

People matters

Leading People
Building Organizations

Vol. IV, Issue 4, April 2013

Rs. 75

An illustration of a brown monkey wearing a purple shirt and a small purple hat, standing on the back of a brown elephant. The elephant is decorated with a blue cloth featuring orange stars. The background is a light yellow with faint floral patterns. In the foreground, there are several colorful, stylized umbrellas in shades of green, yellow, orange, and purple.

JOBLESS GROWTH

India needs to create 150 million jobs this decade. Reforms to labour laws and policies to develop skills & infrastructure could be the right fix to get this monkey off the economy's back **Pg 28**

BIG INTERVIEW
RICHARD REKHY

FLEXIWORK
A TALE OF TWO OPTIONS

IFTDO CONFERENCE
DR. PRITAM SINGH & B.P. RAO

NOT A TEAM PLAYER



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RAISING THE BAR FOR RANKINGS



MBA rankings are integral to the management education world because they address the needs of three sets of stakeholders. Faculty, alumni and students look at rankings to evaluate how their school fares with respect to others, employers peruse rankings to gauge alternative hiring sources and MBA aspirants trust ranking to help them shortlist schools to apply to and choose from. Whether you like them or loathe them, you can't ignore rankings.

There are many who criticise the concept of MBA rankings. The criticism has centered on the methodologies used to rank the schools and that many rankings will measure only things that are easy to quantify (like the cutoff score for GMAT or CAT, or the number of international students etc). The major condemnation has been about the over-reliance of rankings on self-reported data and the absence, in most cases, of validation and authentication of that data.

This is the reason why NHRDN and *People Matters* came together to build a robust methodology and execute a fully validated and authenticated scoring and ranking of business schools in India. This is the first ranking being done by the community of HR professionals, the very people who are the market for B-school education and graduates, the consumers if you will. As a consumer, one always aims to have accurate, legitimate and reliable information to take

decisions that are most appropriate for our business context.

The USP of the NHRDN-People Matters B-school Ranking is its methodology. In a vast exercise spanning many months, involving leaders from academia and industry, the data solicited from the B-schools was validated through onsite visits and interactions with the faculty and students and was then evaluated on parameters like academic excellence, industry-academy interface and performance of alumni. B-school applicants and hiring managers will definitely appreciate our function-wise ranking of schools that clearly spell out the academic strengths of the various institutions.

The beneficiaries of this ranking are many, and for different reasons: B-schools benefit from an unbiased benchmarking exercise that helps them reflect and improve; the community at large benefits from access to validated information; and for students and employers, while there is no such thing as 'best' in the business school world, at least now they have the information to assess what could be 'best' for them respectively.

Keep sending us your encouraging words and your constructive opinions, it helps us improve and be more relevant to our community.

Happy reading,

Esther Hernandez Martinez
Editor-in-Chief



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A Tale of TWO Options

Organisations debate the relevance of flexible working hours as they struggle to streamline costs and engage employees

By Deepshikha Thakur

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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. Do write to us!

March 2013

<http://peoplesmatters.in/>



Corporate Power Women

The story (**Power Women**) appealed to me. It touched upon the right issues and highlighted the real problems. I agree with the writer's observation that "corporate performance assessments are inherently biased to suit masculine traits".

— Peter (Online)

Leverage capability instead of focussing on the weakness

The appraisal (**Appraising the Appraisal**) tends to focus on weaknesses, not strengths, what psychologists call the presenting problem. But good leaders like good coaches design performance processes and tasks around a person's strengths, and ignore or make their weaknesses irrelevant.

— Ameet Naik (Online)

Beating the stress

The story on email overload (**Are you a slave of your inbox?**) brings out the true picture of employees today. It is the one single source of stress and if one goes by the advice here, it will surely reduce the stress related to e-mails.

— Suhail Qadir (Online)

Life controlled by devices

The email story (**Are you a slave of your inbox?**) is very apt. It is the reality of new age employees whose life is controlled by their email delivering machines like laptops, Blackberry, etc.

— Yatender (Online)



New age resumes

It is a new concept (**Shoot yourself into that dream job**), but has started to trend. With B-schools like ISB making the video resume a part of the interview process,

this trend is bound to pick up. Plus, who doesn't like being in front of the camera!

— Rajat Jain

Different point of view

Thanks for sharing!! (**So, what bad things have you heard about us?**) This really helps in understanding an employer's expectations from a candidate. Good to be aware of their point of view!

— Rahul Anandani Narayan (Online)

Balanced view

The article is well written (**Changing rules of Talent Management**), specifically from the point of view of the challenges faced by HR in India. I hope to see a follow up to this article on what kind of analytics on the talent data in the cloud would be useful towards a more optimal talent management in organisations.

— Ajay (Online)



tanvi gautam @tanvi_gautam
The trouble with Bell curves !
MT @PeopleMatters2 : article 1:
bit.ly/Y4WxwD and our story in
March bit.ly/WDj08W

supriya jain @jainsupriya @AbhijitB-
haduri @PeopleMatters2 As long
as the level of difficulty should be
relative to individual competency.
Else they could give up.

English Way! @ApooravSharma @
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Indeed this was an article worth
read. I have seen people making
these common mistakes & then
the crib session starts. :-)

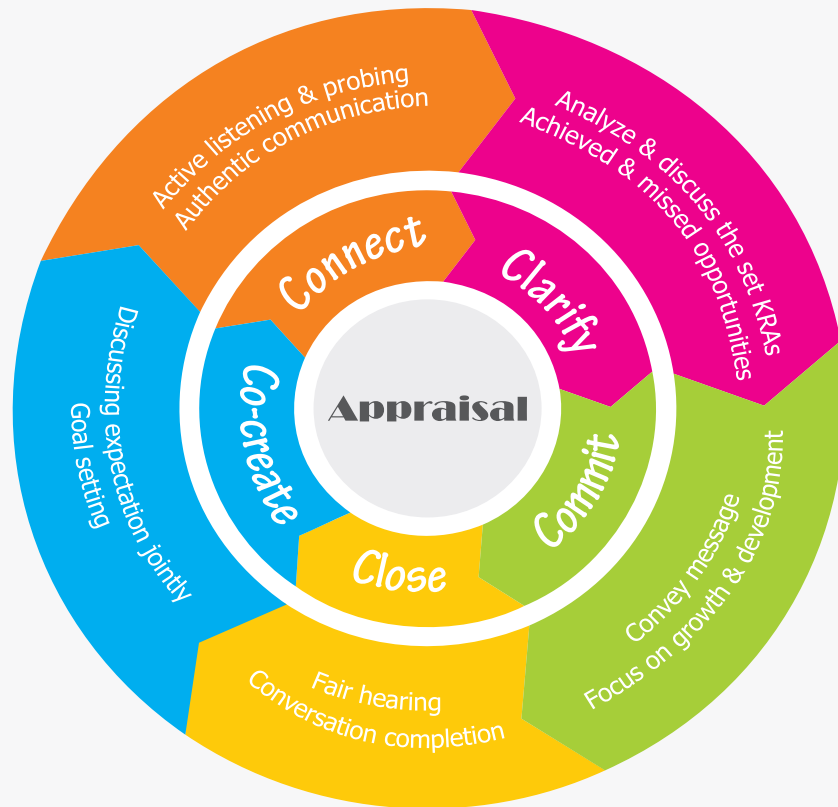
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Corporate HAPPENINGS



Does investing in talent pay off?

Recognising the growing importance of talent in driving success, organisations around the world are making greater investments in talent. However, as organisations increase their investment in human capital, many of them question—do investments in talent and human capital, really pay off? The recently released Talent Barometer Survey by Mercer has some interesting insights. According to the survey, 60 per cent of organisations worldwide report increasing their investment in talent in recent years. However, a much smaller percentage of respondents, 24 per cent, say their

plans are highly effective in meeting immediate and long-term human capital needs. Additionally, 77 per cent of those surveyed by Mercer have a strategic workforce plan in place, but only 12 per cent said it was part of their longer-term strategy.

What could be the possible accelerators of talent effectiveness? Mercer's Talent Barometer Survey explores key accelerators like education, health, wellness and career experience and their impact. While education is a key enabler, more than half (57 per cent) of the organisations surveyed are not confident that educational institutions will generate the talent needed by their businesses today. Further, 59 per cent believe this will be true three to five years out. As a result of this educational gap, organisations are employing internships, apprenticeships, and teaching high-demand skills in secondary and tertiary institutions. As for health and wellness, less than half the organisations worldwide actively apply the basic elements of a health management programme, such as ensuring a healthy workplace and establishing health-related policies and procedures (as reported by 48 per cent and 44 per cent of organisations, respectively). However, organisations globally take the issue of career experience seriously, with the majority (80 per cent) conducting regular (annual or semi-annual) talent reviews.

While the gaps and the accelerators/enablers are known, what is perhaps required is the willingness on the part of the leaders to invest in talent, have a collaborative mindset and create a culture that values talent. **am**

APPOINTMENTS



Volkswagen has appointed **Gerasimos Dorizas** as the chief representative of the Volkswagen Group in India. Prior to this Dorizas was the managing director of Volkswagen Group Sales India Pvt Ltd.



The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts has appointed **Rajesh Jhingon** as group Executive Vice President, Operations. Prior to the appointment, he was General Manager at Mandarin Oriental Las Vegas.



Indian Staffing Federation has announced **Rufina Fernandes** as its

Chief Executive Officer. Prior to this, she was Business Head, VBHC Education Services.



Andleeb Jain has been appointed as Director- HR, Admin, Quality and HSE for India at Isolux Corsan India. Prior to this he was Vice President HR at Lancohe Power Limited.



Aadil Bandukwala has moved to LinkedIn as Recruitment

Product Consultant. Prior to this he was Talent Acquisition Social Media Advisor at Dell.



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UTILIZED FOR KNOWLEDGE
DISSEMINATION AND
DEVELOPMENT



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Unbankable Banks?

India's private sector banks – HDFC, ICICI and Axis Bank – are under a scanner. A sting operation carried out by investigative website Cobrapost alleges that these banks and their managements systematically and deliberately violate several provisions of the Income Tax Act, foreign exchange and central bank regulations, know your customer norms, the Banking Act and Prevention of Money laundering Act (PMLA) with utter disregard to consequences, driven by their desire to boost deposits and thereby increase profits. The banks claim that their compliance standards are stringent and have consequently decided to launch an investigation into the matter. Meanwhile, the Reserve Bank of India gave a clean chit to the Banks saying no money was laundered.

HERE IS WHAT THE BANKS HAVE TO SAY:



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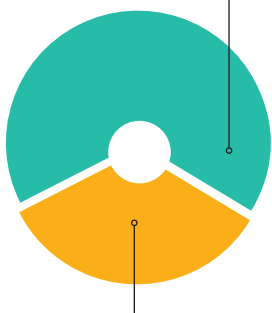


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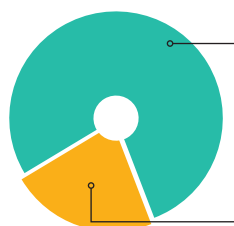
BANKING FRAUD IN INDIA: THE HOW, WHAT AND WHY



73 per cent of the respondents cited "lack of oversight by line managers or senior managers on deviations from existing process/controls", "current business pressure to meet targets" and "difficult business scenario" as the major reasons for increasing fraud incidents.

About 37 per cent of the respondents indicated that there was collusion between the employees and external parties.

Source: India Banking Fraud Survey 2012: Navigating the challenging environment. A study by Deloitte.



84 per cent of the total number of fraud cases in the financial services sector was reported in the banking vertical. In 60 per cent of the cases, employees at various levels within the organisation committed the fraud. In 26 per cent of cases, customers were involved, and the remaining were committed by former employees and external parties including employees of outsourced organisations. Fraudulent documentation, multiple funding, overvaluation/non-existence of collaterals and siphoning of funds are some of the areas in which banks have witnessed major incidents of fraud.

Source: India Fraud Indicator 2012: Increasing Magnitude of Fraud. A study by Ernst & Young's Fraud Investigation & Dispute Services



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BEING COMPETITIVE IN A NEW BUSINESS ORDER

In the run up to the 42nd IFTDO World Conference on April 23-26, 2013, **Dr Pritam Singh** – DG, IMI and **B.P. Rao** – CMD, BHEL, talk to *People Matters* about the need for organisations to be cutting edge by building capability to remain competitive in the new business order

BY **GYANENDRA KUMAR KASHYAP**

“**N**ever in human history has the change been on such a scale,” says Dr Pritam Singh, Director General, International Management Institute (IMI). Perchance, he couldn’t be more apt. The pace at which change is taking place across organisations is phenomenal and going forward, it is only going to increase. The business landscape is increasingly changing, with industry models shaken, revenue streams turning volatile and competition becoming hybrid. Business models that have existed for years are now under attack – thanks to the changing consumer behaviour and technology, forcing them to either adapt to

the trend or wither away into obscurity. The economic downturn and escalating pressure on corporate profitability have combined to focus the spotlight firmly on what is being termed as the new business order. The question then is – are organisations aware of this change and if yes, what are they doing to leverage the new business order?

The near meltdown of the financial system and the ensuing great recession has been, and will remain, the defining issue for organisations. Over the past couple of years, there has been a dramatic acceleration in the shifting balance of power between the developed West and the emerging East. Agreeing with the



Dr. Pritam Singh



B.P. Rao

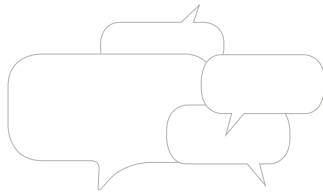
shifting balance of power and more so in the context of manufacturing, B.P. Rao, Chairman and Managing Director, Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited, says, “The new business order has emerged in the last four to five years. The global manufacturing base has moved towards Asian countries like China and India and manufacturing is totally becoming uncompetitive in European countries as well as the US.” Now that the worst seems to be behind us, it’s tempting to feel a sense of deep relief — and a strong desire to return to the comfort of business as usual. But that is simply not an option. Rao makes a strong point, “The new business order is becoming fiercely competitive; those who have lost out want to make a comeback and hence, you need to compete.” Dr Singh advocates the need for organisations to align and contextualise the way they have been doing their businesses according to changing business scenarios. “If we don’t change, then perhaps the relevance of the way we do the business will be questioned and that would put us in further trouble,” he says.

In an era of risk and instability, globalisation, new technologies and

Organisations need to align and contextualise the way they have been doing their business according to changing business scenarios

greater transparency have combined to pose tremendous challenges for strategy making. This is so because the traditional approach holds true in a relatively stable and predictable world. So, how are organisations gearing up to the new business challenges? The answer to these and many more such questions seem to be inextricably linked to how organisations transform themselves into cutting edge firms. This requires them to focus not only on capacity building, but lay equal if not more emphasis on capability building.

Cutting edge strategies and technologies are well heard of; what is rarely talked about in the mainstream is cutting edge



The new business order is becoming fiercely competitive; those who have lost out want to make a comeback and hence, you need to compete

organisations. Both Dr Singh and Rao feel that if organisations are to flourish in the new business order, they need to transform themselves into cutting edge organisations. And here too, the duo makes it amply clear that the real differentiator would be human resources.

“These companies will have manpower that contributes in the most effective manner in terms of value. It is essential that this manpower has all the cutting edge skills,” says Rao. “When you talk of such an organisation, it is not merely in terms of technological sophistication, but it also encompasses mindset sophistication in terms of involving and engaging people and embracing inclusive growth,” adds Dr Singh.

Can organisations transform themselves to cutting edge institutions by focusing on capacity building? Can capacity building alone help organisations challenge the limits to growth and find a new trajectory? Or is there more to it?

While it is important to emphasise on capacity as well as capability building, Dr Singh says he feels that the two terminologies are often not understood. While capacity building has more to do with the hardcore business aspect, capability building has a lot more to do with the softer aspects – mindset and people variables. “The only competitive edge for a cutting edge organisation is capability building,” says Dr Singh.

Concurring with Dr Singh, BHEL’s Rao says, “Cost effectiveness alone will not help. It has to come up with capability building.” Cost leadership or quality leadership can be imitated. Even superior technology is available to all organisations and innovation can be imitated in a year or two.

A successful organisation is the one does not only require capabilities to meet today’s business needs, but must also be able to identify which capabilities need to change in a rapid, cost-effective and risk-managed approach to address new market realities. Investing in “developmental skills for the future” as Rao terms it, is the key that will help organisations develop products and solutions, which are cost effective, technologically advanced and in tune with new business realities.

Organisations need to be aware of these trends and must be able to anticipate the competencies and resources needed to adapt their companies to these changing times. However, organisations that are not cognizant of the changing business dynamics will become obsolete at a rate like never before. Dr Singh puts it aptly, “Organisations that fail to live up to the new emerging challenges put themselves at risk of obsolescence from market leadership to market demise.” In an interdependent and competitive global economy, organisations must endeavour to position themselves as cutting edge organisations that rely not merely on capacity building, but capability building and are keen to take advantage of the new business order. [.pm](mailto:gyanendra.kashyap@peoplematters.in)

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A CEO for the people, by the people!

