are also meant to inspire and motivate action. So the foundation for good performance appraisals lies in setting the right number of goals (no more than four in my opinion).

## BEAR IN MIND THREE FACTORS WHEN YOU SET GOALS:

**1** Difficult goals tend to motivate people more than easy goals



**“The goals that we set are meant to inspire and motivate action”**





**The ability to reach a performance appraisal discussion where nothing comes as a surprise to the appraiser is a good measure of how effective a boss has been**

**2** Ensure that critical goals are aligned with what we are naturally inspired to do

**3** Too many goals are as ineffective as having too few goals. Four is a good number of goals to have so that each goal can get 25% of effort

### **Performance appraisal is good feedback for the boss**

The ability of a manager to set goals that are meaningful is a skill. More than that, the ability to reach a performance appraisal discussion where nothing comes as a surprise to the appraiser is a good measure of how effective the boss has been. If the appraisal discussion generates more heat than light, then it may indicate that the appraiser has not tracked feedback throughout the year, and shared it with the appraisee.

Imagine a scenario when someone discovers after a year that his or her manager always felt that the performance was not up to the mark. This is the most common scenario that leads to bitterness. While the poor performance may be a reflection of the appraisee's effort, capability and competency, let us not forget that the reaction of an appraisee is a reflection of the manager's skill as a coach and enabler.

Adobe had recently caused a flutter when they announced that they were planning to do away with appraisals. This was hailed by several people. The naysayers wondered how that would give the organization the ability to segregate different levels of performance. How would increments be differentiated if work output was not, they wondered.

### **Imagine a scenario when someone discovers after a year that his or her manager always felt that the performance was not up to the mark**

The intent behind such a decision is to foster more frequent conversations between the manager and the employee. Without frequent discussions on the what, why and how of work, it can never be motivating enough. Appraisals are not about receiving judgement on the final output. It is about getting feedback and collectively working to improve each step along the way. **PM**

*Abhijit Bhaduri is Chief Learning Officer, Wipro Group. The illustration included with the article is also by him.*



# HOW CAN TECHNOLOGY HELP?

**A well-designed performance management platform can reduce employee turnover, cut employee costs, and increase time spent in strategic activities, reports Vikram Choudhury**

**M**any organisations view technology as the answer to all their performance management woes. A well-designed performance management platform is one that is able to accurately capture an individual's performance across the year, and eliminate all forms of perceptual biases.

Recent trends indicate that Indian companies are rapidly moving away from tedious, paper-based processes to automating the performance management lifecycle. The question is: does the task end simply with automating the process? As Siddhesh Bhoje, Business Head at Persistent Systems, an HR gamification technology

company, puts it, "Merely moving from a paper-based to a technology-based process cannot resolve an organisation's performance management woes."

Many factors come into play in a performance management process. These range from internal factors such as organisational culture and management principles, to external factors such as the type of product or service produced by the firm. A good technology platform is one that not only captures these factors accurately, but is also able to drive and shape them according to the organisation's requirements.

Says Adele Bernard, Head of Marketing, Cloud Unit, Asia Pacific and Japan, at SuccessFactors, an HR technology company, "Research proves that a good performance platform can reduce employee turnover, cut employee costs, and increase time spent in strategic activities." And a 2012 Bersin Consulting report revealed that performance and succession management solutions is the fastest growing segment in the talent management solutions space globally.

## **Gamification is big**

Quite a few gamification technologies have emerged in the performance management space recently. They employ game mechanics to track and motivate performance in employees. IBM and Deloitte are leading the pack among companies that have introduced aspects of gaming into their engagement and

**It is now possible for tech platforms to quantify performance assessment through objective metrics & measures**



performance management strategies.

For instance, employees in these companies receive badges for complying with deadlines or completing tasks, similar to a video game. Another technique fast gaining ground is the concept of leaderboard. Leaderboarding is a technique that allows employees to view other employee's scores, create short-term and long-term individual performance enhancement plans, and compare performance progress across a period of time.

Gartner predicts that approximately 70 per cent of companies across the globe would have adopted some form of gaming technology to augment their performance management strategy by 2014. Persistent System and Wise Cells are two notable players in this niche segment.

### Trends to watch out for

Typically, a performance management solution includes features to set goals and targets, objectify performance metrics, and identify gaps or development areas of an individual and a team. Organisations today need to consider the following trends while selecting a performance management technology.

#### On-premise to cloud:

Most leading technology companies are introducing cloud capabilities in their product suites. Some of the leading performance management technology companies offering cloud-based platforms include IBM-Kenexa, Success Factors, Oracle-Taleo, Saba, and SumTotal.

**Objective goal-setting:** It is now possible for tech platforms to quantify performance assessment through objective metrics and measures. eMee, the gamification platform of Persistent Systems, allows managers to provide virtual gifts to an employee through the course of a performance cycle. These virtual gifts can be quantified at the end of the performance cycle, to arrive at an objective measure. At the same time, a manager can reprimand an employee by giving a virtual banana skin whenever an

employee has underperformed in a project.

#### On-going performance capture:

Rather than keep the process static, many companies want to capture employee performance across the course of the performance cycle. For such firms, IBM-Kenexa and SumTotal offer capabilities such as mobile integration and workflow tracking to ensure that employee performance is accurately captured on an ongoing-basis.

#### Integration with other business

**applications:** Performance management technologies are getting smarter by interacting with other business applications to capture employee performance. This ensures that an employee's performance is tracked accurately and in real-time, eliminating the need for an employee or a manager to rely on memory and judgment to assess performance. Saba's performance management software, for example, integrates with an organisation's learning management system, allowing an employee and manager to devise constructive actions and meaningful conversations.

#### Dynamic

#### configurability:

Technology companies are offering options to change and remodel the components of their performance management strategy across the course

**70%**  
of companies globally will adopt  
gamification technologies by 2014.  
(Gartner)

of the year. Oracle-Taleo's performance management platform, for example, allows an organisation to easily configure review forms, rating scales, and workflows to fit unique functional, organisational, and geographic requirements.

While the possibilities are endless, companies that are looking to implement a performance management technology should start by setting down their key requirements from a performance management process, and identifying the end objectives that the platform needs to achieve. **PM**

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# The Counsellor

Vivek Paranjpe answers professional and ethical dilemmas faced by our readers at their workplace

**I** recently joined a company for a particular project and came prepared with a strategy. However, in the last few months, my role and responsibilities have changed and I now head a completely different project. This transition was very sudden, and I did not get a chance to think and deliberate on the decision. While I do have the expertise to carry out this new project, it does not fit in with my long-term career plan. I have communicated the same to my superiors. However, there has been no initiative to align my goals with that of the organisation. I am tempted to leave and look for options that are more suited to my ultimate goals. Please advise if there is a way to turn this situation in my favour here, or is leaving the only option.

