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think about Scientology?

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It's a new day, it's a new plan

It is that time of the year when we all look at making resolutions. It's the New Year and we decided we needed to make a few of our own. One of them was to raise the bar of our own stories as we strive to keep them relevant to the disrupting times. We plan to keep them brief, new and fresh. For the first issue of the year 2015, we decided to have a very different take on trends—capture some of the major news events of 2014 such as Elections 2014, Mangalyaan's foray into Mars, the FIFA World Cup, the Ebola Crisis and E-commerce wars and draw out lessons that we can learn from them.

One of the most defining moments of the year were the Parliamentary elections conducted in India. The polls proved that social media has come of age as one of the best communication tools that the parties used to communicate to the masses, besides rallies and meetings. The elections also showed how leadership could make a huge difference. With Narendra Modi at the helm, party workers rallied around to perform like a well-oiled unit. Amit Shah, the second-in-command and the brain behind BJP's electoral campaign, ensured

that BJP could take on its opponents effectively on any issue.

2014 was also a landmark year for the Indian Satellite Research Organization (ISRO). On September 24, an orbiter satellite Mangalyaan was launched into the Mars' orbit unscathed to the awe and amazement of the world. India was the envy of every country across the globe as it managed to achieve the feat on almost one-tenth of the cost of the US mission Maven. From working on a frugal budget to utilizing one's resources to the maximum, the Mars mission has taught us never to lose heart in the face of adversity. Right now, the spotlight is firmly on the Indian scientists as they are preparing to make another dream a reality – sending a manned mission to space. Like these, there are three other instances that we have mentioned – the FIFA World Cup, the Ebola Crisis and the E-commerce wars.

Apart from triumphs, 2014 was also a year of sadness. Last year marked the 30th anniversary of the Bhopal gas tragedy. The accident has highlighted that if the local laws do not bind companies, it will disrupt not just the business ecosystem but also the society in unforeseen ways and also raised a lot of questions on corporate responsibility.

In other stories, we have Harsh Mariwala, Chairman of Marico Industries Limited as our Big Interview for the month, where he talks about how he came to set up Marico separately from the family business, his thoughts on innovation and his learnings. In the run up to the Total Rewards Conclave on February 3, we talk to various experts to find out what are the upcoming trends in the Rewards & Recognition space in our Total Rewards supplement.

I leave you with these instances to ponder over and see what your own conclusions about the learnings will be. Like Mahatma Gandhi says, "Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever." As always, please do send in your comments and views about our stories. Here's wishing you a very Happy New Year and all the best for 2015.

Happy reading!

Esther Martinez Hernandez EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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Lessons for talent

As the New Year dawns, we revisit some of the major news developments of 2014 and reflect on the lessons they have taught us in ways we can't imagine | **BY VIKRAM CHOUDHURY**

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Openness leads to Innovation

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Good managers are the ones who foster trust

Professor Michael Gibbs, *Clinical Professor of Economics, Faculty Director- Executive MBA Program, University of Chicago Booth School of Business*

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THIS ISSUE OF **PEOPLE MATTERS** CONTAINS 88 PAGES INCLUDING COVER

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My breakthrough was when I channelized my thoughts in a structured format with the DEFEATS model for evidence; I was able to express myself confidently. This made me stand out during the group discussion and the interview rounds at my company of choice.

Sachin Chavhan



I learned small but great principles on how to put power into presentations and how to manage conflict. Overall, on the presentation I delivered at VSIT, I was a lot more enthusiastic and less stressed. I was able to recognize the impact of negative stress on results and effectiveness which will enable me to become a good presenter.

Ankush Yadav



I thank Dale Carnegie India for conducting this training. Besides feeling confident, I also feel capable. Post attending this training session, I had the opportunity to debate in front of 40-50 people. Where I would have found myself running away previously, I now find that I can comfortably stand in front of a crowd and engage people for 30 minutes or more!

Urmil Parekh

What The Students Said



As engineering students we often face a problem as we have the knowledge, but often have trouble expressing this knowledge. As a student undergoing this program, I benefitted a lot as I now take part in group discussions and projects and am assured of making a mark when I leave college and join the corporate world.

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Letters of the month



PEOPLE MATTERS VALUES YOUR FEEDBACK
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DECEMBER 2014 ISSUE

Cover Story- Are we ready to Make in India?

This is a great story. We have been missing the feedback of the unions for a long time on this. Looks like the industry is speculative and awaiting further actions. This article made for an interesting read. Keep up the good work!