Richard Rekhy, CEO, KPMG India, in conversation with **Rajlakshmi Saikia**, on his dream to make KPMG the most-envied firm by becoming the clients' and employees' first choice

In 2012, KPMG India introduced a unique process of democratic succession planning to ensure that the right CEO from a people and business stand point takes the deserving seat. With this change there is a vote per partner, with no veto power even with the top management ensuring that the appointed CEO of every 4-year term is the best choice of a large majority of at least 75 per cent. Every CEO appointed at KPMG India will have to go through this process. A proposed CEO can either be self-nominated from among the pool of partners or be nominated by a selection panel. The proposed CEO will be expected to fulfill the prerequisites to become a KPMG CEO: someone who inspires trust and has the ability to significantly improve the firm's performance. Richard Rekhy, the first CEO of KPMG India to be appointed through this process, shares his plans to introduce a culture of 'Collaborate to Win' in the firm.



What is your plan for the next 4 years as CEO of KPMG in India?

For me it is very clear – in these 4 years I want to leave behind a legacy. As a leader I want to make a lasting difference - to the business and to the lives of people who work at KPMG. My focus is to drive a collaborative approach to work and that is also my personal goal this year, because I believe in leading by example. While the traditional approach to consulting business is to work in silos, at KPMG we are trying to change that mindset. This collaborative approach also has direct business benefits. We are even encouraging collaboration in revenue flow – this year we have a two-pen approach to Partner evaluation where significant weightage is attributed to the Partner's collaborative approach.

Social media strategy is also something that I am truly very keen on driving. It is important from all angles: business development, knowledge sharing and employee feedback. From an employee perspective, it will allow us to share our thoughts with them on a platform that they are comfortable with. Today, if we as an organisation are not listening to our people, then we are bound to be in trouble.

A firm such as yours is traditionally more careful on what is discussed outside. Is that changing because of social media?

We are basically an accounting and consulting firm. In India, a major part of our revenue comes from the consulting business and audit is about 22 per cent. We are governed very strictly by our regulations, but whether it is audit, tax or consulting, we cannot overlook client confidentiality, which is sacrosanct. So, we have very strict rules on social media where we tell employees that they cannot speak about clients on social platforms or talk about colleagues in a derogatory manner. We have a very clear policy on what is allowed and what is not on social media. For example, a KPMG employee will not post "I am going to London to do due diligence of XYZ company" on their Facebook page. That is confidential information, so there are such

dos and don'ts on the use of social media. But people are encouraged to talk about general situations which are not specifically client-related.

We try our best to keep employees informed of all the dos and don'ts – so they are not caught by surprise. And a lot of this is communicated right at the time when an employee joins the firm. Our plan this year is to focus on devising a new social media strategy and communicate the same across the board. We have also started using apps in our marketing plan – for example, some of our thought leadership and budget publications are being promoted using these apps.

In a people-driven industry, the personal style of leadership is a very important factor for people to align to a common goal – there may be people who do not align to the company's goal as they move up the hierarchy. How do you manage that?

That is very tough to manage. People join organizations', but they leave their managers and that's the truth. If an employee is to live and die with one manager, then it becomes very difficult if that manager becomes autocratic. And you get all sorts of people. We now ensure bad behaviour will not be tolerated irrespective of how good a performer one is. We have asked people to go if they had demonstrated behaviour that was not aligned with our values, even if they were high performers. And we are also rewarding people for demonstrating our values. In fact, we are celebrating 20 years of KPMG in India and we have planned to reward all those who demonstrated values of the organisation over the years.

I have kept something I once heard very close to heart. When I met the CEO of a large consulting firm in New York some time ago, he said something that just stayed with me – "Pick your highest performing business partner and make that person the Head of HR". People are the most critical asset in a consulting firm, so you need to put your best person in charge of your people. It made absolute sense.

I personally believe that if we care for

CAREER GRAPH

Graduation -
Bachelor of
Commerce, Delhi
University

1984 - 1997
Partner - RSM
& Co

1987 - 2002
Partner -
Andersen / Arthur
Andersen

2002 - 2004
Partner - Ernst &
Young

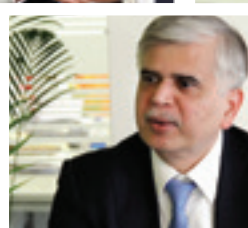
2006 - 2009
Chief Operating
Officer, KPMG
[Advisory
Services]

Apr 04 - Feb 12
Chief Operating
Officer, KPMG

2009 - Oct 2012
Head of Advisory,
KPMG

Nov 12 - Present
Chief Executive
Officer, KPMG
India

I believe that men and women come from two different perspectives, and when they both work together, they bring great value



people the result will be high performance. So, when I became the CEO, I took the opportunity to ask one of our best performing partners – Shalini Pillay - to take on the reins of managing HR and ensure that we give our people the best. I chose her because I wanted someone who was a high performer as well as passionate about people. In fact, I've had such a keen interest in people that I had offered myself for this role to my earlier CEO, so that I could make a difference and transform KPMG India to be one of the best places to work. I believe it's the most critical role, because you would be responsible for the most expensive asset in the business – our people.



In the transformation journey towards creating a culture of 'Collaborate to Win', there will be people who are not aligned to what you are trying to do. The transformation may demand that you take few people off the bus. What is your plan to deal with such scenarios?


I believe, all my life I have been a very good judge of people and it only takes me 2 or 3 interactions to know where an individual comes from. I have this uncanny knack of understanding people. I am very honest with them. I never show them something I cannot deliver. I ensure that I tell all new recruits that while this is a great opportunity, it does come with its own challenges. We are honest with people and I have told everyone that the doors of KPMG are big enough for anyone to walk through. So, there will be no compromise on values in the journey.

At Andersen, besides my business role, I was also given the role of overseeing HR in the company and Andersen was not the friendliest place to work in. I personally worked to make it into a people friendly organisation, to a point when our attrition rate fell to almost zero. I had some very difficult conversations with people

when we had to ask them to move out, because it is in the interest of the individual and the organisation. There is no personal vendetta. It is not about likes or dislikes, it is about you not standing for the values that the organisation stands for. So, yes, Shalini (our present Head of HR) will also go through these same challenges, but this is in the best interest of the business and so must be done.



While there may be a healthy gender ratio at the entry level in your business, is the same also true as you move up the ladder? What is your diversity strategy?

You are right. At the entry level, our gender ratio is 40 per cent and as you go up, it is a miserable number. There was one time when we had only one women partner in the business. But yes, that has changed and now we have many more partners who are women. The challenge is that the kind of life a consultant leads becomes difficult for women, especially in India where women are expected to work and look after the house as well. So, it is always a challenge for a woman to balance the two. However, the Indian ecosystem offers enough support and many women today realize that and manage to find the right balance. Personally I believe we need to focus on gender inclusion, otherwise we will not be able to keep this great talent that is there in women. I believe that men and women come from two different perspectives, and when they both work together, they bring great value. It makes business sense for us to have a healthy gender ratio. It's on my priority 'to-do' list. 

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Failure is not an option. It is a must!

While we like to believe that failure isn't an option, the reality is that it's unavoidable. What's more, it is something we should embrace!

BY RICHARD S. WELLINS

“Failure is not an option.” This phrase has become increasingly commonplace in recent years. But, where did it come from?

Most attribute it to Gene Kranz, mission director at the National Aeronautic and Space Administration (NASA), during the ill-fated Apollo 13 mission in 1970. But the truth is that Kranz isn't documented as ever having said “Failure is not an option.” The phrase comes courtesy of the Hollywood scriptwriters for the 1995 Ron Howard film, *Apollo 13*, in which Ed Harris played Kranz. The writers came up with “failure is not an option” after interviewing people from Mission Control, who spoke of dealing with stressful situations in which lives hang in the balance. And, it perfectly captures the attitude and tenacity that enabled Kranz and his team at NASA to learn from the multiple near-misses, unsuccessful attempts at fixes, and unprecedented challenges that arose as they worked tirelessly to save the spacecraft and the three astronauts on board.

For all the bravado that “failure is not an option” implies, the reality is that Kranz and his team failed repeatedly during the mission. But, with each failure they gained valuable information and knowledge that contributed to their ultimate success.

The concept of learning from, and even encouraging failure, isn't new. Soichiro Honda, the founder of Honda, said, “Many people dream of success. Success can only be repeated if achieved through repeated failure and introspection. Success represents the 1 per cent of work that results from the 99 per cent that is called failure.” Legendary

One of the most important things an organisation can do to drive innovation is to understand and learn from failure

statesman Winston Churchill had a similar thought: “Success consists of going from failure to failure without loss of enthusiasm.” More recently, the past CEO of Procter and Gamble, arguably one of the most innovative companies in the world, said, “I think of my failures as a gift.”

The message is clear: While we like to believe that failure isn't an option, the reality is that it's unavoidable. What's more, it is something we should embrace!

Embrace failure? Really?

How can this be? Failure is to be avoided at all costs. Failure is frightening. Imagine an organisation that experiences one dismal failure after another. Out of business!

But, what matters is the ability to understand and learn from failure. In fact, it's one of the most important things an organisation can do to drive innovation.

Innovation on its part can be accurately viewed as an act of leadership. However, a recent DDI study states that only about 40 per cent of employees felt that their leaders were displaying innovation behaviours. The most prominent derailer was aversion to risk.

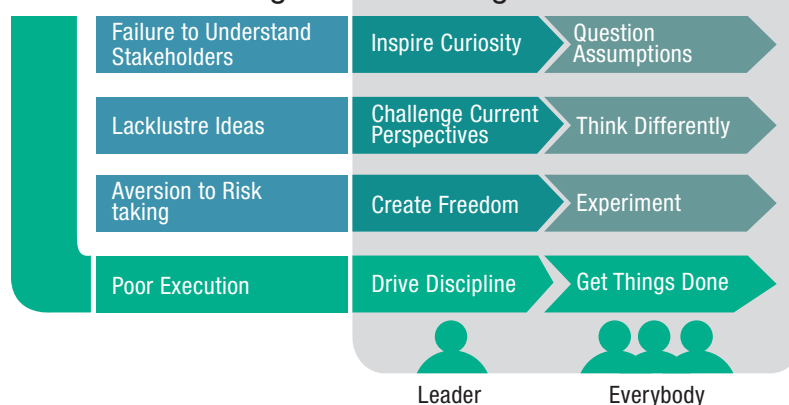
IN BRIEF

To drive innovation, organisations must understand and learn from failure, take risks, not punish 'honest' failures and view innovation as a leadership act

HOW TO DRIVE INNOVATION



Innovation Challenges



How to get iskier

So, what can organisations and their leaders do to become less risk-averse and accept failure?

1. Don't punish 'honest' failures. Instead, think about ways you can reward them! When you give associates the freedom to succeed, you also need to give them leeway to fail. A recent Wall Street Journal article called "Better Ideas through Failure" told how two organisations, Grey, a large advertising agency, and SurePayroll, a payroll service for small companies, give out formal and frequent "failure awards" to their people. An interesting concept and a rare and unique idea.."

2. Design for failure. Many organisations try to succeed every time by coming up with what they deem to be a big idea, making it as perfect as possible, and then testing it under optimal conditions. A better approach is to make "little bets," as championed by Peter Sims, who wrote a book on innovation with that title. Making little bets entails running multiple small experiments, and then choosing typical or even adverse conditions for pilot programmes.

3. Learn from failure — and keep going. The end goal of failure is not more failure. The goal is to dissect, in an open and transparent environment, what went wrong and learn lessons that can be applied next

You give associates the freedom to succeed, you also need to give them leeway to fail

time around. You need to only look at pharmaceutical companies or medical research firms for examples. Real failure is not having in place strategies for learning from failure.

Leadership really matters!

When it comes to failure, risk, and ultimately innovation itself, the key is what leaders say and do. Most employees can tell if their leader is likely to "shoot the messenger," advertently or inadvertently punish mistakes, close their doors to the renegades, shut out what's unfamiliar, or kill disruptive ideas dead in their tracks.

Being a leader who is okay with failure, who is willing to take risks, and who is a true champion of innovation isn't easy, especially if it runs counter to your accustomed leadership style. But, if you really want to drive innovation in your organisation, you have to start somewhere, perhaps by being willing to swing and miss sometimes and to let your people know it's okay for them to do the same. [\[2m\]](#)

Richard Wellins is Senior Vice President at DDI



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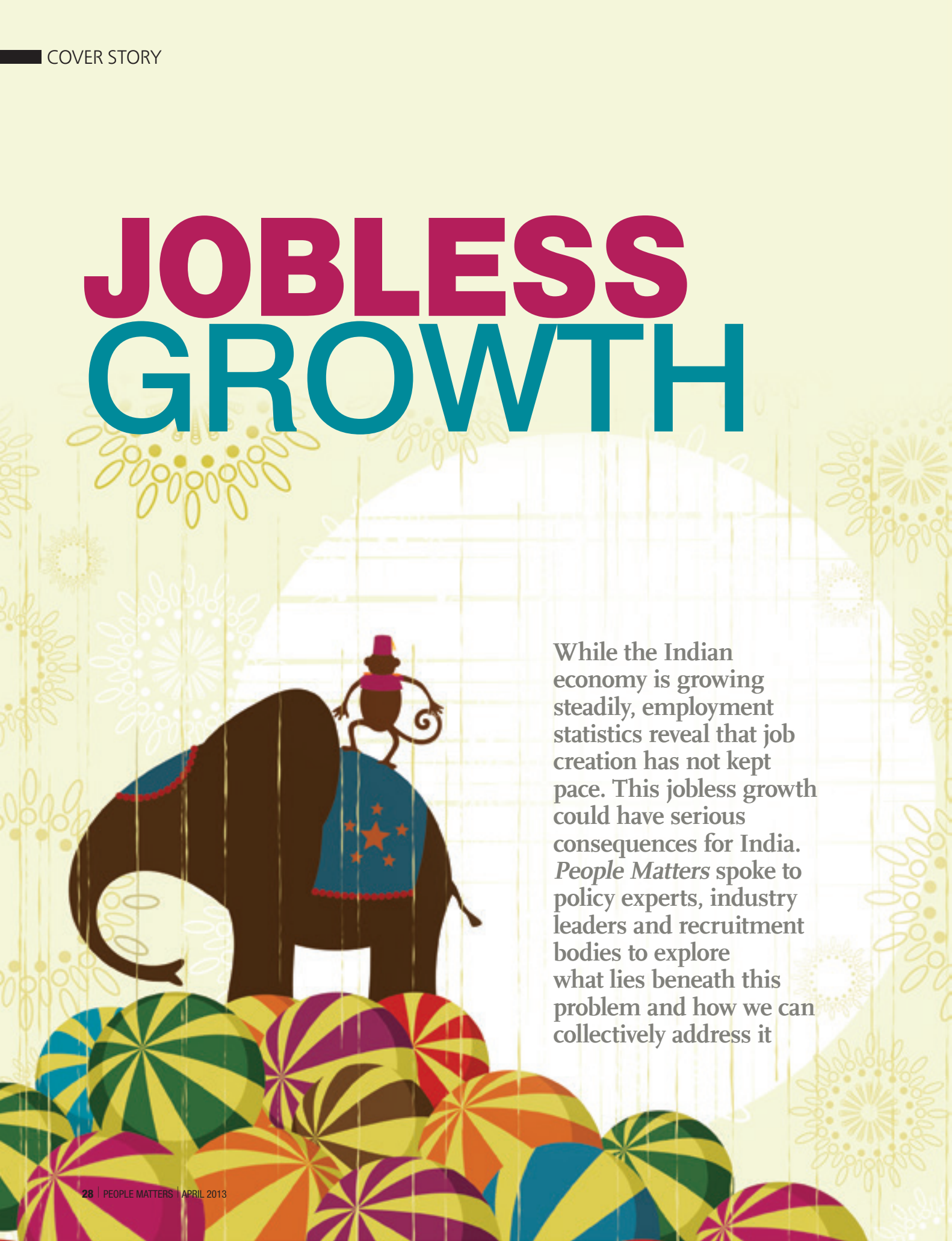
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JOBLESS GROWTH

A stylized illustration featuring a brown elephant with a blue saddle decorated with orange stars. A person wearing a purple shirt and a small purple hat is perched on the elephant's back. The elephant is walking towards the left. In the foreground, there is a large pile of colorful umbrellas with various patterns, including stripes and polka dots, in shades of green, yellow, orange, and purple. The background is a light yellow with faint, stylized floral patterns and a large, faint grid pattern.