— **Mr Lacking-clarity-in-my-role**

## Dear Mr Lacking-clarity-in-my-role

First and the foremost, you should not join or leave a company based on one project. Your corporate life will be full of multiple roles and several assignments -- some of those you will like, and some you will not. Depending on the business exigencies, the projects and roles do change and people are reassigned. The earlier you understand and accept this reality, the better.

**You will end up working with all types of managers. Learn to deal with realities and take up your grievances appropriately**

You have stated that you do have the required expertise to carry out this new project. My suggestion is that you put in your best, make a success of this project, and get noticed for the excellent work. In this way, the management will become more receptive to your needs, and will help align your career needs with that of the company's objectives. Your complete alignment with the company's objectives has to be the starting point for long-term relationships that are fruitful.

Changing jobs at a young age for a well-qualified professional is not very difficult. However, no one can guarantee the right role or a right project. Always think multiple times before you change a job.

**I** work with a consulting firm and have been performing extremely well for the last two years. My performance feedback conversations have also been very positive, and I have been promoted to a senior position. While I am very excited about this growth, I am also apprehensive about handling the stress that comes with it. Two things are bothering me. Firstly, with this promotion, I will be moving to a position of greater responsibility with a new set of KRAs. How does one manage this responsibility in a new set up where there is greater ambiguity? Secondly, my role transition will take a month, and already my existing team members have started distancing themselves. What is the best way to deal with this behaviour? Also, how can I ensure that I maintain my relationship with my existing team while fostering new ones with the senior management?

— **Mr Promoted-but-stressed**



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**Dear Mr Promoted-but-stressed,**

First, let me congratulate you on your promotion. Now let us deal with the issues that you have raised.

Any transition always comes with some amount of stress, even if it is a positive one, as in your case. I suggest you understand your new role well, and this includes the management expectations from you in this role. Know your new stake-holders: boss, customers, employees, skip level manager, internal partners, vendors, etc.

Understand the competencies, capabilities, knowledge areas, and skills necessary for good performance, acquire them, and start practicing the new competencies. Remember:

**Everything that made you successful in the previous role may not help in the new role. Each role is associated with unique needs and expectations**

everything that made you successful in the previous role may not help in the new role. Each role is associated with unique needs and expectations. A systematic, planned approach, and full alignment with the new bosses will help you minimise your anxieties and stress levels. Ambiguity during the transition is a reality. However, good leaders quickly understand the situation, and make sense out of the chaos and ambiguity. Moreover, as you grow higher in the hierarchy, you will realise that things will become more and more fuzzy.

You have mentioned that your current team members have started distancing themselves from you. In the absence of data, it is difficult for me to comment on this. But it may be good news – perhaps they are busy realigning to their new boss, and you should encourage the same. As a good corporate citizen, you should support such a transition, and gradually fade out, while being available when they need you for support and help. Your informal relationships with the old colleagues will always exist. But the formal working relationships do change, and you should accept this change quickly. You need to

appreciate, accept and transition, and not get stressed out over this.




I work with an automobile company as an HR manager. Given the nature of work, the ratio of female to male employees is skewed. However, the women employees have managed to make a mark and there have been quite a few success stories. Recently, one of the women employees approached me with a problem. Her senior manager has been harassing her by calling and messaging her at odd hours. While there has been no blatant attempt at sexual harassment, she feels disturbed by these calls and messages. Since this is a primarily male-dominated industry, the company does not have clearly defined policies for such situations. How do I help this employee in this scenario?

— **Ms Unsure-if-its-sexual harassment**

**Dear Ms Unsure-if-its-sexual-harassment**

In a male-dominated work environment, you have to be extra careful about ensuring that the women feel valued, secured, and are included in the main stream of the company. You have stated that the women have made a mark for themselves and are creating success stories, and I am not surprised about this.

Let us not go in to the definition of sexual harassment. However, let us accept some realities: an unusual behaviour of a manager calling or messaging someone at odd hours without a good 'business reason' will certainly be construed as harassment, whether it is a woman or a man at the receiving end. If it is a senior manager exhibiting such an abnormal behaviour, it is very natural that the employee will feel stressed.

I suggest that this manager be counselled immediately and told not to indulge in such behaviour. Is it a case of sexual harassment or not will depend a lot on the content of his messages and the reasons for such abnormal calls. I will also suggest that you create a sexual harassment policy for your company and ensure that your leaders and managers are trained on the same. 

---

**Vivek Paranjpe** is Consultant & Strategic HR Advisor to Reliance Industries. Allow Vivek to clear your career and professional dilemmas by writing to us at [ask@peoplesmatters.in](mailto:ask@peoplesmatters.in)



# Does Contract Labour Management give you heartburn?

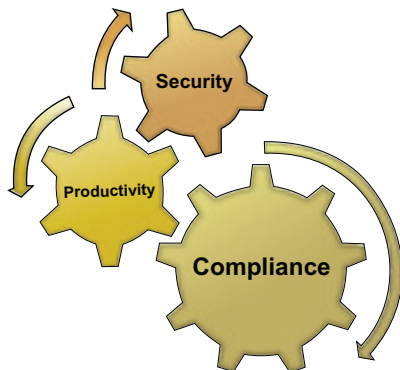


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# People - always the biggest asset for an organisation

A conversation with **Rajeshwar Tripathi, Chief People Officer – Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd.-** Automotive & Farm Equipment Sector on how people management acquires a top position in the priority list of the organisation

## **Q** What have been the top 3 learnings through your career journey as a human resource professional?

Reflecting across the span of my entire career of 28 years, one of the most significant learning is that one has to really believe with conviction, in letter and spirit, that people are the most important asset for the organisation. Although this has become a cliché and a fashion statement, but it is extremely difficult to demonstrate through actions and behaviours. Even in the best of times, the best organisations need a huge amount of conviction in believing and practicing that people are their biggest asset. It reflects in everything that organisations do, particularly when it comes to the trade-offs in difficult situations and gets tested out when the chips are down. Business is cyclical by its inherent nature and there will be downturns. Therefore, while you claim that your people are the greatest asset; how you treat them at that point in time is the moot question. If the same people who got you excellent results are not able to give you the same results today, how do you treat them? I am not suggesting that under-performers or non-performance should not be dealt with. But, do you still believe in your people, or your trust and belief also becomes cyclical like the business cycles?