- SATABDI JENA

The December issue is fabulous

- VIVEK PATWARDHAN

Happy and gay- Tim Cook leads the way

I really enjoyed reading the story. One of the few less technical stories you printed in a long time. Kudos for the very interesting headline.

- SIMRAT

6 reasons why you should upgrade your skills

6 reasons why you should upgrade your skills was a very informative piece. While it is important to upgrade skills, doing it randomly without a plan is a waste of time. One needs a very clear purpose of why she or he is learning a new skill and what long-term benefits it will bring upon her or him.

- SAGAR GUPTA

A CEO Should Instill Pride - November 2014

I just happened to read your magazine. The article "A CEO Should instill Pride" is

excellent and an eye opener too. Congrats to you and all praises to your Creator God who has enriched you with so many creative skills.

- MEKALA PRABHAKAR

Dear CEO... please stop and listen! - November 2014

This article hits the right nerve in terms of highlighting the various roles a CHRO can play in being a counterpart to the CEO. I agree to all the points mentioned in the article. I also believe that the CHRO has the capability to be a chief advisor to the CEO provided he/she displays a clear understanding of the business.

- ARPITA

We are all driven by motives in what we do - October 2014

This has touched upon something that each one of us faces in our work life at some time or the other. It offers great learning and motivation. It's a very inspiring read. Creative thinking and staying happy at work is the key to being successful at work and this interview has nailed it!

- GAURAV



Are you in the List 2014?
After taking a look at such a great mix of people for the jury, I am looking forward to the next breed of awardees. I am sure it will be a tough battle.

- GUEST

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The sun sets on iconic brands – What can businesses learn



This year, iconic brands such as HMT watches, the Ambassador and Maruti 800 finally wound up production. We take a peek at their history and what it means for us

By Anu Babu Kurian

Guess what! HMT is going to stop production.”

I looked up from my phone. It was late night and my husband and I were settling in for the night. As always, he was at his computer and me at my mobile.

My first reaction, “Wow! Are you kidding?”

Nope, he said. “They used to make the best watches ever. It is really sad that they are shutting down.” Soon, I look for news related to HMT shut-down and voila there is. Established in 1961, the once illustrious watch company will be winding down operations as it has been reeling under losses since 2000. With a manpower of more than 1,000 employees, the brand that once defined affordability and timeliness for the Indian masses, has been unable to pay salaries to its employees.

HMT was synonymous with watches like Bisleri for bottled water. “I remember that my dad always had an HMT watch. He actually had it for

years.” I said in amazement, while at the same time thinking about how often we change our watches. Their tag line “Timekeepers to the nation” was pretty apt.

Soon, my husband started checking the HMT website. “You know, they had the best mechanical watches ever. All you had to do was wind the watch everyday and it would work perfectly for years to come. Of course, later they introduced the quartz and battery operated watches.” Slow decision-making and entry of new players in the 1980s along with tacky designs and old production techniques proved to be the death knell for the watchmaker. Many HMT employees eventually made their way to Titan.

Soon, we both were looking through the website for mechanical watches. We wanted a piece of history before it disappeared into the oblivion of time. Our scramble to buy the watches before they completely stopped production led me to think about how iconic the brand had become before it made the blunder of making quartz watches—something the watchmaker never really recovered from.

Management Lesson #1: *Never ever underestimate competition. The history of business is strewn with many stories like HMT and Kodak, which*

reigned over the market for so long that they became complacent. So complacent that they ignored all market signs, did nothing to innovate to keep the customer happy and engaged and waited for things to get really bad before doing something about it.

And the sun has set not just on this brand, but also on two other brands like the Ambassador, the Maruti 800.

Growing up, we'd always take the Ambassador if we wanted to travel somewhere within the state. Its spacious inside coupled with huge boot space and the joy of helping the driver with the gear changes were all too good to miss. Now, of course, the cars supposedly have better seats, AC, seat belts and power steering. The Ambassador was a tool in the driver's hand and many a driver learnt their first lessons on that. They also came to be associated with politicians, as that became the vehicle with the *lal batti* (red beacon). Be it bureaucrats, politicians, rich folks or the poorest, everyone rode in an ambassador.

From the stable of Hindustan Motors, the Ambassador was in production even before HMT was established. The first cars were made in 1958 and were modelled after the British Morris Oxford. Called the "King of Indian Roads", it trudged upon the biggest and smallest of pothole-ridden roads in India. But like the HMT, it too got into the complacent mode and wasn't prepared when Maruti Suzuki launched the low-cost hatchback called 800. As of 25th May 2014, the Ambassador, fondly known as the Amby, stopped production.