While the Indian economy is growing steadily, employment statistics reveal that job creation has not kept pace. This jobless growth could have serious consequences for India. *People Matters* spoke to policy experts, industry leaders and recruitment bodies to explore what lies beneath this problem and how we can collectively address it

It is time to face facts. The estimated number of entrants into the workforce in the period 2005-10 was an average of 12 million per annum. This was a period when the economy grew at an average 8.7% and at above 9% in three of the five years. But despite this growth, the economy managed to create just 5.5 million jobs annually in the industry¹ and services sectors in the same period. This is after accounting for new job creation through welfare schemes like NREGA.

Further, not all new jobs went to entrants into the workforce - a large chunk of it includes previously self-employed individuals from agriculture and trade who moved mostly into construction.

To put it in perspective, while new job addition in the five-year period was 27.5 million, the number of self-employed people also reduced by 25.5 million, leading to a net increase of 2 million in the employed population.² One fact that could account for such a paltry increase could be the large-scale withdrawal of self-employed women from the workforce, but that is not a healthy trend either.

The quality of new jobs added is also distressing. The construction sector created 18 million jobs, but a major chunk was in the form of casual labour. On the other hand, services contributed only 3.5 million jobs, while the manufacturing sector actually lost 5 million jobs. While corporate India suffers from a chronic shortage of high and medium skilled people, estimates suggest that India

will create a surplus of 30 million low skilled unemployed youngsters by the turn of the current decade. Further, reduction in self-employment (by a whopping 25 million in five years) is beginning to affect entrepreneurship - the lifeline of future job creation.

To compensate for this period (2005-10) of jobless growth, the Indian economy needs to create 150 million jobs between 2010 and 2020 to assimilate new entrants into the workforce and people looking to move out of self-employment. We are already in 2013-14, growth has taken a nosedive since 2011 and there is no evidence to show that the economy is moving away from jobless growth. The facts, in short, are dismal and alarming.

Slow poison

Job creation is a gradual and involved process - it is a culmination of the right economic setting, capital inflows, capital allocation, skilling and most importantly, the right policy. However, the unfurling of today's economic nightmare that is reminiscent of an era gone by, has been a tortuous process where market forces have had to cower and adapt

The Indian economy needs to create 150 million jobs from 2010 to 2020 to compensate for the jobless growth since 2005

1. IAMR Occasional Paper No. 9/2012, Institute of Applied Manpower Research, Planning Commission, Government of India, December 2012

2. *Employment in India: Uneven and Weak*, A study by CRISIL Centre for Economic Research, August 2011

to policymakers who have been absent for the most part and worse, whose excesses have led to disastrous consequences both on the fiscal front and on job creation. While there are differences on whether the method of collecting employment statistics accurately captures the full measure of employment in India, what cannot be disputed is the disturbing trends in employment based on available data.

The growing Indian economy has long provided a fertile setting for movement of people from agriculture into manufacturing and construction. A combination of rising productivity in an extremely backward agricultural sector and rising aspirations will naturally push people from agriculture into industry. While this exodus is visible in the drop of 14 million agricultural jobs between 2005 and 2010, the troublesome reality has been that India's manufacturing sector too has lost 5 million jobs in this period.

obvious steps to making India a better habitat for job creation - infrastructure, lower regulatory cholesterol, more credit flow to Small and Medium Enterprises, etc, but the low hanging fruit has been picked and we need to confront the difficult, controversial but important issue of labour law reform," he says.

In the absence of labour intensive manufacturing, the overarching macro employment trend over 2005-2010 has been the exodus of workers from agriculture into construction. The growth in construction employment has been guided by an increase in infrastructure investment during the 11th Five Year Plan (2007-12) from 4 per cent of GDP to 7.5 per cent of GDP in 2012. This pull of construction growth in rural and urban areas has been the silver lining to an otherwise disastrous employment scorecard. But even here, growth has come at the expense of some dangerous economic policies.



The construction sector created 18 million jobs between 2005 and 2010, a majority in the form of casual labour. Services contributed only 3.5 million jobs, while the manufacturing sector actually lost 5 million jobs









While India's manufacturing sector has grown by 9.5 per cent per annum in the 2005-2010 period, employment intensity of manufacturing (measured as number of people employed per Rs. 1,00,000 in output) has fallen from 1.2 to 0.73. In effect, manufacturing has become more capital intensive and productive. This is the backdrop for possibly one of the most glaring shortcomings of the India growth story - the virtual absence of large-scale labour intensive manufacturing.

This absence can be mostly explained by India's archaic and rigid labour laws, something that is in dire need of reform. Creaking infrastructure, poor power supply and land availability issues are other commonly cited reasons for the fact that India has seen no addition of labour intensive manufacturing units. Manish Sabharwal, CEO of TeamLease, the country's largest people supply chain company, describes this succinctly. "India's labour laws make an employment contract the equivalent of marriage without divorce. There are many

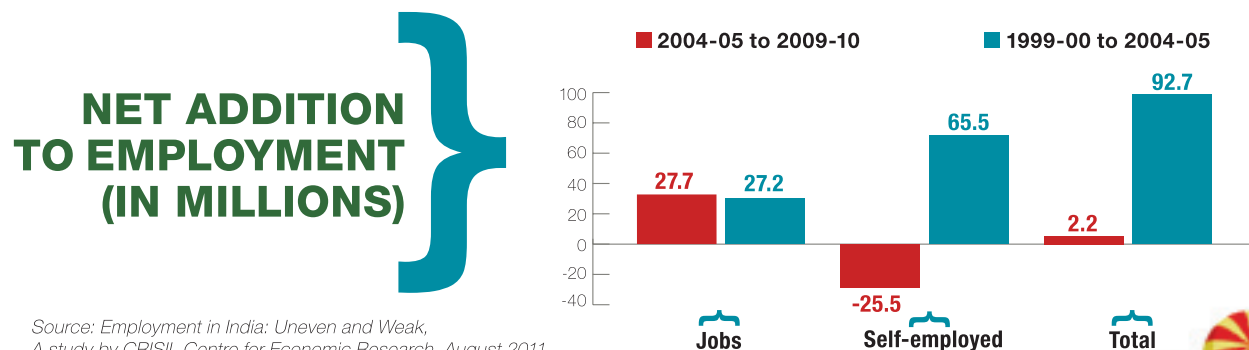
The NREGA has been the flagship social scheme of the UPA government since 2008. Utilising roughly \$7.5 billion (Rs 40,000 crore) per annum, the programme provides roughly 2.5 billion days of employment (with a 100 day employment guarantee) for minimum wages of Rs 130 per day. The ambitious programme, with a lofty aim to stopping migration of workers from rural areas, has been instrumental in driving rural construction and has contributed to reducing rural poverty. But the unintended consequences of the scheme, apart from the apparent fiscal misadventure, could come to haunt the Indian economy over the next decade.

Besides squeezing available farm labour and consequently driving up minimum support prices for agricultural commodities, there is enough empirical evidence to show that NREGA has led to rising urban construction wages, food inflation and shifting of workers from skilled professions (artisans, weavers) to low skilled construction. At the end of the day, sustained job creation requires policy that focuses on skill

EMPLOYMENT AND CHANGE IN EMPLOYMENT DURING THE DECADE

		EMPLOYMENT ACROSS SECTORS (IN MILLIONS)			ABSOLUTE CHANGE IN EMPLOYMENT (IN MILLIONS)		
SECTORS		1999-00	2004-05	2009-10	2000-05	2005-10	2000-10
 Agriculture		237.7	258.9	244.9	21.3	-14.1	7.2
 Manufacturing		44.1	55.8	50.7	11.7	-5.0	6.7
 Non-manufacturing		20.8	29.9	48.3	9.1	18.3	27.4
 Mining, quarrying, utilities		3.3	3.9	4.2	0.6	0.3	0.9
Construction		17.5	26.0	44.1	8.5	18.1	26.6
 Services		94.2	112.8	116.3	18.6	3.5	22.1
Trade, repair, hotels & restaurants		41.2	49.5	49.6	8.2	0.2	8.4
Transport, storage & communication		14.6	18.5	19.9	3.9	1.5	5.3
 Banking & insurance		2.3	3.1	3.8	0.9	0.7	1.6
Real estate, renting & business activities		2.7	4.7	5.8	1.9	1.1	3.1
Public administration and defence		10.5	8.9	9.5	-1.6	0.6	-1.0
Education		8.5	11.4	11.9	2.9	0.4	3.3
 Health		2.6	3.3	3.6	0.7	0.3	1.0
Other community, social and personal services		10.0	8.8	8.7	-1.2	-0.1	-1.3
 Other services		1.9	4.8	3.6	2.9	-1.1	10.4
Total		396.8	457.4	460.2	60.7	2.7	63.5

Source: IAMR Occasional Paper No. 9/2012, Institute of Applied Manpower Research, Planning Commission, Government of India, December 2012
All numbers in the table, including the total, have been rounded off to one decimal place for ease of representation



development and productive job creation. The New Manufacturing Policy may provide the answer to creating such an environment. But for now, it is becoming increasingly clear that these social sector schemes have led to real wage growth without any corresponding improvement in productivity. The saying goes “Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime”. Unfortunately, there has been a lot of fish showered down from helicopters these last few years.

Consequences

The economic and social repercussions of jobless growth are all too well known. With an estimated 12-15 million new entrants into the workforce every year, there is every possibility of India's touted demographic advantage turning into a social nightmare if these employment trends continue. The fiscal misadventures of the Indian state during the heady days have meant it cannot sustain guaranteed employment schemes in case of a protracted slowdown.

Among the solutions suggested by experts and industry leaders, the most urgent one seems to be the reform of India's labour laws

Another consequence of the India growth story since 2005 has been the rise of low productivity and informal construction jobs. The economic survey 2012-13 prepared by the country's chief economist Raghuram Rajan also notes that India is creating jobs mainly in low-productivity construction and not formal jobs in manufacturing, which typically yields higher productivity. The urgent need of the day is to improve exports amidst a more inclusive employment pattern and not surprisingly, both are linked to the growth of labour intensive manufacturing.

India story's Missing Link


The answers to these grave trends and projections lie in a handful of policy initiatives that will promote manufacturing. The limitations of India's much touted agriculture-to-services-to-knowledge model are slowly being exposed. It is time to build this missing link of export-oriented manufacturing into the India growth story.

Among the solutions put out by experts and industry leaders, the most urgent one seems to be the reform of India's labour laws. The very fact that a small-scale manufacturing enterprise cannot fire employees even while facing bankruptcy keeps the real cost of labour very high. Also, there is an urgent need to make the law more flexible to ensure higher formal employment by “reducing the costs of formality”, as Sabharwal puts it. “We have to make the employment contract more symmetric by redoing irrational legislation like the Industrial Disputes Act. We also need to reduce the amount of payroll confiscation (49 per cent of salary is currently deducted at source in a CTC world) because low wage worker cannot live on half their salary”, he adds.

Labour intensive manufacturing requires certain key ingredients - better power and transportation, easier land availability and finally, access to medium level skills in large numbers. Growing a strong export oriented “light industrial sector” requires strong focus of the state in providing this infrastructure, of entrepreneurs in developing the right industries with existing pockets of medium skilled labour and of public-private partnerships in galvanising large scale skilling initiatives for such medium-level skills.

Arun Maira, Member, Planning Commission, says he believes the focus on manufacturing has to be bottom-up and the key is to improve the lot of small entrepreneurs, both by providing economic incentives and ground level administrative reform that reduces their cost of operations. “It is the government's responsibility to incentivise these small enterprises by providing economic support to build and sustain them. Since we are still a people-intensive economy, it needs concerted efforts from the government to incentivise those establishments that require more person time and person efforts. This bottom-up approach will enable smaller enterprises to be more productive and make more profits”, he says.

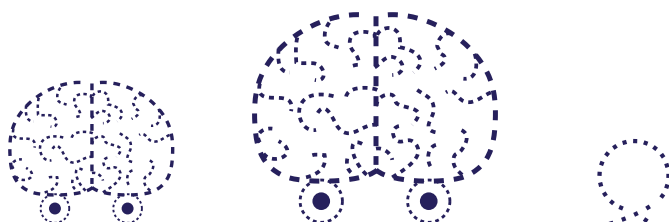
Simultaneously, the services sector faces acute shortage of high-skilled labour and supply constraints in such skills need to be addressed by reforms in education.

Most importantly, these handful of initiatives - labour laws, infrastructure, land accessibility, SME incentivisation, skilling, education reform - need to happen in sync and soon. It's time for India's policy makers to respond. 



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A real chance of lowering unemployment

Our strategy to grow manufacturing needs to shift away from emphasis on large enterprises and a few large scale manufacturing zones, to dispersed enterprises across the country, and more small-scale people-intensive employment, says Arun Maira, Member, Planning Commission

In the Indian context the definition of who is employed or unemployed is rather loose compared to many other economies of the world. Even if a person has done a job for a few hours of the week, the individual may claim that he or she is employed. We do not have a minimum baseline definition of what employment is, for example working for 20 days of the month. We need some hard coded definition of the quality and quantity of employment.

Questions are asked on how we gather data on the employment situation in the country. For example, if we measure unemployment by measuring people who came to a labour exchange and did not find work, it is a narrow instrument for assessing how many people are unemployed. There needs to be dipstick surveys done to assess the state of employment. The challenge, however, is that there is no economic incentive for an individual to call oneself unemployed. While the statistics say that there is single-digit unemployment in India, if one takes a ride through the streets of India, seeing underemployed people at every corner is common. The situation, therefore, is likely to be worse than what the numbers suggest.

When we look at the single-digit unemployment numbers in India and compare it with the 30% unemployment for a more developed economy, such as Spain, questions arise on the measurement methodology. The method of gathering statistics have remained the same across the decades. This may be alright for comparing progress over time, but may not

be represented the actual state of affairs regarding employment. This is the same argument the Planning Commission has been making with poverty line calculations. Since the yardstick hasn't changed, numbers indicate that fewer people are below the poverty line now as compared to the economy 10 or 20 years back. However, many say that this does not capture the real poverty level. One can easily see what is going wrong with such a system.

The need to connect skills with opportunities

People look for employment that is close to the skills they have and also to the location they prefer. To empower people to be able to connect with the opportunities that are available, the greater is the variety of skills they should be able to have, the greater should be their ability to connect with opportunities..

Increasing the supply of skilled people is necessary. Therefore we must build more capacity in supply side institutions. However people who come out of these institutions must find jobs! Newspaper reports mention that even people from the IIMs this year have found it more difficult to find jobs compared to last year and the year before. We saw postgraduates lining up to find employment as bus conductors in the city of Pune a few months ago. A couple of years ago, in a recruitment drive for jobs as border security personnel in the city of Bareilly, there were applications from all over the country from over-qualified



Arun Maira

“100 million additional jobs can be created in the manufacturing sector in India by 2025”

candidates with legitimate college degrees. The government’s plan of skilling 500 million people through the push system is alarming because it might lead to economic waste and disenchantment among the people. Instances are rife in other economies where unemployed or underemployed post-graduate and graduate students become leaders of political unrest

The focus on manufacturing has to be bottom-up

The manufacturing sector will be the prime channel for employment generation in the economy. What is ‘manufacturing’? There are many value-adding activities such as farm produce processing that should come under the purview of manufacturing although they do not employ large amounts of power and are not necessarily produced inside a factory. The Planning Commission is working toward the employment generation side of the equation, especially on small enterprises. These will lead to strategies that translate into much more meaningful employment for people rather than focus on a few large enterprises.

The potential of single-person retail enterprises to generate employment is very large. Perhaps much more than multi-brand large establishments. Self-employed retailers in the form of street-side hawkers are examples of establishments that use very little space and capital and yet generate meaningful economic outcomes. It is the government’s responsibility to incentivise these small enterprises by providing economic support to build and sustain them.

This bottom-up approach will enable smaller enterprises to be more productive and make more profits.

The need to listen to the system

The Planning Commission has undertaken the very difficult task of listening to the rumblings of the system through small industries and identifying what their problems and challenges are. This should be supplemented by providing means for small enterprises to overcome last-mile problems, such as finding bank credit. Small enterprises themselves have a big role to play by organising themselves into associations. A lot needs to be done for small enterprises, but not in the form of handouts or subsidies, but by showing them a path of economic opportunity and a better future.

The Planning Commission has started the process by connecting with associations of small enterprises, such as FISME as well as CII, FICCI, and ASSOCHAM, who represent both large and small enterprises to identify what problems they face and what can the government do to minimise them. By looking closely at these sectors, we have been able to identify how many jobs they will create, and what will be the productivity improvement. We believe that almost 100 million additional jobs can be created in the manufacturing sector in India by 2025. To sum it up, we have a plan that addresses the pressing problems that the economy faces in terms of employment and if implemented systematically, we are giving ourselves a real chance of achieving the target of lowering unemployment in the country. **Pm**

Jobless growth may not persist

S Mahalingam, Chairman, CII Council on Skill Development and Former CFO & Executive Director, Tata Consultancy Services

To a large extent, I don't think that the Indian economy will have a jobless growth in the longer term. In many places, a lag effect comes into play and this is what the economy is experiencing at this point. But this lag effect will go and the economy will start adding more jobs in the future. Jobless growth can also happen when the economy starts moving toward higher automation. This is exactly what is happening in the Indian economy where most of the large employers are investing in higher automation.