The second big learning without which this profession cannot survive is, stepping

into the shoes of the business or partnering business, which has again, become a very clichéd phrase amongst HR professionals, but in reality, it is one of the most difficult and also the most important things. There are several degrees of difficulty, the first one being constraint of time. One will have to sacrifice and give a lot of one's time to the business, including personal time. Generally there is a huge amount of work to do in one's core function and yet one will have to learn the ropes of the business and do it as well as one's line colleagues. The second degree of difficulty is that organisations have become very complex with businesses not just being single stream business, but diversified businesses, along-with their off-shoots. In M&M Automotive & Farm Equipment business, for example from grapes to a tractor to a SUV, the kind of diversity in the overall business really tests one's band-width on understanding the nuances of each of the business verticals. The third degree of difficulty for HR professionals is the pace of change, which is taking a toll. It is characterised by a huge amount of dynamism. The practitioners of the function will not be able to respond if they don't understand the business. One very big reason why even very experienced and seasoned professionals are faltering at the top is the speed of change. The learning out of my own experience is also that partnering with business will not happen

### IN BRIEF

Partnering with business, understanding the challenges of your leaders and treating your team well are essential for HR to flourish



simply because one has the intent. One will have to make concerted efforts in preparing oneself and give time, to be able to partner the business.

The third important learning is that the HR function needs to have a clear understanding that everyone in the organisation, who is managing small or large teams, is fundamentally a people manager. At the end of the day, what does a CEO or a functional head or a line manager do? They all manage people and that is a significant chunk of their overall role. This aspect of the function no more remains the domain of the trained HR professionals only. Then, where does the core HR function come into play? I think HR's role lies in its ability to prepare the organisation and its managers to manage people well and not doing it all alone. That's a paradigm shift in thought. Building that kind of an organisational capability becomes one of the significant strengths of the organisation.

**Q What are the key emerging trends that you see with respect to the way people are managed in organisations?**

The processes and principles related to people management 5 to 10 years back have undergone a paradigm shift. Today, it is more about empowerment and less about supervision.

Secondly, it is more about engaging people rather than trying to achieve something as a result of pressure, fear or duress. Engagement brings about much powerful performance as compared to the other conventional ways. This is a big shift in management thought.

The third thing is the whole aspect of diversity that is coming into the workplaces. Although in India, for various reasons, we are obsessed with gender diversity, but the social constructs beyond gender, which form the larger context of diversity & inclusion, have a highly increased appreciation and the advantages are very visible. As a society, there is much more awareness around the differently-abled people, regional diversity, etc. As a country, politically we may have a long way to go, but organisations and corporations in India today, have definitely come a long way.

The fourth very important trend is the

ongoing debate around a manager vs. a leader. Unlike in the past, the current thought is that as you grow in the hierarchy, it is leadership, which assumes a higher place. Earlier there was a very big focus on managerial capability rather than the leadership capability.

The fifth trend that I must not fail to highlight is the role of technology. It has radically changed the workplace. I can be in any part of the country or the world, but I am still connected and still working.

Last but not the least, organisations and workplaces have become more globalised. Whether you have a global presence or not, whether you are exporting or not, you are working in a globalised environment because of the connectivity, exposure and interdependence. Some socio-economic or political event in some corner of the world can potentially impact your business. These are some of the changes that I see.

**Partnering with business will not happen simply because one has the intent. It requires concerted efforts and time in preparing oneself**

**Q What are the top 3 people related metrics that you track?**

The 3 metrics that I constantly monitor and keep an eye on are employee engagement, talent pipeline and the organisation's performance level on our well defined competency framework.

**Q What's your elevator pitch to justify investment of time and effort in building strong people practices?**

The truly differentiating factors for a business in the market place are all people related. Technology and other capabilities can be acquired or built over a period of time, but the people related differentiating factors take a long time to build or replicate. **am**



**CHIP LUMAN**
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## WANT TO ADVOCATE FOR HR? BETTER FIND SOMETHING TO SAY

As a young HR manager striving to gain influence with my line clients I made the argument for a bigger title to get there. I complained to my boss that all of those directors and VP's weren't listening because my status in the organization was lower. I didn't expect the response he gave me, but it was sage advice I've employed to this day. He said, "If you have something of value to say, people will listen to you." It's pretty simple. In order to be heard, you have to be able to demonstrate that you understand key business objectives and the needs of whomever you are working with. Yet, figuring out what to say is a challenge for many HR professionals. Rather than advocating for the HR function as a whole, it is much more effective to highlight the actual results the department brings and its value to the entire company.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Chip Luman is the Chief Operating Officer at HireVue where he leverages more than 20 years of human resources, general management and operations experience to ensure the success of HireVue's customers. Chip has held executive HR roles in the F500, led video game software development and is an adjunct professor at his alma mater, Penn State.

While many focus on the need to get HR a seat in the boardroom, many chief human resources officers are already there. According to a recent PricewaterhouseCoopers study, most CEOs reported that their company's CHRO or an equivalent position is one of their direct reports. Still, the problem remains that lower-level HR professionals typically don't benefit from their CHRO's status and struggle to understand their place in the organization.

That's because HR is sometimes viewed as highly administrative. While it certainly contains those aspects, such as ensuring compliance, the main goal of the job is making sure the right people are in the right positions and are advancing the company's objectives. To improve HR's company-wide

standing, we need to focus less on advocating for the function itself and place greater emphasis on the talent aspect of the role.

Another way to better serve the business is for each HR professional to spend time doing a line job at their organization. In doing so, HR can gain a better understanding of what the company does and how their role fits into larger organizational objectives. It also provides an opportunity to use the skills that they coach other people to use, while gaining exposure to key business functions.

In the end, the value of HR is measured by the talent the function brings into the organization and its ability to develop and retain those individuals, and HR professionals need a way to demonstrate the results of their efforts. While finding, hiring and developing the right people for the company is obviously important, HR needs to explain how those people will improve business operations. The growing use of HR analytics is a step in the right direction. The ability to have real data about time to hire, quality of hire, amount of time employees stay in their roles, the number of internal candidates who move into higher-level positions, and a wealth of other metrics can have a significant impact on HR's standing and ensure that all HR professionals appreciate the impact that their job has on the entire business.