Automation is for two purposes: it improves quality and is directly aimed at replacing people. Fundamentally, I disagree that on a longer term basis it can be a jobless growth because we are still a very highly human resources intensive economy and the industry values people skills. What is encouraging is that there is ready availability of skills in the market place. I believe that employers will continue to invest in people-intensive processes and people skills will continue to be in demand in this market in the coming times.

As we go into a higher level of technological sophistication and customer services mechanisms, the demand and the expectation levels are also going up. This is happening



S Mahalingam

"Employers will continue to invest in people-intensive processes and people-skills will continue to be in demand"

across all sectors, including government services. Many professions in the IT and IT-services sector that were unthinkable in the past are emerging now. The IT

sector is a classic example of how an economy creates continuing jobs and builds the need for more skills.

People have started talking about more IT jobs in other Asian economies compared to India. There are essentially two reasons behind it. Corporations have started realising that outsourcing work to an economy like the Philippines brings forth higher tax benefits as compared to outsourcing jobs to India. Some Asian economies are offering better tax structures and have also built capabilities and skills that are comparable to those in India. The Indian tax laws have historically been extremely good for IT export but some of that is changing. There is talk that the tax department is going to disallow some of the profits from the exempt category and put them in taxable category. This is forcing some of the work in the IT sector to go out of India. The other reason why these were coming up was that they were really running out of skilled manpower. However, this problem will not persist for too long as the economy will continue to produce skilled IT manpower.

Some years back, TCS opened a small office in one street with just 150 people. The next day there was a tea shop coming up, and the next day there were two auto-rickshaws coming up. While it is hard to measure, there is always a multiplier effect on jobs associated with the growth of a large employer. In the last few months, we've seen large employers setting up fewer establishments in new locations as compared to earlier years. While the reasons are many, this has led people to believe that the economy is growing but the jobs are not growing proportionately. It can be hoped that the jobless growth phenomenon will not persist in the long-term. **PM**



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Jobless Growth?

Only in the formal sector

Manish Sabharwal, CEO, TeamLease

Growth is a necessity but not sufficient enough for job creation. But I think the issues around growth and employment were different at various stages of economic development. In richer countries, the technology is rapidly reducing the employment elasticity of growth i.e. the number of jobs created for the same amount of economic growth. Prior to 1991, India had growthless jobs i.e. employment which was irrational, excessive and involving low productivity. Since 1991, all our job creation took place in the informal sector. Unemployment in India is exactly where it was in 1991 despite the addition of millions to the labour force. So this means 100 per cent of net job creation since 1991 has happened in the informal sector. India's challenges are very different from the challenges faced by developed countries, who face a more existential challenge of technology greatly reducing the need for low-skilled workers. This has led to a wage stagnation at lower levels over the last two decades in Europe, USA and Japan that for now only looks like it will get worse. But India is far from the jobless growth problem for now.

Academics often say that in any argument you are entitled to your own opinion, but not your

Manish Sabharwal

"Formal sector jobless growth needs reducing the costs of formality"



own facts. Only 7 per cent of the total employment is in the formal sector. It means that the employment of 93 per cent is not tracked but extrapolated or assumed.

India's labour laws make an employment contract the equivalent of marriage without divorce. There are many obvious steps to making India a better habitat for job creation (infrastructure, lower regulatory cholesterol, more credit flow to SMEs, etc) but the low hanging fruit has been picked and we need to confront the difficult, controversial but important issue of labour law reform.

The primary consequence of informal growth is low productivity. If all the job creation in India had happened in the

formal sector, we would have seen much higher growth rates, higher per capita and much lower poverty.

Formal sector jobless growth needs reducing the costs of formality. We have to make the employment contract more symmetric by redoing irrational legislation like the Industrial Disputes Act. We also need to reduce the amount of payroll confiscation (49 per cent of salary is currently deducted at source in a CTC world) because low wage worker cannot live on half his salary. The only way to increase the employment elasticity of growth is to make India a less hostile habitat for entrepreneurs; roads, power, ports, urbanisation, better skills and education, and much else. The ideas are all on the table. The challenges lie in courage and execution. **pm**

Moving up the value chain

Sher Verick, Senior Specialist on Employment, International Labour Organisation

While it is true that India was growing strongly in the 11th plan period with a growth average of 8%, data from the national sample survey indicates that in the period 2004-05 to 2009-10, total employment only increased from 457.7million to 460.2 million. While in some respects employment has grown, we need to be clear about what we mean by jobless growth. Here we are looking at the net effect of growth and the relationship, elasticity of employment and GDP stood at a very low figure of 0.01 (number of jobs created for the same amount of economic growth). During that period there have been transitions in the labour market. There has been fall in agriculture employment in the country during the period 2004-05 to 2009-10. While agriculture employment fell, employment in construction increased by 18.1 million. While there has been a movement of people from rural areas to urban areas, the story is not good.

The period wasn't characterised by large numbers of people moving into better jobs or decent jobs in the way ILO defines it. The ILO defines good employment as ones that have a contract, rights at work and access to benefits and social protection. While it seems that jobs were being created, they were characterised by poor working conditions and were not



Sher Verick

"India has to move higher up the value chain of manufacturing and scale up to absorb workers"


well-paid or protected jobs. Policy makers need to unpack this phenomenon more closely and in greater detail.

In India, the data during this period suggests that while employment was not growing strongly, there is evidence to suggest that the

labour force was shrinking during that period. This is partly explained by the fact that people were staying on longer with education.

Participation of women in the workforce has been falling and it is a much more complex scenario. There are many socio-cultural factors behind this trend of low participation of women. The dynamics of the labour market in India, therefore, is much more complex than it appears.

The employment in the manufacturing sector during that period has stayed more or less constant at 11%. Manufacturing has not been the main driver of the economy or job creation. There were more jobs created in manufacturing between 1999-00 and 2004-05, but the number of jobs created in this sector fell after that period. The 12th plan has included a renewed focus on manufacturing. Manufacturing in India has never been large scale like it has been in other economies like China. In China, you have factories like the one run by Foxconn which has 200,000 employees. Now this sort of factories and scale do not exist here in India. Manufacturing is more capital intensive in India compared to China. The vast majority of the manufacturing sector in India belongs to the unorganized sector and small enterprises employing less than 10 people.

Infrastructure, demographic issues, and the historical legacy of how business and manufacturing are done in India that can be possible causes of low growth. India has to find a niche of how to move higher up the value chain of manufacturing and scale up to absorb workers. The answer, therefore, lies to more broad-based industrialisation. Infrastructure advancement should also be supplemented by how rural areas can benefit from modernisation. 

Training people is a strategy that works

Piyush Mehta, Senior VP-
HR Genpact

There is no stepping away from the fact that growth leads to employment. Given the nature of the business that we are in, we see growth in correlation with employment and revenues, and not just revenues. So, I won't call it a jobless growth. We are hiring. Depending on attrition or similar factors, the volumes of hiring may vary over a period of time. Since we are a large organisation, it pretty much evens out over a larger period of time.

I see a correlation between value-added work and hiring. The Indian economy has changed from an agriculture-based economy to a service-based economy. This poses a challenge for the employers. I am not sure whether an orderly transition (from agriculture-based economy to manufacturing and then service) would have created a ready talent pool for the service industry. This industry needs different skill sets. We don't have ready supplier skills available. There is a shortage of really skilled people who we can directly switch into jobs. We



Piyush Mehta

"I wouldn't call it a jobless growth. We are hiring. The volume of hiring may vary over time"

spend a lot of time and resources in bringing people up to speed and training them. In absence of infrastructure, the organisations have to do it. I think employers are looking at it as an opportunity. To me, it is a smart way of doing business because the other option is to go and hire people from other organisations. In the absence of a full-fledged infrastructure, it is incumbent on all of us as organisations to take care of our needs to build our own, as opposed to buy. It is a strategy that works. **pm**

Employers are more cautious about hiring

Ravi Dasgupta, VP-Group HR, Biocon

Traditionally, Indian companies were far less conservative than multi-national companies when it came to hiring. In good old days when the salaries were low, everyone was hiring continuously. Then, two things happened: One, the gap between salaries in India and developed countries reduced; two, people started looking at the global market place rather than the domestic market alone. So, many companies have become far more conservative than what they were like in the past. By and large, people are cutting back on hiring.

The biotech industry is more capital and technology intensive than people



Ravi Dasgupta

"There is a reason for jobless growth: Increase in salary cost"

intensive. We have never hired in huge numbers and will be conservative. In domestic market, we will continue to hire people in marketing, sales, research and development, quality manufacturing etc., but the numbers are not going to be huge. Typically, 5 to 10 per cent of increase in headcount is what we will expect next year. For our overseas operations, there will be a mix of people whom we hire from India and other countries.

There is a reason for what is being termed as 'jobless growth'. Gradually, salary costs are going up. In the pharma industry they are not as high as in the service sector, but yes, the numbers are beginning to become significant. We are really looking at how we can work smarter, be more careful about where we deploy people. Medicine is not a discretionary purchase, so, regardless of a slowdown, we follow a very predictable approach. With companies becoming more cautious towards hiring, I do not foresee any problem with this approach. **pm**

Connect skilling agenda to needs of industry


Shelly Singh, Co-founder & EVP,
PeopleStrong HR Services



Shelly Singh

“Connecting the skilling agenda with the industry is the last mile”

cost pressures and the threat of global competition from other economies including the Philippines. The sector is trying hard to rationalise their headcount costs by focusing on productivity. This sentiment seems to reflect in all the other sectors of the Indian economy and some of the largest recruiters are hiring very cautiously.

The financial services including banking sector, however, is seeing a different trend. Unlike other sectors, the organisations are creating jobs closer to the actual customer locations. As a result, the economy is seeing a number of jobs being created in places like Bihar, Gujarat and Jharkhand. Also, these institutions are reaching not just Tier I and Tier II educational colleges for talent, but also Tier III and Tier IV institutions. The industrial sector, other than automobiles, will add jobs to the economy in the coming times as the government takes some positive steps towards calming the uncertainty. There is a great need to have the last-mile connectivity of the national skilling agenda with the industry. Sales, customer service and nursing are some occupations that are seeing a lot of employment demand, but skilling in these areas seems to lack last-mile connectivity. 

There is always a lag between the economic direction and the impact on jobs in the industry. The country's political landscape experienced some upheavals in the first half of last year, but its impact was felt on the jobs landscape only in the latter half.

The phenomenon of jobless growth has hit the IT and IT-services sectors quite hard due to rising

SMEs hold the key to employment growth

Kamal Karanth, Managing Director,
Kelly Services India

While the economy is growing, it is driven by efficiency. While capital expenditure led growth has minimised, organisations are steering growth through productivity improvements. The Indian industry is, therefore, targeting improvements in operational efficiencies but jobs are not growing in proportion to the growth in business. Technology is playing a major role in improving operational efficiencies. While the IT/ITeS and the pharma sectors will continue to add jobs, most others have a stagnant hiring outlook.

Examples from other economies reveal that job opportunities thrive and flourish in manufacturing-intensive economies. In India, most commodities from manufacturing-intensive industries are reliant on imports. Consequently, the only jobs that are created with growth in the commodities sector are those in trading. Trading, however, is a small employment generator in the manufacturing lifecycle. There is a big opportunity for the Indian economy to create manufacturing-led employment.

The SME sector can potentially be a big contributor to the growth story in India with 70 million people employed in it. In fact, presently SMEs are adding more jobs to the Indian economy compared to large companies. While the overall growth in employment in the economy is still positive, it is much lower compared to 10 years ago. There is a big opportunity for the education and E-commerce sectors to add more jobs to the economy, but they are not at this point. 



Kamal Karanth

“There is a big opportunity for the education and e-commerce sectors to add more jobs to the economy”

The pursuit of perfection is fatal

Women need to do their best to balance the competing interests in their lives, but surrender the quest to be perfect at everything says **Triana Newton**, Regional VP-APAC, Dale Carnegie & Associates

AS TOLD TO DEEPSHIKHA THAKUR

Making difficult choices

When I started my career, back in the early 90s, I was among the few women at the management level. Workplaces were very different then. I used to work with McDonalds. I had been with them for years and many opportunities were awaiting me if I chose to stay. It was a fabulous organisation, but it had 24/7 operations and demanded a significant amount of my time. I decided to leave a secure career path, and an organisation I loved, to take care of my daughter and have a better work-life balance. I walked away from all the opportunities, from profit sharing and company cars, towards something that was not necessarily a well-defined career path at that point in time. It was a big leap of faith from security to uncertainty.

Since then, times have changed. People may not always need to make such difficult choices. Workplaces have matured a lot and it is becoming a level playing field, where performance matters more than nationality, gender, age, culture, etc. Soon, I believe, workplaces will be entirely based on merit, which is an added advantage



“Flying and long-distance running have helped me find balance in my work”

for everyone, especially women.


Organisations of today also acknowledge the increasing amount of pressure that everyone is dealing with. There are companies that work diligently to make the workplace as conducive and stress free as possible for employees. To add to that, with advancement of technology, we are living in an incredibly connected world. Also, there is Gen Y – a generation which is gender neutral and comes with a completely different set of aspirations. All these factors are contributing towards creating organizations where people can have fulfilling careers as well as a personal life. This is great news for everyone, especially women because now they can build their careers without compromising on family responsibilities.

Pursuing a passion along with a successful career and family responsibilities

Many people see an airplane go by and get fascinated. I was no different. I have always been attracted to flying and I was fortunate enough to be able to save up enough money to pursue my passion. I started with my

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The pursuit of perfection is fatal because we cannot be perfect for the family, for the business and for all other things. So we need to surrender that. Instead, try to give your best

private pilot licence and then moved on to a commercial one and it took off from there. Connections and relationships in flying led to my involvement in the air show industry, and I subsequently became the President of the Northwest council of air shows.

As far as balance between work, passions and family is concerned, I would not profess to have that equation figured out. Having said that, flying and long-distance running have helped me find balance in my work. It is an interesting parallel. In training, your right brain works whereas flying depends on the left brain. Work at Dale Carnegie is people centric. It is about human interaction, it is about transformational processes which allow people to tap into their achievement orientation, find those relationships and extend them to influence, whereas flying is more about processes and systems. The two crossing paths have helped me blend strategy and systems from flying and the people-perspective from Dale Carnegie.

Running disconnects me from all kind of distractions and gives me space and clarity to think. Many things that otherwise seem complex become a lot clearer. I do my best strategic thinking when I am running. Many of the initiatives we have now came as a by-product of running, and flying too. It is like getting the best of both worlds, or at least I hope that's the way it is.

About women in leadership


Research says that women are wired differently. Women have different leadership DNA that emphasises the emotional quotient as compared to their male counterparts. The high emotional quotient manifests in women building individualistic relationships, being focused on how people feel in their workplace

and being more in tune with the level of engagement of employees. Women also tend to focus more on building consensus, whereas men are more achievement and advancement driven and tend to ignore their teams in their pursuit of higher goals. Both men and women leaders have their advantages and disadvantages and we need to learn and borrow more from each other to build a great organisation.

To women professionals in India and the world

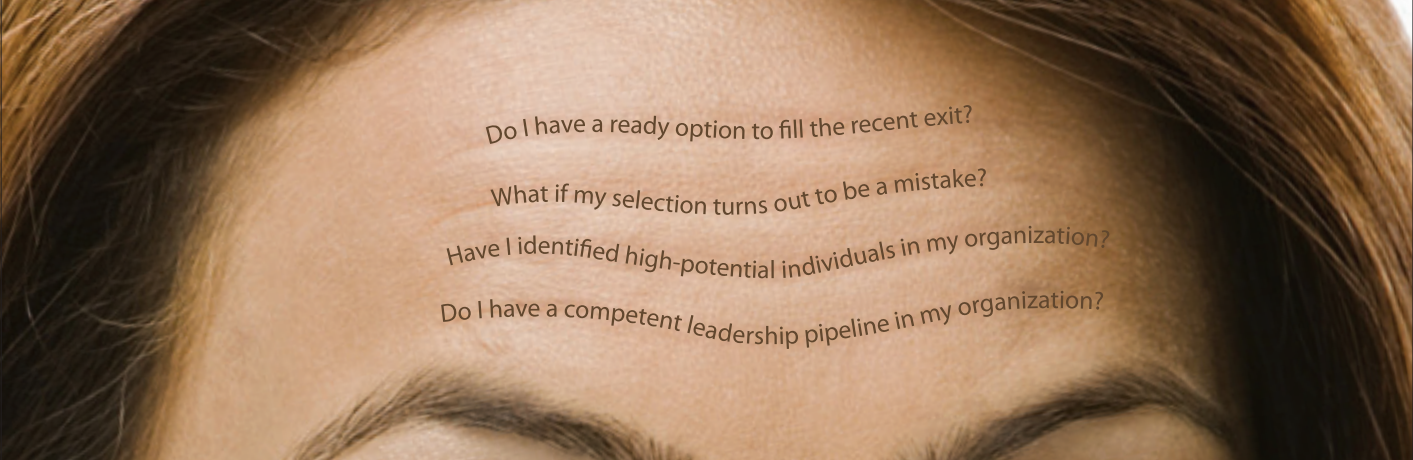
We need to drop the word 'perfect'. The pursuit of perfection is fatal because we cannot be perfect for the family and for the business and other things. So we need to surrender that. Instead, try to give your best. Then, decide once and for all who gets what percentage. Decide what your boundaries are with family, if you need more support and if you have the right resources to help you make quality time and not quantity time with family and children. In the workplace, decide what you need to do in order to organise your work life.