Again, executives in the C-suite don't care about your title, as long as you have something to say. When HR is able to demonstrate a firm understanding of the company and express what it is doing to enhance operations, executives will listen. **pm**





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# Be a star recruiter: reduce cost and increase efficiency

Technology can greatly reduce costs and time taken thereby allowing recruiters to become more efficient and quality-focused, says **Balaji Ganesh, CEO, Adrenalin eSystems Limited**

BY STAFF CORRESPONDENT

**O**wing to recent economic events, recruiting organisations are facing greater challenges compared to the scenario a couple of years back. After the economic downturn, jobs became scarce and there are more candidates vying for fewer jobs. With a large number of equally qualified applicants to choose from, the quantum of work for a recruiter has increased manifold. The bar on quality is rising, thereby making recruiting processes more complex and demanding.

**What are the primary challenges a recruiter faces during the recruitment process?**

The typical recruitment lifecycle involves identifying the talent pool, posting a job opening, receiving applications, and selection through tests and interviews. In case of hiring for senior positions, the processes are even more rigorous and time intensive, involving additional costs of travel and accommodation.

The complexity of assessments has increased,

through new shortlisting mechanisms such as psychometric tests. Given the current economic environment, recruiters have to identify potential talent from a bigger candidate pool, shortlist best-fit talent from a large number of applications, manage logistics and schedules, and conduct the paperwork needed to complete the process.

**What are the key areas of cost and time investment in the recruiting process?**

There are multiple parts of the recruiting process that involve significant investment of cost and time. They can be classified under scheduling, sourcing, logistics, and paperwork management.

Scheduling involves matching calendars of the interviewer and candidates and finalising timeslots for written rounds and in-person or telephonic interviews. While managing schedules, in itself, is a complicated task, what makes scheduling even more complex are unplanned changes and alterations.

Motivating passive candidates to apply for a job opportunity is also a big challenge for recruiters as the rules of engagement for passive candidates are much different from the ones for active candidates.

**While choosing a technology, an organisation needs to identify challenges in the recruitment process and find the right technology to address them**





Logistics management is also an area that needs significant investment of time and cost for a hiring organisation. Added to that, managing logistics becomes more complicated if the candidates and interviewers are based out of different cities.

For multi-location recruitments and candidate sourcing, the recruiter typically manages the entire logistical lifecycle of the process, starting from schedule mapping, travel bookings, food and accommodation. Travel and logistics form a significant part of the time and cost involved in a recruitment process.

Lastly, a recruiter is also responsible for managing the paperwork formalities in the process that involves, among other things, creating and disbursing offer letters to selected candidates.



#### **What challenges does a recruiter face with existing recruiting technologies?**

Organisations can reduce logistics costs and optimize productivity to a great extent through the use of a virtual talent acquisition infrastructure. Many candidates, especially in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities in India, do not have access to the essential infrastructure for video conferencing. For a company that wants to be an equal opportunity employer, reaching candidates in remote locations is not possible through such conferencing facilities which are available mainly in Tier 1 cities. Though there was a shift from video conference to internet based live video interviewing, it has its own set of limitations. Internet based live video interviewing has key essential requirements, such as a web camera, good internet connectivity, and voice infrastructure.

Most organisations streamline the applicant tracking and paperwork management as part of the process, through recruiting platforms. A recruiter, however, has to manage a number of technology platforms, including the HRMS, internal and external portals, partner portals, talent assessment software, and other niche products such as college and university management software



#### **How can a recruiter overcome technology challenges to make the recruiting process more efficient and inexpensive?**

While technology can greatly reduce cost and time from the recruitment process, an organisation should be judicious with the selection of the right technology. While choosing a technology, an organisation needs to identify challenges in the recruitment process and find the right technology to address them. The HR technology landscape is witnessing a transformation and service companies are launching technology products that address these inefficiencies.

### **Organisations can reduce logistics costs and optimize productivity to a great extent through the use of a virtual talent acquisition infrastructure**

Adrenalin eSystems has tried to address these challenges through its soon to be launched recruitment platform, HR-ATM (Any Time Manpower). It is a kiosk, similar to a banking ATM machine that serves as a one-stop integrated shop for the recruitment lifecycle.

Through the HR ATM, candidates can search for jobs, apply for advertised positions, and appear in job interviews and receive the offer, all from the same location. The ATM also provides options for a candidate to appear in written tests in real-time. The ATM eliminates costs in the scheduling and logistics parts of the recruitment process.

For a recruiter, the ATM integrates with all internal recruiting platforms, and also with external social media and job portals. It allows for the creation and administration of customised tests, such as psychometric tests. The platform will be particularly helpful for organisations in reaching out to candidates in remote locations. Lastly, the technology also administers the paperwork management component of the recruiting process by providing features to print offer letters on the go. Such a technology, that provides an end to end integrated talent acquisition infrastructure therefore, can greatly eliminate the time and cost components of a recruitment process, allowing a recruiter to invest more time in quality and efficiency. 



# The secrets behind a successful M&A

Days before the Sun-Taro merger was called off, *People Matters* spoke to **Dr. Gavin Watkins** and **Vivek Nath**, of **Towers Watson**, on **synergy, integration and governance** – the key pillars of a successful deal. Excerpts:

BY STAFF CORRESPONDENT

**People involved in an M&A deal are generally picked up on a project basis and the same people may not necessarily be a part of the next deal. In such cases, how can organisations ensure that the tacit knowledge gained during the process is made to optimal use?**

**Gavin Watkins (GW):** It depends on how frequently an organisation is involved in a merger and acquisition (M&A) activity. Large firms such as GE have the luxury of having a full-time M&A team. It gets more complicated for conglomerates because a deal in one industry may be quite different to a deal in another industry. So, it can be difficult when there is a lack of frequency. There are companies which, even when they are not doing deals, maintain their M&A bench strength. They keep educational programs running that expose new joiners to M&A concepts and process. Even if a company isn't doing deals frequently, from an education point of view, it is better to keep a state of readiness that will make it easier to move quickly. The last thing a company wants is to be saddled with a

brand new M&A team that doesn't know the rules of the game.

**The success of a deal rests primarily on the synergy and how seamlessly the integration takes place. How should companies address this, and how can HR play a pro-active role here?**

**Vivek Nath (VN):** As organisations, in their bid to acquire or build assets, opt for M&A they cannot simply acquire an asset and move on to the next acquisition. In the lack of synergy, different acquired units would function as separate entities within the organisation without bringing in the value add that it was supposed to. It is here that HR can play a pro-active role in institutionalising a policy that helps integrate various operations.