In order to become better, seek out mentors and coaches in the workplace who can help you be the best that you can be. Seek it out. Don't resist it just because you think that it will make you not as good or perfect. A mentor could be a peer or a junior, not necessarily someone senior, someone who can ask you the right questions, facilitate and have conversations that help you reach conclusions. Others could be experiential, someone who is doing what you want to do someday and can guide you.

Being a woman, you are blessed to be incredibly efficient at work and across organisations, women are valued for this quality. Embrace it, use it effectively, portion how work needs to be done, surrender perfection at work and say 'I will do the best I possibly can'. You need to draw a line somewhere. It is about finding a balanced approach. It will never be 100 per cent balanced, but as long as we are consciously trying, we can do it. As I said, I am on a journey too. If you are in the constant phase of development, sky is the limit. 

deepshikha.thakur@peplematters.in

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A Tale of Two Options

Organisations debate the relevance of flexible working hours as they struggle to streamline costs and engage employees

By **Deepshikha Thakur**

Marissa Mayer's decision to ban work from home at Yahoo! has ignited an international debate over workplace flexibility. And one month down the line the rumour mills are still humming. What makes this topic so sensational that every one working in the corporate world seems entitled to have an opinion on it? How do you define flexible working? Why should organisations and businesses, small and large, welcome flexible working and what is the business case for doing so?

Coming back to Yahoo!, these knee-jerk reactions seem to be missing the forest for the trees. Marissa Mayer is the fifth CEO of Yahoo! in the last six years and the youngest head of a Fortune 500 company. Hired from Google, Mayer is expected to turn around Yahoo!'s fortunes. Yahoo! has missed the two biggest trends on the internet – social media and mobile. Its email services and home page have become relics used by people who never bother to try new things. It ceded its top spot as the biggest seller of display ads to Facebook & Google and its stock price is consistently plummeting.

The policy change affects some 200 people out of Yahoo!'s 12,000 employees (a measly 2 per cent). Mayer has a big turnaround to execute and this step is just a bold move in that direction. It reflected in Yahoo!'s statement post the controversy, which said, "This isn't a broad industry view on working from home. This is about what is right for Yahoo!, right now."

However the point to be noted here

is that the debate around flexiwork has generated reactions from men and women alike. Flexible working hours is no longer a women's issue. In fact, in a survey conducted by Cisco in 2012 of 2,800 college students and young professionals under 30 in 14 countries, one out of three respondents said he/she would prioritise social media freedom, device flexibility, and work mobility over salary in accepting a job offer.

The universal outcry about one policy change in Yahoo! is actually a reflection of the changing demographics, blurring gender lines and the inclination of people to pursue lives that fit what they truly want to be.

What is flexiwork?

In HR terminology, flexiwork allows an employee to better manage the time and place in which they work. It may also involve an option to move from part-time to full-time and back again and options such as career breaks for personal or family responsibilities.

Flexiwork finds its genesis in the management philosophy of Results Only Work Environment (ROWE) developed by Cal Ressler and Jody Thompson, wherein employees are measured on the basis of results rather than the number of hours worked. ROWE is based on the premise that giving employees complete control over their time is the best way to increase productivity in the workplace. Managers focus only on results, while employees get to decide when and how they get the work done. First introduced in Best Buy, ROWE has since then been adopted by 40 companies

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including GAP, Yum brands etc. However, it doesn't work for all roles, especially those that require physical presence.

What makes flexiwork so desirable?

The Personal Productivity Challenge by Microsoft found that employees average only three productive days per week despite spending 45 hours a week in office. The survey results indicate that being in office certainly does not guarantee productivity and comes as a rude shock in times when organisations are trying hard to maximise productivity while trying to keep costs low.

Real estate costs today, represent the second biggest overhead after salaries for most organisations. In cities such as central London, the cost of a desk per person per annum is somewhere between \$19,000 and \$22,000. (Source: Whitepaper by Unwired Ventures Ltd.) With Connaught Place, New

The secret to arriving at a flexiwork strategy that works for a company is to find a balance between achieving optimum level of motivation and productivity

Delhi, being the fourth most expensive office location in the world, Mumbai's Bandra Kurla complex the eighth most expensive region in APAC and five Indian cities (Delhi, Banaglore, Chennai, Pune, Kolkata) with top rental growth in APAC (Source: Cushman & Wakefield, "Office space across the world 2013") real estate will be a significant cost driver for organisations in India too. In order to maximise productivity, it serves to have a flexible work environment.

People have busier and more complicated lives than ever before, with mobile email further blurring the lines between professional and personal work. Research by Underwires Ventures Limited shows that on an average people spent 54 minutes commuting to their workplace. Numbers could be more daunting in developing

countries where cities are becoming increasingly congested. Traffic speed in major cities of India can be as low as 5 km per hour during peak traffic hours and experts say that cities is heading towards a gridlock. (Source: Economic Times, State Traffic Police Departments). Enabling flexiwork would mean that employees can actually work in the time they spend to commute to work.

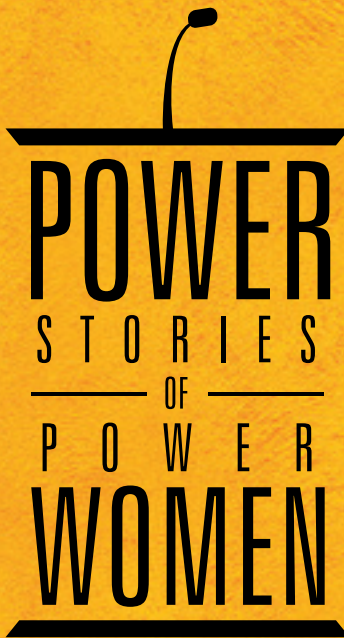
Workplaces of today especially in India have a multigenerational workforce creating a unique challenge because each generation has its own characteristics, aspirations and preferred way of working. Millennials (Generation Y) believe in equality at the workplace and like to have a life beyond work. With increased advancement in technology, the millennials do not believe that they need to be at a specific place at a specific time in order to deliver results. Mukund Mohan, CEO in Residence, Microsoft Accelerator, seconds them, "We found that different people have different times when they tend to be productive. We have meetings at a specific time when everyone needs to be available, even then people have the option to attend it virtually if they have a specific need."

With changing demographics, flexible working environment can be a powerful tool to attract and retain employees, while increasing productivity. As per a survey by Evolv, a workforce analytics start-up, the median retention rate of employees who are allowed to work from home is 28 per cent higher. P.V. Ramana Murthy, Senior Vice President, HR, Hindustan Coca Cola Beverages agrees. He says, "Many employees these days face challenges in terms of commuting to work, long working hours and balancing personal and work responsibilities. If we allow employees to be more flexible in terms of working, employee productivity certainly goes up. And because we are focusing on the needs of the employees and building a more inclusive organisation, engagement and retention also go up.

Shilpa Khanna, Director, Aon Hewitt, adds another dimension to the benefits of flexiwork. She says, "We need to look

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Although remote employees may be no less vigilant than onsite colleagues, they are more exposed to unsafe applications putting organisational data at risk

at business continuity and organisational sustainability, which I don't think many organisations are thinking about in India. What if there is a disaster and the office shuts down? Work can still continue if the organisation has enabled remote working. From a sustainability perspective, flexi work environment can be another alternative."

In terms of staffing strategy, remote working presents a major bonus to employers as it allows them access to out of reach skilled workers who live out of commuting range and would be reluctant or unable to relocate. Equally, it might also allow the retention of skilled and experienced staff whose circumstances change and who may otherwise have had to resign. The saving in recruitment and training costs alone could be substantial, especially in niche industries. Bhuvaneshwar Naik, Vice President - HR, SAP Labs India cites data from his organisation, "Since the time we have launched flexible work hours which gives employees the option to work from home, work part time or opt for flexible working hours, our maternity attrition that was 31 per cent in 2010 has come down to 4 per cent. And our employee engagement has gone up by 13 per cent which is the highest in the SAP world."

However, to capitalise on the benefits of flexiwork, organisations need to build enabling processes or the outcomes can be counter-productive.

The pitfalls

The Evolv survey, which also reported 28 per cent higher retention because of flexiwork, mentions that both offsite and onsite workers have a steep learning curve. However, office workers are faster than those who work from home after 90 days of work. Remote employees hit a plateau

at day 120 - and after 150 days of logging in from their house, they actually start to get slower. Remote workers do have to be able to motivate themselves to work independently and with less supervision. Some employees find this difficult and miss the direction and management they may have previously received from face-to-face contact. Productivity declines, more often than not, because management is unclear on expectations and measures.

Another reported disadvantage is a feeling of isolation. Some feel that they miss out on informal organisational discussions and even feel that they are less valued than their onsite colleagues.

Moreover, there are preconceptions that remote working is "easier" and remote workers tend to "skive off". A recent survey in Computer Weekly reported that "when their remote employees do not immediately answer their home or mobile phones, managers show some lapse of faith. Nearly a quarter think their employees are running household errands or shuttling the kids around, and 9 per cent believe they are being deliberately ignored." Managers still believe that it is easier to manage and track performance when employees are available and because of this perception, employees working in the office enjoy an increased chance of moving up the corporate ladder.

Another challenge with not being in office is of data security. Most organisations use broadband with Web Virtual Private Network (VPN) to provide a secure connection between two or more locations via the Internet. Web VPN is a remote access security platform, which provides relatively simple and secure access to applications and information they require. Although remote employees may be no less

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What do your employees really need?

	SUPPORT SEEKERS	CASUAL FANS	PAUSE-BUTTON PUSHERS	ALTERNATIVE CAREER PATH ENTHUSIASTS
Description	Looking for culture support, as more likely to be at firm without flex offering or with low flex usage	Seek continued career path progression with few concerns around travel or predictability	More mature, self assured employees seeking a challenging career and attractive rewards, but interested in leaves of absence	Younger generation seeking predictability over career trajectory
Care most about (overall)	Leadership support Supervisor support Challenging work Visible results	Supervisor support Challenging work Visible results Fair compensation	Challenging work Visible results Fair compensation Leadership support	Fair compensation Challenging work Leadership support Increased predictability
Care most about (relatively)	Supervisor support Leadership support Direct report support Critical mass	Path to promotion Mentor/recruiting Office extracurricular options	Visible results Challenging work Fair compensation	Increased predictability Not on call Less travel
Care least about (relatively)	Office extracurricular options	Increased predictability Being on call Less travel	Supervisor support Direct report support Leadership support	Path to promotion Visible results Challenging work
Best-fit flexible model	Low preference for specific model; want proof flex can work	Flex hours	Leave of absence	Part time

Source: Flexible Work Model Survey by Bain & Company Inc (2010)

vigilant than onsite colleagues, they are more exposed to unsafe applications putting organisational data at risk.

Organisations, which employ remote workers, might also suffer a significant loss of cohesive identity.

There is another challenge unique to India, “The social structure of India doesn’t support work from home. If you are working from home, families assume that you are not working. Secondly, most people don’t have space for an office in our homes. In the US, all people have dedicated spaces at home to work,” says Khanna.

One size fits all?

While the debate about flexiwork is universal, the fact is undeniable that not all jobs are suited to remote working and there are equal numbers of drawbacks as there

are benefits to remote working. Some tasks lend themselves better than others, requiring long periods of uninterrupted work without any collaboration while others need staff to be on-site and available during working hours. Raghavendra K., Vice President & Head HR, Infosys BPO, talks about his organisation, “Unlike other organisations, we work on client networks on behalf of our customers. So our customers need to authorise remote working because it involves data security, confidentiality etc.

Identifying sound business reasons for flexible working will not only assuage concerns which some organisations have about flexible working hours, it will also provide an opportunity to look at and make positive changes in the way work is organised – the win-win situation which mutually benefits the business and the employee.

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Genpact has a flexiwork policy based on specific roles. "Depending on his/her role, an employee can avail the benefits after getting the requisite approval from his/her manager," says Piyush Mehta, Senior Vice President, HR, Genpact. Organisations need to define which role needs employees to be onsite and could allow employees in those roles to choose their working hours from fixed time slots.

Investment in the right technology is another critical aspect of enabling flexi work. As Hemant Behal, Senior Vice President - HR, Ceat Tyres says, "We have developed a mobile application for some teams. This gives the employees access to various sales and production data and reports on a real time basis thus increasing productivity on the go."

Next is the factor of enabling team work and collaboration. Should it be a 100 per cent work from home or should there be certain points in time where people should come together or are there other ways to leverage technology to drive innovation and collaboration?

The current performance management systems also needs to move from an effort based performance management system to a result based performance management system, putting the pressure back on HR to define clear metrics.

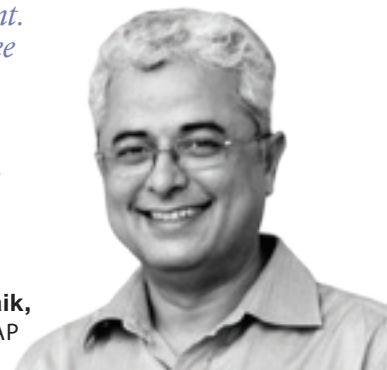
The secret to arriving at a flexiwork strategy that works for a company is to find a balance between achieving optimum level of motivation and productivity. Ultimately, organisations need to decide how best to empower people and hold them accountable. A more specific, and individually targeted, work from home policy that supports both team and individual productivity, with clear goals for each, will most likely help firms evolve over time.

Lastly, whether or not employees can work from home depends on the state the organisation is in. An organisation like Yahoo! or Best Buy, which is going through a crisis and is in need of a magical turnaround, may need all-hands-on-deck. And remote working may not work for them at all. **PM**

deepshikha.thakur@peplematters.in

Since the time we have launched flexible work environment which gives employees the option to work from home, work part time or opt for flexible working hours, our maternity attrition that was 31 per cent in 2010 has come down to 4 per cent. And our employee engagement has gone up by 13 per cent which is the highest in the SAP world.

Bhuvaneshwar Naik,
Vice President HR, SAP
Labs India Pvt Ltd



Awareness and implementation of the flexi-work policy has led to a systematic rise in the diversity mix of the employee base. Over the last 4 years, we have seen a rise of 37 per cent in the women employee population in our organization. We have also observed a year on year decline in the employee attrition percentage which is in low single digits now.

Rajiv Burman,
Director HR, India
& China, Microsoft



As per a survey by Evolv, a workforce analytics startup, the median retention rate of employees who are allowed to work from home is 28 per cent higher



To capitalise on the benefits of flexi work you need to build enabling mechanisms around it. On its own, people coming to work can also be unproductive. The fact that someone is working from home and someone is working from office doesn't necessarily make a person more or less productive.

Piyush Mehta, Senior Vice President HR, Genpact

Technology that enables remote working, an environment of trust, clear definition of outcomes and deliverables with strong monitoring mechanisms and the organisation's culture and philosophy are the four aspects to build an effective flexi work environment.

Raghavendra K, Vice President & Head Human Resources, Infosys BPO



At the end of the day it is the leadership mindset that is where it starts. It is a cultural change, which is where it needs to be fixed first before any of the other enabling processes can be established.

Shilpa Khanna, Director, Aon Hewitt

We have an initiative called One Simple Thing which one can use to pursue a hobby during a weekday or work from home once a week - the option of how one wants to use the OST is with the employee is approved by his/her manager

Suchitra Rajendra, Director, Organisational Capability, Pepsico India



The kind of challenges that employees face these days in terms of working – commuting to work, long working hours etc, if we allow employees to be more flexible in terms of working, employee productivity certainly goes up. And because we are focusing on the needs of the employees, and building a more inclusive organization, engagement and retention also go up.