Purely from an Indian perspective, I do not think that HR in India is institutionalized vis-à-vis the M&A process. There are variations in practice across industry as to when HR gets involved in the M&A process. In some cases the HR doesn't really come to the table when the deal is being announced

## IN BRIEF

The involvement of HR in the M&A process is crucial to mitigate the risks and address potential pitfalls in new M&A projects before it is too late

**“HR can play a key role in identifying if there is a cultural mismatch between two companies and devising ways of managing the differences before it is too late”**

Dr. Gavin Watkins, Director, Client Development Group, Asia-Pacific





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## “It is important for organisations to understand why they need to have a proper framework in place. The intuitive way of doing business in India, doesn’t work internationally”

Vivek Nath, Managing Director, Towers Watson India

and is more involved in the interpretation of it. HR should take a leaf out of how GE has institutionalised the process.

**GW:** Despite their importance in the process of integrating two different companies and often cultures there are certain challenges that HR often faces: firstly HR often isn’t involved in M&A discussions at an early stage; secondly, often they are not well represented on the team that conducts and seals the deal. Importantly, HR can play a key role in identifying if there is a cultural mismatch between the two companies and devising ways of managing the differences before it is too late.



### Talking of the new phase of integrations, how important is it to have governance strategies in place?

**GW:** The problem with governance is that it sounds much more daunting than it is. The hard part is to acknowledge that appropriate governance strategies are critical in big deals. Whether a company believes in a centralised or de-centralised mode of operation, it needs to have some form of compensation and benefits governance. There are four areas that I believe to be absolutely critical:

1. The companies have to be clear about their global compensation and benefits philosophy i.e. how they intend to oversee their compensation and benefits arrangements from a global point of view.
2. This requires there to be appropriate guidelines for the different aspects of compensation and benefits globally.
3. There should be absolute clarity on the expectations of the head office in relation to compensation and benefits eg. approval processes etc. Similarly, the issues on which local offices have full autonomy or no autonomy should also be clarified.


4. Have clarity about different stakeholders and their responsibilities so that people in key positions know what each other’s responsibilities are and who is accountable for what. Governance responsibility should be fully documented.

5. Have a small number of key HR metrics that are aligned with the key business metrics. These should be based on what really matters to the organisation.

**VN:** I think it is really important for organisations to understand why they need to have a proper framework in place. The intuitive way of doing business in India, which most of us are used to, doesn’t work internationally. There are huge financial risks involved. It is about understanding where the synergies are, where the risks fall, and then designing the right framework that works for an organisation. I think organisations have started working in this direction.



### Once the deal is struck, what are the challenges that companies face in setting up a clear governance structure?

**GW:** Within organisations there are different stake holders. Internal stakeholders such as HR, Finance, Legal are at a ‘peer’ level. The people in these roles and at these levels typically do not report to each other or take instructions from each other. The governance isn’t the sole responsibility of Finance, HR, Risk or Legal. It has to be a joint cross-functional effort because that is the only way you can get risk management and opportunity management right. The most difficult part is the first step of getting these various stakeholders to work together to identify and manage the various HR risks and opportunities. 



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# Changing rules of talent management

Employees are the company's core competitive advantage if proper talent management strategies are implemented. Only then does this potential competitive advantage become real

BY DR. A.K. BALYAN & AMIT KUMAR

## IS THE 'WAR FOR TALENT' STILL A REALITY?

Many companies strengthen their talent management strategies as they recognise that lack of their most precious employees might confine their future growth. Therefore, the most successful and admired companies offer great working conditions and pay differentiated compensation packages. Even though employee retention is costly, talent departure and shortage puts companies in an even worse situation.

Several years of economic downturn in the subsequent years and high unemployment rates might suggest that the battle for talent will not intensify, yet in reality, in many employment categories, demand for talented workforce grossly outmatches supply. In this inconsistent world, the company's success is restricted by how quickly they can access and deploy required knowledge at acceptable costs.

## MANAGING EMPLOYEE TURNOVER: CHANGING RULES OF THE GAME

The old goal of HR management - to minimise overall employee turnover - needs to be replaced by a new goal: to influence who leaves and when.

Harvard Business Essentials (2004) estimates turnover cost to be about one-third the new person's salary, while among managerial employees, estimates are in the range of one to two times the departing employee's annual salary including costs of recruiting, interviewing, and training

replacement, effect on workload and morale, customer satisfaction and last but not least, is the loss of knowledge. The most successful and admired companies offer a great a work environment that attracts and retains talent.

Managing retention costs is a fundamental step towards more successful talent management practices and provides notable payoffs for organisations. This reinforces the argument to put workforce planning and talent management at the heart of business strategy and therefore, get a bigger share in the senior management's time budget.

A survey conducted in the United States revealed that the Generation Y (born after 1980) influenced by changes in technology, Internet and information overload poses a very particular demographic challenge. This generation demands more flexibility, more meaningful jobs, higher rewards, better work-life balance and more professional freedom in comparison to older employees. Today, they represent 12 percent of the US workforce and are substantially harder to manage than their predecessors.

### IN BRIEF

Managing retention costs and a shift in focus from minimizing employee turnover to influencing who leaves and when, are steps towards successful talent management

**Success of HR analytics lies in the ability to trace a link from inward looking 'people perspective' to outward looking 'financial perspective'**





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Dr. A.K. Balyan



Amit Kumar

### OBSTACLES FOR THE HR FUNCTION

As no other global trend in the recent years was considered as significant as competition for talent, companies started to invest heavily in the implementation of HR processes and systems. Nevertheless, talent management is still considered as a short-term problem rather than an integral part of a long-term business strategy. McKinsey Quarterly (2008) conducted a research about the role and perceived responsibilities of HR teams by line managers (LM) and HR professionals. The researchers concluded that despite the increased efforts and time invested into proper organisation of HR functions, their impact is in decline and recognition by LM is not in line with the view of HR professionals.


In a similar survey that we conducted recently, amongst a small cross section of line managers working in the Delhi and NCR region, the results were refreshingly different and positive. A clear majority disagreed with two of the statements that we asked: HR lacks the capabilities to develop talent strategies aligned with business objectives, and HR is an administrative department, not strategic business partner. Moreover, an overwhelming majority agreed that HR function has helped their organisation face the challenges effectively during adverse conditions. The respondents also believed that HR's strategic contribution has increased substantially today than what it was 5 years ago, and the upward trend is likely to continue. These findings

paint a promising picture regarding the impact that HR professionals have started to make and are likely to make in the times to come.