P.V. Ramana Murthy, Senior Vice President, HR, Hindustan Coca Cola Beverages

The nature of work doesn't allow us to work remotely. While flexibility tends to be more around timings, everyone comes to work on most of the days except one day which is a no meeting day. They can get their work done from wherever they want to

Mukund Mohan, CEO in Residence, Microsoft Accelerator



For few teams such as marketing and sales, we have developed a mobile application. This application gives the employees access to various sales and production data and reports on a real time basis thus increasing productivity on the go.

Hemant Behal, Senior Vice President - Human Resources, CEAT Tyres

We have taken several initiatives in technology to enable our people to be equally effective even when they are out of office premises. Some of these initiatives are remote secure access to official emails, installation of soft phones on laptops to enable connect on official phone extension while working from home, migration of important database to web-based portals, toll free access to international conference calls.

Sandeep Kohli, National Director HR, Ernst & Young



Three Companies

Three Approaches

Sector: **BPO**

Size of the organisation: Large (10,000+ employees)

Geographical spread: Spread across eight offices across APAC with headquarters in the USA

Nature of Business: Working on client network, 24/7 support. 80 per cent of the workforce in operations and the rest in support functions.

Policy recommendation:

a) Shift arrangements: Employees can choose the shift they want to work in after getting the requisite approval from their manager. While they need to work from office, they can choose the time.

b) Compressed workweeks: Employees have an option to work full time hours in less than the traditional five-day workweek by increasing the number of daily hours.

c) Flexibility in the amount of hours worked

i) Part-time work/reduced hours schedule: Employees have an option to work three days per week and get paid on a prorata basis.

ii) Job shares: Two or more employees share the duties of one full time project, with each person working on a part-time basis.

ii) Part-year work: An option to work only a certain number of months per year.

Note: The policy applies to everyone however, requisite approvals need to be taken from the immediate supervisor before availing the benefits.

Exceptions to the policy: Enabling functions such as finance, HR etc which do not have to log in to client network can avail remote working as well.

Here are a few of our suggestions for companies that want to incorporate more **flexible work arrangements** into their HR policies

Sector: **Software development firm**

Size of the organisation: Small (500+ employees)

Geographical spread: Spread across two offices in India

Nature of business: Development of software based on client requirements. Informal work environment with 90 per cent of the workforce comprising engineers working in collaboration with clients and enjoy a high degree of autonomy.

Policy recommendation:

Policy recommendation: No defined policy at all. Employees can choose to work from wherever they want to and at whatever time, as long as their manager approves and the targets are met.

Sector: **Consulting**

Size of the organisation: Medium (3,000+ employees)

Geographical spread: Spread across four offices across the world with headquarters in the USA

Nature of business: Business and strategy consulting firm

Policy recommendation:

a) Flexibility in Work Scheduling: Schedules based on an employee's needs within set parameters approved by a supervisor. E.g.: Adjust arrival and departure times or define new standard work hours (as long as they are available during the "core hours").

b) Compressed workweeks: Employees have an option to work full time hours in less than the traditional five-day workweek by increasing daily hours worked.

c) Flexibility in the amount of hours worked

i) Part time work/reduced hours schedule: Employees have an option to work three days per week and get paid on a prorata basis.

ii) Job Shares: Two or more employees share the duties of one full time project, with each person working on a part time basis.

ii) Part-year work: An option to work only a certain number of months per year.

d) Flexibility in the place of work

i) Telecommuting/work from home: Employees can work remotely from a place of their choice leveraging technology.

ii) Telecommuting/working from satellite office: Employees can work remotely from a designated satellite office.

ii) Alternative locations: Employees can work from different offices based on their needs.

Note: The policy applies to everyone however, requisite approvals need to be taken from the immediate supervisor before availing the benefits.

Exceptions to the policy: Employees availing these benefits need to be in office when required for meetings etc.

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Assessing your organisation's readiness to introduce work from home arrangements

Do you want to know if your organisation is ready to provide **work from home policy to its employees**. Take this quick quiz to know the readiness levels

Q1. Does your organisation have businesses/jobs that are conducive to be executed from remote locations ie home site?

- A** Yes
- B** No
- C** Don't know

Q2. What proportion of your employees are in jobs that can be performed from remote sites, ie home sites, client/customer facing jobs?

- A** >60%
- B** 20% to 60%
- C** <20%

Q3. What percentage of your employees have expressed the need for work from home as a flexiwork arrangement?

- A** >60%
- B** 20% to 60%
- C** <20%

Q4. Who would you extend the work from home policy to?

- A** All employees
- B** Only women employees
- C** Employees with special requirements / needs

Q5. Can your organisation establish a robust set of metrics to measure productivity objectively and accurately?

- A** Yes

- B** No
- C** Don't know

Q6. What impact do you see/ foresee on the following as a result of work from home policy being implemented?

I) Employee productivity & engagement

- A** Positive impact
- B** No impact or neutral
- C** Negative impact

II) Employee retention and loyalty

- A** Positive impact
- B** No impact or neutral
- C** Negative impact

III) Career growth opportunities and performance evaluation

- A** Positive impact
- B** No impact or neutral
- C** Negative impact

IV) Customer satisfaction / customer experience

- A** Positive impact
- B** No impact or neutral
- C** Negative impact

V) Data privacy, client confidentiality & compliance

- A** Positive impact
- B** No impact or neutral
- C** Negative impact

VI) Real estate & Infrastructure costs

- A** Positive impact

- B** No impact or neutral
- C** Negative impact

Q7. Would the organisation prefer to keep work from home policy as a formal or informal arrangement?

- A** Formal
- B** Informal
- C** Don't know

Q8. As an "Employer of Choice" should a work from home policy be part of your organisation's Employee Value Proposition?

- A** Yes
- B** No
- C** Don't know

Score >>

More **A**'s tend to indicate a favourable environment for success with work from home arrangements.

More **B**'s indicate less favourable outlook for implementing work from home successfully.

In case of more **C** being "Don't Know", the company may need more information before coming to a conclusion on work from home policy

Compiled by Aakriti Mamgain and Apurva Sharma, Consultants at Vyaktitva

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Life beyond the Mayer Decision

Future-proof your career against decisions like the one Marissa Mayer took at Yahoo!

BY ELANGO R.

The CEO of Yahoo! unleashed a week of frenetic tweeting, columnists preening with all and sundry weeping for the loss of work-from-home. How dare she do that? Some pointed out her privileged status of nannies, unlimited help and manicured nails as her undoing!

And when her counterpart at Best Buy followed suit, all hell broke loose. It was almost like the end of the free world, as we know it. Everyone and their dog was spouting sanctimoniously, from every platform that allowed them to air their views!

My response is to acknowledge that each of these organisations are doing what they need to do, to stay competitive and stay relevant. If I were an employee in either of these organisations, I'd throw my weight behind this decision, figure out the 'why' and look for ways to support the turnaround strategy. Shouldn't the greater good of the company supersede narrow personal interests?

While the jury is still out on that one, the bigger question on everyone's mind is - does this mean it's the end of flexi working the way we know of it today? Are these guys setting a trend for other companies to soon follow suit? Like popular fashion trends, you will see a slew of 'me-too' policy changes and several imitations of the original, irrespective of whether it even makes sense to the current context of the organisation!

This column, however, is not about whether work from home is right or wrong. I am not going to add to the experts' views, there is enough said and done! Instead, my 2 paise to you is - don't get too caught up in taking sides.

This too shall pass, and hopefully it will make way for a new-improved-workplace practice, that which is relevant to the dynamic work environment today. And when that happens, will you be ready? Are you future proofing yourself?

Prepare yourself

Organisations are known to go through cyclical changes in work styles and as a professional, you'd want to be on the right side of this change. Being ready and adapting ensures that you thrive, irrespective of the direction of the wind, because it is not the strongest of species that survives but the one that adapts the fastest. That would be applicable to just about everything in life, wouldn't it?

Work-from-home too was a big change for the Indian workforce when it was first introduced. Celebrated as a new-age perk, candidates were soon deciding which organisation to join based on whether they allowed this. Supervisors, however, went through a culture shock! They had no idea how to manage teams that weren't physically present and it personally took me some time to get used to the crying baby and barking dog syndrome.

But we all learnt. Employees learnt the balancing act, supervisors got over their stigma and new skills were honed - working and networking in a virtual environment, virtual presentation skills, etc. Life moved on.

Test your boundaries

Change isn't easy but then again, it provides an opportunity to test your boundaries. Here are 3 behaviours that will determine whether you are likely to thrive or just cope:

IN BRIEF

Employees who build successful careers are those who can cultivate the skills and the attitude to adapt to change

- 1) **Spot the signs** – Many a time, we miss the forest for the trees. To avoid being blindsided, stay alert, listen and register the signs of oncoming change. Was it referred to in the last team meeting? Did your manager check with you in your last 1-0-1? A well networked professional will acknowledge these signs and be forewarned and forearmed. Creating backup options ahead of the actual change can help you to not only deal with it but potentially thrive too.
- 2) **Ask yourself** – “What’s the worst that can happen?” This question will force you to look at the worst case scenario and then work back from there. If I have to take on a 2 hour commute every day, what does that translate into for me, my family, my personal commitments, etc? It’s prepping yourself to look at what could go wrong and find strategies to do your best to prevent or better still, decide what is non-negotiable.
- 3) **Try, test and experiment** – New patterns require an open mind and some time to generate a sense of comfort. Leaving your child at day-care for an hour extra each day, will take some getting used to. Give yourself room to explore different permutations and combinations – some of which you will fail at, before you write it off completely. But remember, this will change too and in the process, build new capabilities required to flourish in this era.

Utilise the power of personal connection

Having said all of the above, as we focus on building new capabilities, some existing ones we will have to continue to invest in and consciously grow from strength to strength. Once such capability that I would personally vouch for is ‘The Irreplaceable Power of Personal Interaction’. That connect over a coffee, a face to the email is very important, especially if you are flexi working or remote working. Most often, even when we get to office we miss this.

Here are some ways you can create and maintain a personal connection:

- 1) Schedule a call every day, with a different colleague from the immediate or larger team, to catch up on what’s happening in their world


Work-from-home too was a big change for the Indian workforce when it was first introduced

- 2) Ensure that you join weekly team calls without fail, and participate actively
- 3) Plan to visit your closest office at least once a month
- 4) Join a social event with colleagues at least once a quarter – this could be an official dinner or just a potluck at the office cafeteria.

In doing all of the above, maximise what technology can do for you, but don’t let it replace the value of human interactions. By the way, I have an app that does the equivalent of counting the sheep for me every night. Great fun, but the bedtime story ritual with my son, puts us out in record time!

Everyone has a choice, make yours

Work from home is, without doubt, a boon on days when your child is unwell, the plumber is due to visit, when you are under the weather or God forbid, when you’re caught in a vortex of all three.

Wait a minute. Why wouldn’t you take a day off and pay attention to the wildly important task at hand? Why do we choose not to exercise that well earned day off? Choices have a twisted way of impeding decisions and cloud our mind from making that ‘either or’ decision. Instead, we go for an ‘and’ approach and probably do justice to neither. There will be points in our career where choices will require trade offs. Playing the game with a combination of the hand that you draw and that which you are dealt, will ensure that you are firmly placed on the saddle and safely strapped in to take on the Mayer Effect. CEOs will come and go; work cultures and working arrangements will come a full cycle, but thinking through what you read above will help you future proof your career. 

(I am grateful to Dr Tanvi Gautam, for her interesting blogs titled ‘What lies beneath’ and ‘Real Men Don’t Need Work Life Balance’. While these blogs were definitely thought starters for my article, the views and thoughts expressed are my own.)

Elango R. is Executive VP - Emerging Geographies SBU and Global CHRO at Mphasis

AUTHOR'S TAKE



Tap into the idealism of the young

Managers should focus on tapping into Gen Y's sense of idealism and possibility, instead of the superficial inter-generational differences

BY R. SANKAR

It has become commonplace to speak about Gen Y. Just as the boards of every multinational company want their chief executive officers to have a BRICs strategy, so does every HR head talk about a Gen Y strategy. The implication is that the new generation is so markedly different from its predecessor that managers, who often belong to an earlier generation, must be taught new skills to engage, motivate and deal with them. This has led to the popularity of reverse mentoring, a process whereby the older employee learns new tricks from his younger subordinate.

When asked about the ways in which the new generation differs from the old, answers invariably point to the way younger people dress and talk, the extent and manner in which they are networked and their dexterity with social media and communication devices. While these are important differences, they do not constitute a generational gulf that is bigger than those between any two generations heretofore. Except perhaps in pre-historic times, man's incessant and unceasing efforts to master the forces of nature with a view to creating for himself a better life has meant that each generation is born into a world that will in many respects be different from that of its progenitors. Inter-generational differences in ways and mores have always marked the history of man's progress, even if the pace of change is higher today than ever before.

Furthermore, it has always been recognised that certain skills decline and certain others improve with age. And that

therefore the young will be better equipped to carry out certain tasks than the old, in addition, of course, to bringing higher levels of energy and a fresh way of viewing things.

Does this mean that we are over playing Gen Y and that it is all idle chatter or a fad?

In the discourse on inter-generational differences, too much attention is focused on the externalities – dress and deportment and technological adeptness – and too little on the abiding characteristic of the young: their sense of possibility, starry-eyed idealism and sense of purpose. The young believe they can change the world for the better. They dare to dream. They are unafraid of questioning hallowed traditions and long-held and cherished beliefs. They are willing to risk all for the causes they hold dear until age blunts the edge of idealism and experience (or as some would say, wisdom) pushes them into the folds of cynical respectability. It is not a coincidence that the young have been at the forefront of societal change. The Vietnam protests, the Arab Spring, India against Corruption and the Delhi protests against

IN BRIEF

Organisations should understand the true meaning of diversity that Gen Y offers to be able to capitalise on this source of positivity and energy that can propel it to greater heights

Leaders must stop using industry forums for narrow gain, but give their collective voice to policies and actions that are in the nation's larger interests

the gruesome incident of gang rape have been led or sustained by youth.

What does this portend for employers and enterprise? We are a young nation, not nearly 70 years independent and with as much as 50 per cent of our population below 25 years of age. We would be wasting an opportunity if we did not tap into the potentially limitless reservoir of idealism and sense of purpose and self-belief that resides in the millions of young people in our country.

Increasingly, young people seek credible and authentic leadership, imbued with a sense of purpose. They are also attracted to organisations which use fair business practices and are socially responsible. They like to work for managers who allow them the freedom to question and to speak their mind, who listen well and can inspire them through the power of example. At a time when capitalism and private enterprise have had their sheen dulled by avarice and irresponsibility in the West and cronyism in our country, it behoves business leaders and managers, by example and precept, to show young employees that profit is not a dirty word and that good business and a good society are not strange bedfellows.

By putting people over profits, by forsaking the dodgy for the straight and narrow and providing principle-centred leadership, business leaders can delay the onset of cynicism in the young and instil in them the belief that business can play a transformative role in society.

Going further, business leaders must make bold to speak up against the wrongs they see in society. It won't do for them to say "it is none of our business". Just as importantly, they must stop using industry forums for narrow gain, but give their collective voice to policies and actions that are in the nation's larger interests.

Above all, they must imbue their business with purpose – an overarching aim that defines who they are and why they exist – that transcends the immediate and that inspires people to give their creative best. This does not mean crafting high-sounding purpose statements or straining to find altruistic intent where none exists. Rather, it is the consistent, simple and honest espousal of the value the business generates for all those it affects and comes in contact



Young people like to work for managers who allow them the freedom to question and to speak their mind, who listen well and inspire them through the power of example

with and the principles that govern its operations. Most importantly, it is the living of the principles, especially when, as often happens, they come into conflict with short-term considerations.

Through such means, business leaders can yoke a sense of purpose to the economic weal. It is through such a twinning that businesses can truly become a force for change. And it is by striving to become agents of change that businesses can tap into the wellspring of idealism that animates the young and truly distinguishes them from the old.

So, can we stop viewing Gen Y through the lens of the ephemeral, the superficial and the transitory and start viewing them through the prism of the abiding and the important? **PM**

(R. Sankar is an Executive Director with PwC India and the leader of the firm's People and Change Consulting. He can be contacted at sankar.ramamurthy@in.pwc.com)

Call of the weird 'n wacky

Out-of-the-box job titles are not uncommon now as employees strive to give their workplace a bit of zing and colour

BY ANU KURIAN

Ben Metcalfe proudly calls himself the Chief Trouble Maker. It seems like the perfect tag for the co-founder of WP Engine, who is a hacker-turned-independent consultant. He advises leading internet companies on product development and open platform strategy for websites and apps built with WordPress.

If you thought that was crazy enough, check these out: Founding Mobster, Hunterwali, Director of First Impressions and Director of Storytelling, Brewmaster, Brand Evangelist, Chief Fun Officer, etc.

I know that you are scratching your head at this list. Ok, let me explain. Brewmaster is a brewer responsible for the production of beer in a brewery; Director of First Impressions is actually a fancy title for a receptionist, while Founding Mobster is a euphemism for founder.