### THE FUTURE OF TALENT MANAGEMENT: CLOUD AND ANALYTICS

Until recently, companies typically conducted performance management, career development, goal setting, compensation and succession management using paper forms, PowerPoint presentations and spreadsheets filled with half-completed, manually entered employee reviews and profiles. HR departments would often spend months pulling together data needed for compensation decisions and succession planning. This left HR in the unenviable position of trying to engage leaders in "strategic" talent conversations using clumsy paper binders full of questionable information.

However, nowadays, talent management is shifting from fixed, highly static in-house enterprise platforms to dynamic online, cloud-based systems. The use of cloud technology is enabling HR organisations to fundamentally change the role they play within their companies. But, the technology by itself does not create this change. HR leaders must effectively use the technology to drive more business relevant conversations with line leaders. Talent decisions will be the key differentiator to competitive advantage and the depth and astuteness of utilisation of HR analytics will determine the relative superiority of talent decisions. The success of HR analytics lies in whether they are able to trace a link from the inward-looking 'people perspective' to the outward-looking 'financial perspective'.

HR professionals must therefore, develop the skills required to seek out connections where none exist. So, will companies where HR leverages the power of cloud analytics to align practices to strategy execution, be the ones which emerge as future leaders? It is a journey which HR in companies should embark on and see for themselves! 

**The use of cloud technology is enabling HR to fundamentally change the role they play. But, HR leaders must effectively use this technology to drive business**

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*Dr. A.K. Balyan is MD & CEO of Petronet-LNG Ltd  
Amit Kumar is Manager HR, ONGC*



## ATTENTION HR PROFESSIONALS AND BUSINESS LEADERS!

### MTHR Global invites you to the Launch of “Talent Economics – The Fine Line Between Winning and Losing the Global War for Talent” by Gyan Nagpal



Talent Economics maps out what the workforce will look like in 2020 and beyond, for key economies across the globe. It also lends a spotlight on workforce trends that no government or business leader can afford to ignore. At the same time, the book highlights how workforces differ sharply from region to region. **Presenting data from 45 countries, the book uses economic inquiry - the study of how the forces of supply and demand allocate scarce resources - as a discipline to present a brand new perspective for finding and retaining talent.**



Gyan Nagpal is an award winning talent strategist and bestselling author, who is deeply invested in researching ongoing changes to the global talent pool. He is based in Singapore, as CEO and Principal at PeopleLENS Global Associates.

These Events, provide opportunities for social and business networking, all in MTHRG's unique blend of learning, fun, entertainment and camaraderie. **Get engaged, enriched and empowered at Talent Economics: Where business strategy and HR meet!**  
*These Sessions are complimentary! All sessions from 18:30 to 20:30 hrs followed by refreshments.*

Date	Location	Venue
8th March	Pune	Ista Hotel
9th March	Mumbai	The Park, Navi Mumbai
13th March	Gurgaon	The Oberoi (Invitation only for Senior Executives)
15th March	Bengaluru	Ista Hotel
16th March	Hyderabad	Ista Hotel

*Block the dates on your calendar and send your confirmation at the earliest .*

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## The 2013 Leadership Development Conference

Organised by: **The Conference Board India**

### Accelerating the Development of Leaders in India

**Speakers:** Rebecca L. Ray Ph.D., Senior Vice President, Human Capital, The Conference Board; Ajay Srinivasan, CEO, Aditya Birla Financial Services Group; Abhijit Bhaduri, Chief Learning Officer, WIPRO; Richard S. Wellins, Ph.D., SVP, DDI; Smita Affinwalla, Head of Consulting, DDI India; Subash Rao, Director - HR, Cisco Systems; Tapan Mitra, CHRO, Apollo Tyres; Rajendra Sud, Business Head, Max New York Life; Subhankar Roy Chowdhury, Executive Director, HR, Lenovo and more.

Organisations across the globe realise the need to have an able leader at the helm to steer the organisation. The focus on leadership development lends an impetus to the employee engagement initiatives and also helps an organisation to effectively deal with gaps in the talent pipeline as



*Panel Discussion at the Leadership Conference*

well as reduce costs associated with employee turnover. In fact, it is believed that leadership development increases people's ability to respond to unpredictable business environments. The emphasis on developing human capital apart from those of senior executives and high potentials helps the organisation unlock the potential of its talent pool and magnify its agility and this is what is required by an organisation of tomorrow. [▶](#)

#### Key Takeaways

- How does leadership development improve a company's bottom line?
- Does leadership development create organisational alignment that attracts and retains talent?

## Annual Inspired Leadership Conference 2013

Organised by: **School of Inspired Leadership**

### Inspired leadership within multi-generational teams

**Speakers:** Anil Sachdev, Founder & CEO, SOIL; Justice R.S. Sodhi; Laura E. Kohler, Senior Vice President, Human Resources, Kohler Co.; Rahul Khosla, Managing Director, Max India; Simon Goland, Faculty, Bainbridge Graduate Institute, Seattle, USA; Munish Sharda, Director, Sales & Distribution, Aviva; Manik M. Jolly, Director, SunEdison; Dr. Bhure Lal, IAS Officer; Sumit Mitra, Executive Vice President, Corporate Human Resources, Godrej Industries Limited and Associate Companies; Dr. Alok Bhardwaj, Senior Vice President, Canon India and more.

The two day conference was an endeavour to understand the nuances of leadership that multi-generational teams need, to succeed in today's fast changing environment. Welcoming the delegates, Anil Sachdev said, "The pillars of inspired leadership are mindfulness, ethics, compassion, sustain-



*Rahul Khosla addressing the delegates at the conference*

ability and diversity. If businesses are to move towards a bright future, they will have to achieve excellence in execution to realise their vision. For that we need to support different generations present in the workforce." The event also had a Young Leaders contest - exploring issues on leadership and followership. A Street Play contest around the theme-- building a society on values, concluded the event. [▶](#)

#### Key Takeaways

- Multigenerational diversity is not a problem, but an opportunity.
- Inspired leadership driven by values and ethics is critical to build a sustainable organisation.