And Hunterwali is not the movie in which Fearless Nadia aka Mary Evans Wadia starred. Rather, it is the designation of Mehak Sabat, head of Bollywood content, The Glitch. The moniker was bequeathed to her after she fired three people in the first week of her job!

These days, companies are flexible in terms of how they deal with employees and even encourage them to showcase their

bizarre side. They feel it instils a sense of pride among the employees and allows them to tap their 'cool' quotient. Out-of-the-box job titles are not uncommon now as employees strive to give their workplace a bit of zing and colour.

That is what the British thought they were doing when they decided to call their lifeguards 'wet leisure assistants', but somehow that missed the spot. The ninjas, on the other hand, seem all over the place, especially in the retail and sales areas. But for a Boston-based company, SCVGNR, its Chief Ninja worked his charm on venture capitalists and got his company \$32 million so far.

With employees spending more and more time at the workplace, a wacky job title seems like a dash of colour in the corporate world where everything is in black and white. Remember how Prasoon Joshi came up with the Chief Happiness Officer title? The current Chief Happiness Officer at McCann Erickson, Bharat Oswal, likes to describe himself as "Me.. Myself.. & JUGAAD.. Marwadi Keeda" on his LinkedIn profile. I guess that is what happiness does to you. Another ad agency Glitch describes its work as "we practice Brandalism, copyfighting, mocketing and believe in erosion of integrity".

People opt for out-of-the-box job titles as it helps them to stand out in the crowd given that one is likely to remember such designations than the run-of-the-mill ones. Of course, it also depends on what kind of company you are working for. The trend is noticed mostly in advertising, media, information technology and start-up companies.

With employees spending more and more time at the workplace, a wacky job title seems like a dash of colour in the corporate world where everything is in black and white

Quirky job titles are great conversation starters as they raise eyebrows and curiosity quotient sky-high. With titles such as Chief Popsicle, Chief Executive Pickle, Digital Overlord, Web Alchemist and a Modality Manager, you are bound to at least go shake hands with the person!

Besides, they are great conversation starters as they raise eyebrows and curiosity quotient sky high. I mean with titles such as Chief Popsicle, Chief Executive Pickle, Digital Overlord, Web Alchemist and a Modality Manager, you are bound to at least go shake hands with the person!

However, what will you do if someone's CV read this: Problem Wrangler, Wizard of Light Bulb Moments, Digital Dynamo, Chief Instigation Officer or Chief Thought Provoker. It might lead to curiosity of a different kind, like what exactly is that you does this person do?


The question is that do we really need such titles? At the end of the day, it all boils down to the work one does. One has to tread really carefully while trying to appear "fun" on public platforms. You never really know whom you are going to rub off in the wrong way. A random look at profiles in LinkedIn shows that even though people are willing to show their quirky side to the world, they still mention the official job title.

Job titles not just reflect the responsibilities of the person in-charge, but also mirror what the company stands for. For example, software major Dell takes honesty and integrity of its employees very seriously. So, the company created the post of Chief Ethics, Privacy and Compliance Officer.

In the Indian context, Kishore Biyani-led Future Group roped in physician-turned-mythologist Devdutt Pattanaik as Chief Belief Officer. Widely regarded as a management



guru, Pattnaik in his own words was to "pay attention to the value of belief in business as belief shapes behaviour, which shapes business." Of course, Biyani's idea paid dividends and Devdutt is now a celebrated author on the subject.

But just when you think you have seen it all, more surprises crop up. I just came across these insane job titles and I don't know what to make of them. If you do, please let me know. Chief People Herder, Chatter Monkey, Public Happy Maker, Social Media Rockstar/Evangelist/Missionary, Head of Interactions, Community Data Guerrilla, Social Media Swami, Retail Jedi, Wicked Witch Of The Web... 

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Illustration by Suneesh Kalarickal



March Madness

Every year around bonus and increment time, business and HR managers start worrying about attrition of high potential talent

BY SONAL AGRAWAL

As Asia continues to grow, albeit at a slower pace, there is no shortage of takers for top quality talent. And as companies struggle globally with slowing growth and lack of internal opportunities, the growth paths are slower, less visible.

Often with millennials, engagement levels are perceived to be lower, with boredom and impatience looming large. Sometimes, a desire to move is about a bad boss, or an unattractive assignment. Occasionally a general dissatisfaction, and only the timing is governed by the bonus payouts. And of course, sometimes it is actually about the money.

So what should managers be doing to prepare for the disruptive exodus that they may get hit by?

Start well in advance. Before the bonus or increment announcements, prepare your workforce, start assessing and recalibrating expectations. Share company performance data and use the performance management system to give feedback to individuals. Ensure that there is a reasonable amount of clarity in variable pay norms. Assess what the competition is likely to be doing – gather data points, mark to market.


At the same time, watch for the signs that someone is signing out. Usually engagement levels drop, unexpected half day leaves, increased activity on LinkedIn, furtive phone calls in empty conference rooms. This gives you an opportunity to prepare.

Anticipate and be tactical. Should you have a limited pool, think through whether you would like to use the pool to ring-fence high performers or spread the rewards in a more socially equitable way. Is your Performance

Management System robust enough to support discrimination? How can this be positioned? What are the likely outcomes? Are you using all the tools you have – rewards can often as much about recognition or visible perquisites?

After the announcement, step up the engagement. One on one if possible, reinforce the compensation philosophy, listen, allow people to vent. If someone quits, don't close the door, engage in a dialogue. Ask what would make them stay, particularly non-monetary rewards. Flexi time? A department change? Chance to work on a new project? A nicer car? A designation change? I'm not suggesting that you submit to blackmail, but at least attempt to examine root causes, so that you have a shot at retaining them without busting your budget.

Have a Plan B. Work through what might happen, who could step into which roles from within, which jobs would need to be filled from outside, what roles and structures could be tweaked. Estimate replacement costs. Assess where talent lies, internally and externally. Perhaps, engage a search firm to conduct a market mapping exercise as a precursor to a search, so you have a four-week headstart on a replacement.

In the longer term, retention strategies don't differ much – whether it is March or mid-year. Is your company a great place to work? If there is a crisis, is there leadership? Do people enjoy working for you? Is there visibility in career paths? Do people know the specifics of achievement and activity required to progress up the ladder? 

Sonal Agrawal is Managing Partner at Accord Group India

Watch for signs that someone is signing out. This gives you an opportunity to prepare



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The Counsellor

How can we consciously ensure diversity of thought and experience in the organisation?

Vivek Paranjpe, Consultant & Strategic HR Advisor to Reliance Industries answers professional and ethical dilemmas faced by our readers at their workplace



I have a high performer who has been given an 'exceeds expectation' rating, but is however very unhappy due to the increment offered by the organisation. He is likely to leave, since he has made his discontent very obvious. He is a star performer and we do have things planned for him in the future. He is being considered for a promotion if he continues to perform the way he has been. However, I cannot give him this information right now. How can I ensure he stays engaged and continues on this track of high performance and rightfully claim the future promotion we have planned for him?

— **Ms How-to-motivate-without-giving-away-information**

Dear Ms How-to-motivate-without-giving-away-information

Not an unusual situation. I believe you need to understand the exact reason for his discontentment and the possible reasons for your apprehensions that he is planning to quit. Are the reasons compensation related or are the reasons related to growth or something else, may be a combination of the various factors? Depending on what the reality is, a strategy can be worked out.

If this person is a top performer, as you have stated, and has the possibility of getting promoted in the near future, some

retention bonus can be a solution. If the reason for the possible exit is growth, show him the possibilities of growth within your company and assure this individual that growth is a distinct possibility in the current organisation itself, subject to the continued good performance and vacancy that is likely to emerge. An assurance of this nature from the immediate and the skip-level manager coupled with a robust development plan will ensure credibility of the communication.

If the vacancy exists today and if you believe this person is, say 70 to 80 per cent ready, you may consider promoting him immediately. Such a promotion should also be coupled with a strong development plan that will lead to bridging the gaps that may exist.

You will appreciate that being secretive is not necessarily a good strategy. We need to be transparent and demonstrate our intentions, if we are really keen on retaining such top performers. What is in your mind should be known to the individual and should be supported by the right actions, such as existence of development plans, existence of retention bonuses if necessary, etc.



I am the Head of HR of an IT product company. Employees at my company are empowered to decide their own schedules and our work from home policies have generally been relaxed, given the nature of the projects we work on and the amount of individual work necessary. However, as we grow there is a feeling among top management that though the employees are clearly working hard and are meeting targets, the policy is too

We need to be transparent and demonstrate our intentions, if we are really keen on retaining such top performers

flexible and it is becoming difficult to track employees availing this policy and the managers are losing control of the output.

The senior leadership is in favour of doing away with the flexible work hours and approving them only on a case by case basis. However, preliminary conversations with employees on the subject of modifying the flexible work policies have been met with strong resistance. I'm afraid forcing this change might lead to disengagement and higher attrition rates. What is the best way to make the employees understand the organisation's benefit from this change? Also, what all should I be prepared for once this change has been put into effect?

— **Ms. HR-head-who-is-walking-a-tightrope**

Dear Ms HR-head-who-is-walking-a-tightrope

Concept of flexible work is highly misunderstood. Flexi work (flexi timing, time and place from where I can work, etc.) in normal course should not lead to the type of issues you are facing, if the policy is implemented in its right spirit.


Let us look at the principles that you may like to follow:

1. We measure employees for the output or the performance and not for the hours they clock in.
2. We must provide adequate flexibility to our employees, so that they are able to strike the work and life balance.
3. Work and life balance initiatives should not hamper team work and also the business needs of the corporation. It has to be very well understood that business needs have to be dealt with first, and while doing that if we can accommodate employee needs, we should certainly do so.
4. Work-life balance initiatives like flexible work options should lead to superior output/performance and improved employee satisfaction – both are important, not one at the cost of another.
5. Flexible work arrangements should not come in the way of necessary team work and become an impediment in the seamless execution of the entire value chain.
6. Flexible work arrangements should not disempower the managers/supervisors from their rights to schedule /allocate the work, demand output, review performance, call for the individual/team

meetings for various reasons like reviews, communication, team briefings, etc.

In any classical flexi working arrangement, the employee and the manager/supervisor should agree on how and when the work will be performed, with all the stakeholders in the value chain fully made aware about the individual arrangements. Flexi work should not lead to mismanagement. No manager/supervisor should have more than 10/15 people reporting to him/her and this manager should be in full control of the team as regards work allocation, scheduling and the output/performance. I will strongly recommend that do not

Resistance to any change is not uncommon, however this should not deter you from making the change

do away with the flexi work policy, just establish the principles and the desired outcomes. Resistance to any change is not uncommon. However, this should not deter you from making the change. Just make sure both the business as well as the employees' interests are well taken care of. If you follow all the principles laid down above, collectively and not in isolation, you should have less resistance in driving the change. Any well-educated and reasonable employee will understand that all these principles collectively are equally important. If some of them don't understand this reasonable view point, in spite of persuasive communication from the management and therefore quit – let them go. Work discipline and output is as important as the freedom and flexibility. You can't have freedom and flexibility without the commensurate responsibility and accountability. 

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



Employees First or Customers First?

Most organisations, not just the best workplaces, know that to win in the market for customers, they have to win in the talent market first

BY PRASENJIT BHATTACHARYA

We all know that we operate in two markets - the market for customers and the market for talent. Both these markets have changed significantly. The changes in the market for customers have been well chronicled and needs no illustration. For most products and services, we are in a 'buyer's market' where the customer has a choice – the balance of power is in favour of the customer.

The talent market has not been studied as well, particularly by managers in organisations, partly because the customer is looked upon as 'somebody else', while talent is 'us'! It is always easier to study others than ourselves. When we look at talent as 'others', we often slot people as Gen Y, baby boomers, Gen X and so on. While these are interesting constructs, they are meaningful only because of the context for these generations.

What we miss in our obsession with studying the behaviours of the younger generation is that, like our customers, they have a choice and they are exercising their choice. The balance of power has shifted.

Most organisations, not just the best workplaces, know that to win in the market for customers, they have to win in the talent market first. Most organisations have specific initiatives that they have launched to win in the talent market, just like the steps they have taken to win in the market for customers.

Yet, most of our organisations have different standards when it comes to customers and employees. Here are some illustrations:

What we miss in our obsession with studying the behaviours of the younger generation is that, like our customers, they have a choice and they are exercising their choice

1. Customer is always right, employees are sometimes right

It seems everyone understands that the customer is the king. Who is an employee? The accepted axiom is that even if a customer is wrong, apologise first and figure out what to do later. The best workplaces we study are often obsessed about ensuring the right customer experience, but not at the cost of the employee. In one of the best workplaces, the global CEO of the company flew down to inform one of their biggest customers in the local country office that his business was no longer solicited because he mistreated an employee.

2. No hierarchy for customers, only for employees

In a recent interaction with a manufacturing organisation, the senior management team opined that while it was not easy for a junior person to walk into the cabin of a senior

IN BRIEF

Valuing employees like we value our customers is the key to capturing both the talent and customer markets

executive without an appointment, even the junior-most person would find the doors of the senior-most executive open – if he said he was from a customer’s organisation. In contrast, over 80 per cent of employees in the global best workplaces list of Great Place to Work® Institute say that management is approachable, easy to talk with.

3. Proactive communication versus reactive justification

Some months ago, the manufacturer of my car wrote to me stating that based on their internal checks, as a measure of abundant caution, they would like to change one part. The part was working well and I was impressed that this company was going to such lengths. Much later, I read in the newspapers that they had recalled/replaced this part in thousands of cars of a particular model. It was a great feeling that I got to know from them before I got to know from the newspaper. But, had they informed their own employees first? Whether it is Cadbury or Mindtree, employees of best workplaces know that they will hear both good and bad news first from their managers.

4. Individualised treatment versus one size fits all

Every time you try and purchase something at Amazon.com, you are amazed by how books that you like are on top of the screen! Amazon tracks your reading choices - it does not try to force you to buy what they want to sell, it takes you to what you want to buy. How many times has an employee come with a request only to be told it cannot be sanctioned as per current policy! RMSI, one of the best workplaces we have studied, has a policy exception site - to enable employees to log in their requests for policy exceptions with reasons, so that management can transparently take decisions on policy exceptions.

5. Even an average customer is important

We will hate to break a commitment, even to a customer who is giving us average revenue. Priority will be given to commitments made to customers rather than commitments made

to employees, particularly employees with “average” performance. We hear a lot about programmes for “strategic talent”, very little about average performers.


6. Instant gratification versus unnamed future rewards

If a customer cannot wait, we will have to stretch to meet his deadline. An employee has needs too, but our assumption seems to be that surely if he works hard and performs well, he will ultimately get what he deserves. (“Deserve before you desire”). Best workplaces like AmEx have published their compensation bands, so that employees know what they can hope to get based on what level of performance.

Many organisations have been able to change the mindset that comes in the way of recognising that to be successful, you cannot treat your employees as less important than your customers

7. We exist to serve the customer; our employees exist to serve us!

Though expressed half in jest by senior managers in a workshop, this can very well summarise the mindset of senior managers in many organisations, which exist with the duality that the customer is the boss and the boss is the customer.

No amount of people or employee first slogans will help if our entrenched mindset reflects the above. What is interesting is that so many organisations have been able to change the mindset that comes in the way of recognising that to be successful; you cannot treat your employees as less important than your customers. The Ritz-Carlton hotel sums it up aptly when it refers to its employees as “Ladies and gentlemen serving ladies and gentlemen”. 

Prasenjit Bhattacharya is CEO of Great Place to Work® Institute, India. Views expressed are personal. Prasenjit can also be contacted at prasenjit.bhattacharya@great-placetowork.com



When HR drives the employee

In an interview with People Matters, Rohit Hasteer, India Director HR, UTi Worldwide, shares insights on how keeping people at the center of HR activities can make overhauling of processes a tad easier

BY STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Being a part of an industry that depends heavily on the skills of its people, what kind of people do you hire, and what are the challenges that you face?

Like any other industry, in freight management also we prefer people with relevant expertise and skills. The problem is that this is a small industry. In India at the most there are 10-15 mentionable players. Due to this, there is a dearth of people with relevant expertise. On the flip side, due to the size of the industry, even people do not leave their jobs frequently. They know that they have to spend 25-30 years of their career in the same industry, amidst the same companies. The industry isn't very open to hiring people from the outside, so when these companies hire, references count for a lot. Combating these practices is a challenge in itself. To be able to make fair judgment, it is essential that the recruitment process is fair. The industry is waking up to this idea. Within our company, we are paying special attention to the fact that we hire talented people through a fair process.