## NASSCOM India Leadership Forum 2013

Organised by: **NASSCOM**

### Imagineering the future: Disruptive innovation for sensible growth

**Speakers:** Aditya Ghosh, President & Executive Director, IndiGo Airlines; Amitabh Bachchan, Bollywood Actor; Arvind Thakur, CEO, NIIT Technologies; Deep Kalra, CEO, Makemytrip.com; Travis Bradberry, Author & Writer; Rahul Dravid, ex-Indian cricketer; Jacob Lamm, EVP, CA Technologies; Aruna Jayanthi, CEO, Capgemini India; Sachin Pilot, Member of Parliament, Government of India; Rajendra Pawar, Chairman, NASSCOM and more.

The focus of this annual event by NASSCOM this year was 'hyperspecialization' and how global uncertainties, is business better than the mood. With over 1500 delegates in attendance, leaders from across the globe spoke in sessions on leadership in uncertain times and the emerging

opportunities in the current economic scenario. Speaking on the occasion, Rajendra Pawar, of NASSCOM said, "NILF in its 20 years has mirrored the evolution and growth of the IT-BPO industry in India. The industry has built a unique value proposition for global and Indian customers – adding value and access to



Amitabh Bachchan speaks at ILF 2013

specialist skills." With an equitable representation from Parliamentarians, the forum was a home-ground for great learning. For a growing economy like ours, Sachin Pilot put it aptly, "India continues to be a great country for business with strong fundamentals and huge opportunities to offer. Hence, the Indian IT

industry needs to shoulder greater responsibility in social sectors like health and education." **Pm**

#### Key Takeaways:

- Will 'Big Data' drive India's future discoveries and frame social debates?
- Do leaders believe that value has surpassed cost as a deal clincher?

When the discussion is about the workplace future, it becomes a source of great learning and engagement for most professionals across industries. At the World HRD Congress 2013, the cornerstone for sessions throughout was the changing paradigms of today's workforce. What needs to be understood here is that a more diverse workforce means new challenges in recruiting, managing, engaging and growing the human resource of an organization. But it is for employers to be up to the task for the payoff to be significant. Employers can leverage the experi-

## World HRD Congress 2013 – 21st Edition

Organised by: **World HRD Congress**

### Getting to know the future of work

**Speakers:** Anita Ramachandran, Managing Director, Cerebrus Consultants; Amrut Rath, VP - HR, Bajaj Auto; Surender Mehta, Sr. VP - HR, Vodafone India; Divakar Kaza, President - HR, Lupin; Vineet Soni, Head - Performance & Rewards, Tata Motors; Judhajit Das, Chief Human Resources, ICICI Prudential Life Insurance; Shyam C. Raman, Senior VP - Group HR, Murugappa Group; Emrana Sheikh, EVP-Human Capital, Mahindra & Mahindra; Dr. Adil Malia, Group President HR, Essar Group; Rajesh Padmanabhan, Corporate VP, Head - HR, Capgemini India and more.

ences and backgrounds of a diverse workforce for a broader exchange of ideas, knowledge and opportunities. Another interesting take on the future workplaces is that, while advancements in technology make it increasingly easy for employers

to offer flexible schedules, flexible schedules may not work for every company culture. Employers who want to offer this benefit should take a good look at their company culture and see what may need to change first. **Pm**

#### Key Takeaways:

- How prepared are we for the nextgen workforce - the 2020 workplace?
- What is the future of workplace learning as companies head towards cloud learning and ambient intelligent HRD?



## UPCOMING TRAININGS

Powered by

TITLE	DATE	LOCATION	LAST DATE TO REGISTER
Lean Six Sigma Green Belt	7 - 10 March	Mumbai	6 March
ITIL® V3 2011 Foundation	9 - 10 March	Hyderabad	8 March
Certified Learning & Development Manager Program	9 - 10 March	Chennai	8 March
PRINCE2® Foundation & Practitioner Certificate Program	11 - 15 March	Bengaluru	10 March
Balanced ScoreCard Certification	12 - 13 March	Delhi - NCR	11 March
Leadership Simulation Workshop	13 - 15 March	Mumbai	12 March
Dr. Edward De Bono's Six Thinking Hats®	13 March	Delhi - NCR	12 March
Crucial Conversations	14 - 15 March	Bengaluru	13 March
Coaching Essentials for Leaders	21 - 22 March	Delhi - NCR	20 March
Social Media Marketing Workshop	21 - 22 March	Bengaluru	20 March
Facilitate the Facilitator	21 - 23 March	Pune	15 March
Certified OD Specialist	22 - 23 March	Mumbai	21 March
Sosie Certification Workshop	28 - 30 March	Delhi - NCR	27 March

For more information visit [www.bookmytrainings.com](http://www.bookmytrainings.com)

## Upcoming Events March - April 2013

March  
5<sup>th</sup>**Power Stories of Power Women****Organizer:** People Matters**Venue:** Gurgaon**Who should attend:** CXOs, Aspiring Women Leaders**Event theme:** The Diversity Agenda - Building a Level Playing WorkplaceMarch  
6<sup>th</sup>**Diversity Summit****Organizer:** NASSCOM**Venue:** Hyderabad**Who should attend:** Business Heads, Diversity Managers**Event theme:** Building partnerships to leverage India's diversityMarch  
8-16<sup>th</sup>**Talent Economics: Business strategy meets HR****Organizer:** MTHR Global**Venue:** Pune, Mumbai, Gurgaon, Bengaluru, Hyderabad**Who should attend:** HR Heads, Talent Acquisition Managers**Event theme:** Bringing HR to the fore in the boardroomMarch  
21<sup>st</sup>**AIMA Fourth Global Innovation Conference****Organizer:** AIMA**Venue:** New Delhi**Who should attend:** CXOs, Innovation Leaders**Event theme:** Brainstorming on some breakthrough innovations in functional areasMarch  
22<sup>nd</sup>**Conference on Corporate Sustainability****Organizer:** CII**Venue:** Hyderabad**Who should attend:** CXOs, CSR Managers**Event theme:** Sustaining with the help of scientific strategies combined with people effortsApril  
5<sup>th</sup>**GIC Conclave 2013****Organizer:** NASSCOM**Venue:** Bengaluru**Who should attend:** CXOs, Technology Leaders**Event theme:** Creating a Global Leadership Pipeline: The Agenda of GICsApril  
26<sup>th</sup>**Strategic HR Summit****Organizer:** SiliconIndia**Venue:** Bengaluru**Who should attend:** HR Heads, Technology Leaders**Event theme:** Keeping your organizations agile for ongoing changeApril  
30<sup>th</sup>**Towards Breaking the Cycle of Stress for Optimising Productivity****Organizer:** CII**Venue:** Kolkata**Who should attend:** Sr. Professionals, Team Managers**Event theme:** Systematic ways of addressing stress at the workplace

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



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## Jobs of the week



**Omnitech Infosolutions Limited**  
Recruitment - Head/ Mgr  
**Location:** Mumbai  
**Job ID:** 12823400  
**Description:** Solely responsible for maintaining client relation and handling the large key accounts from small to large size.