IN BRIEF

A fair and quality recruitment process helps in hiring process and adopting a multi-pronged approach to streamline the HR functions

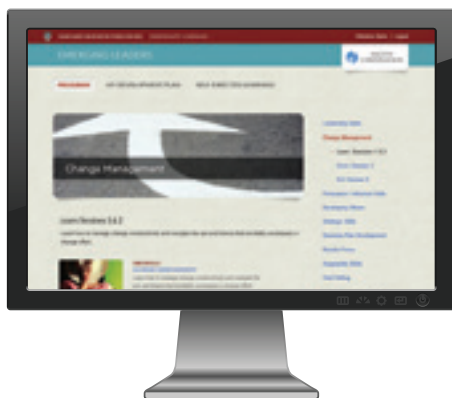
Did you explore some new recruitment options to be able to achieve this?

We realised that we needed to bring trust into play. Hence, instead of fully relying on outside agencies, we decided to internalise the process, as this gives us a direct control

When you are about to bring in such a radical change in existing processes, it takes time. Some people are excited about it and some are a bit sceptical about the results. That's a part of the whole thing

over hiring. Earlier, there was no ERP system, and the whole delivery mechanism depended on people. There were some systems in different offices at local levels, but there was no integration at the enterprise level. We understand that we need to be more organised on the people front. An essential part of it is recruitment. Hence, we focus more on quality hiring. Earlier, recruitment costs were very high because most of the recruitment was being done with the help of recruitment firms. We decided to make the process more efficient. Of late, we have been taking the help of job portals, and have cut down on the number of recruitment firms we were hiring through. We have revamped the entire hiring process. Now the entire process is metric driven; the HR is

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the owner of the recruitment process and is also accountable for a position not closing.

Do you think such culture changes are easy?

It may turn out to be a mixed experience. When you are about to bring in such a radical change in existing processes, it takes time. Some people are excited about it and some are a bit sceptical about the results. That's a part of the whole thing. During my travel to most of our branches, I realised a good thing: somewhere in their heart people wanted HR to come in across branches. I'll suggest that in such situations, HR should pick one piece at a time, but yes, it has to be swift.

What a company does for its employees in the L&D and employee engagement sphere is what makes a real impression on people

What were the main areas that you focussed on?

We adopted a multi-pronged approach. The first focus area was policy and process orientation. For this we looked at various processes such as hiring, on-boarding and training, to ensure that the HR team is ready to handle these changes well. Gradually, we made some changes to the team structure and focused on hiring more talented people. Overall, the power of the HR function improved significantly.

Our second focus area were people outside HR. What a company does for its employees in the Learning and Development and employee engagement sphere is what makes a real impression on people. The third focus area was getting the right feedback. The technicalities of the processes are more or less the same but HR is in a nascent stage in our industry, and we did not have a very successful model to replicate. We decided to rely heavily on the feedback, both of the senior leadership, and the junior and mid-level employees.

Do you in some way integrate with the global HR team as well?

Ours is a combination of global and local initiatives. Practices are fairly open, so they can be integrated with steps taken by the local HR team.


And what were the challenges that you faced in this process?

Challenges are a part of any change. Our focus was to build confidence among our staff. So we took one step at a time. To overhaul existing systems, it was essential to have the right people. I personally believe that there is limited talent in HR. For us, it was important to have the right set of people. Our HR team has been hand-picked and trained and that is how everything fell into place.

What kind of steps did you take?

We introduced some good benefits for employees, made our compensation structure tax-friendly, and took into account what people have to say regarding these steps. The focus is to keep people and their performance at the centre of things. So, besides some nice perks, we started a few interesting engagement exercises. For instance, whenever the CEO is travelling to any of our centres, he makes it a point to have lunch with a set of people, particularly the deputy managers and those below, because senior leaders anyway get a chance to interact with him. All this encourages open communication within the company.

We believe that HR processes and its engagement with people is an ongoing thing, and we are still upgrading our systems. We are working towards standardisation of processes and inculcating a common culture across centres.

Our global team conducts a Voice of UTi survey every year. Last year, 32 per cent of employees from our India team responded to this survey, and this year the percentage rose to 99.6 per cent. This is a culture change. People now want to come out in the open and talk about things. 

Rohit Hasteer is Director - HR at UTi Worldwide

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Ester Martinez, welcomed the audience with a question, “Which stage of the gender balance score card is your organisation in – asleep, token, starting smart, progressing, critical mass or balanced?” The question ignited an interesting debate. Dr. Reena Ramachandran cited the fact that of the 250 PSUs under central undertaking, there is not one woman CEO and proposed to increase the “critical mass” to have more women at the leadership level. Nandita Gurjar emphasised that the glass ceiling, is for both men and women.

Power Stories of Power Women

Organised by: People Matters

Level the playing field this Women’s Day

Speakers: Amita Kasbekar, VP- Diversity & Inclusion, Deloitte Consulting India; Anuranjita Kumar, Country Human Resources Officer, Citi; Asha Gupta, MD, Tupperware; Dr Reena Ramachandran, Former CMD, HOCL; Ester Martinez, Founder & Managing Editor, People Matters; Jyoti Rai, VP HR-Head HR India, American Express; Nandita Gurjar, SVP and Global Head HR, Infosys Technologies; Sairee Chahal, Co-founder, Fleximoms; Shaurav Sen, Executive Director, Corporate Executive Board



Power-packed panel leading the discussion

With eight accomplished speakers from across the industry and 50,000+ twitter reach, the event was a great start to a year long initiative

Key Takeaways:

- Women need to take charge of their own career, the biggest challenges are within.

1st National HR Shared Services Summit

Organised by: NHRDN

Leading transformations through HR shared services

Speakers: D. Prasanth Nair, Head- Global HR, Cipla; Rajiv Raghunandan, Practice Head & Associate, VP, Infosys BPO; Ramesh Ranjan, VP- HR Operations, Schneider Electric; Judhajit Das, Chief-HR, ICICI Prudential Life Insurance and many more.

The summit proved to be a great platform for knowledge and thought provoking discussion around HR shared services from the perspective of the employees and the management. The session ‘Change Management and Impact’ conveyed the message through real stories. Besides an exhaustive session on HR Shared Services, which

focused on the employee lifecycle transformation, an exhaustive session on technology insights, interactive sessions and expert-led discussions, highlighted the importance of wider application of shared services.

Key Takeaways

- Identifying and creating flexible service models through collaboration.

IndianOil HR Conclave 2013

Organised by: IndianOil Pipelines Division

Redefining Performance Management for Sustainable Growth

Speakers: V. S. Okhde, Director (Pipelines) IndianOil; Suneel Sethi, Executive Director (HR), IndianOil; Dr Prajapati Trivedi, Secretary (Performance Management), Cabinet Secretariat, Government of India; S.Y. Siddiqui, COO (Admn, HR, Finance, IT & COSL) Maruti Suzuki India.; Dr Anadi S. Pande, VP (HRM, Corporate Planning & Strategy) Hero MotoCorp. and many more.

V.S. Okhde in his inaugural address at the fourth edition of the day-long HR Conclave organized by Pipelines Division said that the hallmark of any good performance management system is that it should be able to measure performance against tangible business goals as well as unstructured tasks and should also be able to reflect

the true worth and potential of a person. Suneel Sethi said that the Conclave shall provide the ideal platform for the most practitioners in HR community in NCR to come together to share experiences and network further.

Key Takeaways

- Identifying the hallmark of a good performance management system.

CIMA & People Matters Roundtable

Organised by: **CIMA & People Matters**

L&D: Building Efficiency, Impacting Business

Speakers: Amit Malik, Director- HR, Aviva Life Insurance; Amit Aggarwal, SVP- Training & Development CSR & Diversity, Genpact; Anoop Vaid, Director- HR, The Leela Kempinski Hotel & Residences; Arati Porwal, Chief India Representative, CIMA; Anuj Taneja, Deputy VP HR, HDFC Bank; Arun Taneja, Head L&D India North, Tata Consultancy Services; Atima Mankotia, Head HR North, Reliance Broadcast Network; Deepak Behl, Dir- HR, The Grand; Deepak Bharara, Dir- Corporate HR, Lanco Infratech; Gautam Bhushan, Global Head - L&D, Ranbaxy Laboratories; Kedar Vashi, National Head - L&D, HCCB and many more.

This roundtable discussion organised by CIMA and *People Matters* focused on how crucial Learning and Development is and the need to link it with the company's strategy, instead of viewing it in isolation as an operational function. To

kick off the session, Kedar Vashi who was moderating the session posed the question, "Is L&D viewed as a strategic function by organisations?" This proved to be the central theme of the discussion and Gautam Bhushan emphasized that L&D should be linked to



Reema Dabas, Bank of America

the CEOs agenda. Arati Porwal shared that the retention rates of organizations CIMA had worked with, to create L&D programmes, had gone up over the time. Saleem Shaikh raised the thought-provoking point that L&D strategy should go beyond

looking at Return on Investment and address Return on Expectation.

Key Takeaways:

- Long term implications of L&D strategy for employee engagement and retention.
- Companies need to focus on L&D whether times are difficult or not.

MTHR Global Talent Economics Summit 2013

Organised by: **More Than HR Global**

Talent Economics: Where business strategy and HR meet

Speakers: Gyan Nagpal, Board Member of Infosys and Former Chairman of Microsoft India

The session aimed to provide a platform for dissemination of views and ideas pertaining to the complex talent equation. It was a part of a series of multi-city learning events organised by MTHR, on the occasion of its 11th anniversary. The keynote speaker, Gyan Nagpal, put the spotlight on the workforce trends through his session and shared his views



Delegates at the conference

on what the global landscape for talent may look like in 2020 and beyond. Nagpal emphasised on the need for the leaders to focus

on their talent pipeline rather than following HR led programs. Ravi Venkatesan, Board Member of Infosys and Former Chairman

of Microsoft India, emphasised on the need to establish accountabilities for better talent management when he said that the CEOs should hold the business heads and line managers accountable for people. The knowledge partner for these events is *People Matters* and mobility partner is Deltec Infotech.

Key Takeaways

- Why a simple, adaptable, geographically contextual and commercially viable talent strategy is important.
- HR functions need to be headed by leaders, not managers.

UPCOMING TRAININGS

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TITLE	DATE	LOCATION	LAST DATE TO REGISTER
Crucial Conversations	11 - 12 April	Kolkata	10 April
Certified Compensation and Benefits Manager	12 - 13 April	Delhi	11 April
NLP Practitioner Certification Program	12 - 16 April	Goa	11 April
Mind Mapping & Mind Power and Beyond Workshop	13 April	Mumbai	12 April
Train the Trainer Pro	15 - 19 April	Mumbai	13 April
Dr. Edward de Bono's Lateral Thinking Workshop	17 April	Delhi	16 April
Agile Certified Practitioner (PMI-ACP)	19 - 21 April	Bengaluru	18 April
Balanced ScoreCard Certification	23 - 24 April	Bengaluru	19 April
Social Media Marketing Workshop	25 - 26 April	Delhi	24 April
Lean Six Sigma Green Belt	25 - 28 April	Bengaluru	24 April
Core Leadership Skills	26 April	Bengaluru	25 April
Workshop on Effective Interviewing Skills	26 - 27 April	Bengaluru	25 April
ITIL Foundation Workshop	27 - 28 April	Chennai	26 April

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Upcoming Events April 2013

April
5th**GIC Conclave 2013****Organiser:** NASSCOM**Venue:** Bengaluru**Who should attend:** CXOs, Business Heads, Diversity Managers, HR Heads**Event theme:** How to globalize, innovate and collaborateApril
12th**4th CFOs Roundtable Conclave****Organiser:** ASSOCHAM and PEVCAI**Venue:** New Delhi**Who should attend:** CFOs**Event theme:** Turning Risks into OpportunitiesApril
17th**Optimising your Employer Brand****Organiser:** LinkedIn and People Matters**Venue:** Bengaluru**Who should attend:** Talent Acquisition Heads (by invite only)**Event theme:** Measuring Employer Branding effectivenessApril
23rd**Talent Acquisition Conclave****Organiser:** People Matters**Venue:** Gurgaon**Who should attend:** Talent Acquisition Heads and Senior HR Managers.**Event theme:** New age practices of Talent sourcing, recruitment and on-boardingApril
23rd-26th**IFTDO World Conference & Exhibition 2013****Organiser:** IFTDO**Venue:** New Delhi**Who should attend:** HRD Practitioners, Consultants, Executives etc.**Event theme:** Capability Building for Cutting Edge Organizations in New Business OrderApril
30th**Conference on Workplace Stress Management****Organiser:** 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.peoplematters.in/events for more information on events. If you wish to share information about upcoming events, please contact Pushkaraj Bidwai at pushkar.b@peoplematters.in

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Jobs of the week



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



Capgemini Business Services India Limited
HR Executive / Recruiter
Location: Bangalore
Job ID: 12926898
Description: Should have experience in core recruitment (Volume/niche skills/senior level and middle level hiring).



Avatar Career Creators
VP/ GM - HR
Location: Lucknow
Job ID: 12990939
Description: Looking for Heda HR, Generalist HR Role.



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



CBAY Systems India Private Limited
Senior Executive Human Resources
Location: Mysore
Job ID: 12803109
Description: Manage generation of offer letters, increment letters, promotion letters, confirmation letters etc.



EMC Corporation
Human Resources Business Partner
Location: Bangalore
Job ID: 12800011
Description: Responsible for a variety of human resources programs and policies, often encompassing several areas of human resources.



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.



Jobzebra
Training & Development Executive
Location: Chennai
Job ID: 12980338
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Payroll/ Compensation - Head/ Mgr
Location: Pune
Job ID: 12925988
Description: 6 - 8 years of experience in handling payroll of a mid-sized/large organisation.



ADP Private Limited
HR Lead Consultant Professionals
Location: Hyderabad
Job ID: 12888372
Description: 3+ years work experience in managing teams or departments in a complex, dynamic and highly technical environment.



TIBCO Software India Private Limited
HR Executive / Recruiter
Location: Pune
Job ID: 12599052
Description: Sourcing technical candidates per the requirements of the hiring managers.



Collabera Solutions Private Limited
HR Manager
Location: Thiruvananthapuram / Trivandrum
Job ID: 12860858
Description: Responsible for organizing, integrating, and directing all human resources activities which support the company's overall business strategy.



Futures Ahead
HR Manager
Location: Mumbai
Job ID: 12194282
Description: Recruitment of support functions at Corporate Office and key positions at other locations.



Kelly Services India Private Limited
Technical Recruiter
Location: Gurgaon, Pune
Job ID: 12839033
Description: The Incumbent will be entrusted to work with some of our well respected world renowned fortune 500 clients, 3-9 years of relevant experience post PG.

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The writer works for a leading MNC captive BPO center

CONFESSIONS: Hired to be fired

On the one hand, I cannot find people worth being recruited and on the other, the system forces me to nominate the bottom 5% of my team to be fired

January 7, 2013: Sitting at the bar of a five-star hotel in Bangalore, waiting for my old college buddies to join me, I am reflecting about my day. Picture this: 2 full days locked in a business center conference room, missing my family, conducting more than 100 odd interviews most of which were unproductive, without short-listing a single candidate! I am feeling completely drained by this futile task and I still have one more day of this to go.

Why is it so difficult to find people, I wonder. It is not the first time I have felt like this; so many times I have returned from 2 or 3 days long recruitment drives without a single offer rolled out. Clearly there is a problem. My friends, who've joined me at the bar, claim that brands like the one I work for should not be having such a tough time, as working in one of India's largest BPOs is a dream job for many. Yes, that might be, but where are those people?

The interesting paradox is, I tell my friends, that I am at this very moment completing the performance review of my team and I know that once again I will have to let go of the bottom per cent. On the one hand, I cannot find people worth being recruited and on the other, the system forces me to nominate the bottom 5% of my team to be fired. What a surreal situation. I cannot deliver business requirements because I cannot find people with the skills that I need and the company forces me to fire

my own people, trained and productive, every year, by force! Yes, of course, you may say that this helps in building a high performance culture and all that jazz. All these MBA theories are fine on paper, but why fire people who are in the system? It is true that they are not performing at the same level as the rest, but yet they are trained and working better than anyone we can hire right now. I am not saying that low performers should not be moved out of the company. I am just saying that as a manager, I should be able to choose whom and how many I need to fire from my team? I'm losing trained performers, practically sending them to competition! Does that make any sense? We have invested so much in each one of them.

What can the solution be? My friends suggest that I should talk to my boss but I'm unconvinced that will make a difference. He is not going to change the system for me. There must be something I can do on my own. What if I hire some of the guys I interviewed today and they could be my 5 per cent for next year, hired to be fired. If I have to let go of people, might as well identify them in advance and align my efforts accordingly. I am about to share my idea with my friends when I realise that it cannot be the solution. What is the point of having a system if I actively plan to break it? Maybe a conversation with my CEO and Head of HR is worth a shot after all. There must be others like me. **Pm**

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