**LSI India Research and Development Private Limited**  
Human Resource Business Partner  
**Location:** Pune  
**Job ID:** 12541633  
**Description:** The ideal candidate should have diverse experience in Employee Relations, Organization Development and Performance Consulting.



**Amazon Development Centre India Private Limited**  
Recruitment - Head/ Mgr  
**Location:** Hyderabad  
**Job ID:** 12485238  
**Description:** Create detailed plans with clearly defined objectives, desired outcomes, diversity plan, and calendar of events.



**Gebbs Software International Ltd.**  
US IT Recruiter  
**Location:** Mumbai  
**Job ID:** 12315911  
**Description:** Requirements gathering, analyzing and sourcing candidates as per the client's specifications.



**Golden Opportunities Pvt. Ltd**  
HR Business Partner  
**Location:** Chennai  
**Job ID:** 12770967  
**Description:** Must have good experience in all of the following mandated areas Grievance addressing, employee engagement, retention etc.



**Manokam**  
Head-HR  
**Location:** Pune  
**Job ID:** 12709518  
**Description:** Looking for dynamic, matured & enterprising senior HR professional to be stationed at Pune.



**UnitedHealth Group**  
Functional Consultant  
**Location:** Gurgaon  
**Job ID:** 12898755  
**Description:** Assist in the design and implementation of new or changes to existing HRIS Platform in order to support our International business.



**Allscripts**  
Director Talent Acquisition  
**Location:** Pune  
**Job ID:** 12933515  
**Description:** Talent Acquisition Leader for India has overall responsibility for attracting and hiring talent for India across all business functions for Allscripts a leader in Healthcare IT.





## Jobs of the week



**Kelly Services India Private Limited**  
Sr Recruiter  
**Location:** Bangalore  
**Job ID:** 12438296  
**Description:** Looking for senior candidates with End to End Recruitment experience in ITeS - BPO/KPO/Analytics.



**CareerNet Technologies Private Limited**  
Payroll/ Compensation - Head/ Mgr  
**Location:** Pune  
**Job ID:** 12925988  
**Description:** 6-8 years of experience in handling payroll of a mid-sized/large organisation.



**IMSI India P Ltd.**  
HR Manager  
**Location:** Bangalore  
**Job ID:** 12865003  
**Description:** Day to day HR activity (Country Operations) for a defined country.



**EMC Corporation**  
Human Resources Business Partner  
**Location:** Bangalore  
**Job ID:** 12800011  
**Description:** Represents the organization as the principal customer contact and often performs project leadership role.



**Futures Ahead**  
HR Manager  
**Location:** Mumbai  
**Job ID:** 12194282  
**Description:** Assist in planning and implementation of training programmes as per organizational needs.



**ABC Consultants Private Limited**  
VP/ GM - HR  
**Location:** Delhi  
**Job ID:** 12677605  
**Description:** Looking at hiring candidates specializing in Compensation and Benefits.

### Jobseekers - To apply for above jobs

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The writer works for a leading MNC in the IT sector.

# CONFESSIONS OF A Hiring Manager

**“The VP-Logistics came up with every imaginable excuse to reject internal and external applicants for a position in his department because he wanted to hire someone he knew”**

“The secret to the success of any business is having the right people, in the right job, at the right time, in the right place.” This line and its variants get repeated in every business meeting ad nauseam.

My friends in other functions often ask me, “Why is it so difficult to get people? Aren’t there enough people already, looking for a job?” We are easy scapegoats when managers are questioned about the unfilled positions in their teams, but people need to understand that if we are not able to get the right talent, they are as much a part of the problem.

Very recently, my Head-HR asked me to find a General Manager-Legal, who could be groomed as a successor to the Chief Legal Officer (CLO), so that the CLO could move to a bigger role. It was a critical position, and as the job description entailed, a rare talent to find. To make it even tougher, we had to hire a female candidate.


So I went after my search partners to get me the person. I myself went prowling on LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook and various other real and virtual networks. And we did get 14 bright candidates out of which eight were women. After several rounds of interviews and psychometric tests, we short-listed six candidates and presented them to the CLO. This entire process took a good three months. But the CLO dismissed all of them, without even giving us a reason for his rejection. Back to square one, we started the process again. The second round was tougher. There were fewer applicants, and only three could cross the rigorous rounds of interviews. And

yes, you guessed it right -- the CLO rejected those as well.

In an attempt to solve the problem, I revisited the job description, and discussed it in detail again with the CLO. But there were no significant changes. On the contrary, the CLO came up with resumes of candidates who he thought were great, but in reality were nowhere close to the ones we had shortlisted.

Now, here we are, seven months after the position was opened. It is still vacant, and I am still looking for the right candidate, well aware of the fact that the right candidate is never to be found. Why? Because all the other stakeholders would only shortlist a person who could step into the shoes of the CLO; and the CLO is too insecure to hire someone who is competent enough to take over his role.

In another incident, the Vice President-Logistics came up with every imaginable excuse to reject internal and external applicants for a position in his department, because he wanted to hire someone he knew. As a result, a vacancy that was seemingly easy to fill was open for three months, and it was I who had to face the music.

The incidents mentioned above are one among many. The point is this: we all know that getting the right talent on board is a critical part of our existence. But what we as hiring managers failed to understand when we signed up is that understanding the job description is only 10 per cent of our role. Actually, we need to be psychiatrists, diplomats, anthropologists, and a lot more, to do our job well. 





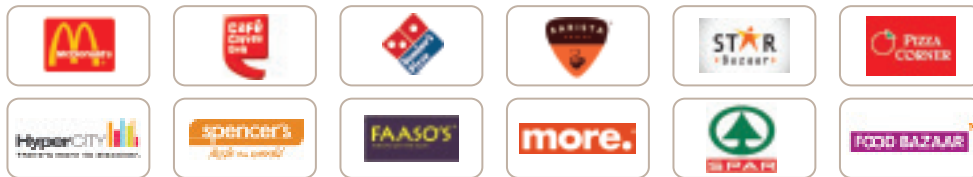
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