Management Lesson #2: *The Amby never really changed its design or technology until late, so much so that it even got banned in the city where it was made, Kolkata as it failed to keep up with the pollution norms. Not only that, it was a fuel guzzler and maintenance costs were very high. Even politicians and bureaucrats, who were among the mainstay for demand of Amby's, stopped ordering and switched to the trendier sedans. In the 90s when the markets were opened up, HMT was defined as the chunky watchmaker while Titan came to be known as today's watchmaker because of their trendy designs. If you don't innovate, you will not survive and that applies not only to companies but also to employees.*

The Maruti 800, when it was launched in 1983, signalled a new phase of car ownership. A couple from Delhi became the first owner of the car for Rs 47,500 and the keys to the car were handed over by the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. Produced at a time when the Amby was going great guns, it turned out to fuel the



All companies should become aspirational workplaces. They not only need to inspire employees, but also give them a better environment to work in

second car revolution in the country. If Amby was the car for the masses (after politicians, bureaucrats and taxi drivers), then Maruti 800 became a status symbol. It became the most affordable car of the ninties. It symbolised the dream that many families had of owning a car that looked sleek and yet kept the mileage looking Indian happy. These brands stood the test of time and are now finally hanging up their boots.

Management Lesson #3: *It is important that any brand or company should be aspirational to its employees. Every human being aspires for greater things and being in a company that allows you to explore your career; your horizons ultimately propels the company to greater heights not just in terms of revenue, but also in terms of innovation and creativity. Life is not just about taking a pay packet home at the end of the day, but also on how enriching that experience is? Are your employees properly engaged and happy with the work they do?*

They were the stars of the rising Indian middle class. During the 80s and the 90s, anything that you bought was meant to last a very very long time. I remember I used

to get hand me downs from my brother for text books and notebooks. We made notebooks on our own as we wanted to avoid spending money on them. The ambassador and the Maruti, in the time they were present were the best options for the *paisa vasool* Indian. Of course, there were other brands. But, if one had to pick and choose, the price conscious Indian would always go for stuff that is lighter on the wallet. That also translated into the employment space. If earlier people chose their education based on jobs that paid well, these days people choose jobs based on not just the pay packet and a well known company, but also the challenges they offer, the travel and the varied responsibilities. Today, employees want to take sabbaticals, go abroad for further studies or take long holidays. They want to work hard and party harder. And the companies that give the freedom to the employees to do that always score higher. ☺

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Create a magnum opus – every time

While passion and emotion may seem conflicting, it is only when the two come together that a work of genius is created

By Vikram Choudhury

I want to build a car for the multitude” Henry Ford proclaimed, “that is so low in price that every man will be able to afford one.” Hailed as the man who taught America how to drive, Ford’s vision was one driven by an emotion, sparking a new modern industrial revolution. At a time when an automobile was an expensive toy available only to the super rich, Ford wanted one for the common man. For him, there was no reason why every man cannot have a car. With this vision in mind, he founded the Ford Motor company at the beginning of the 20th century. The rest is history. People who worked directly with Ford remembered him as a man whose love for automobiles was so great, that it superseded every other desire he had. While Ford wanted to build a car for the common man, he was not prepared to compromise on its quality in any department, including the way it looked. Ford’s statements exemplify two central ingredients of perfection—emotion and passion.

Emotion + passion equals perfection

Emotion drives a behavioural change. It is a conscious reaction to act on the strong desire to serve a customer in the best possible way. Passion, on the other hand, is singlehanded devotion towards perfecting a product, independent of convention and market demand. Often, products or ideas driven by emotion have the best functionality, but end up looking unimpressive. On the other hand, products built only with passion become prohibitively expensive or miss the mark completely. It is when emotion and passion merge that we truly see a product so remarkable that it alters paradigms.

Apple is an interesting case in point. Apple’s legacy of product perfection was not an outcome of a fleeting idea by a genius inventor. Very little is spoken about Steve Jobs’ skill as a qualified calligrapher.



It may not be necessary to view emotion and passion as an everyday conflict

hist. His biography reveals his love for fonts so great that he dedicated a considerable part of his life to the study and practice of the subject. As a result, Apple’s legacy of innovative design, sleek form factor, and simple interfaces have continued to set new industry standards. Not only do Apple products signify Job’s passion for design, they scream of the man’s emotional vision to provide customers with a product, which is easy to experience.

Don’t let passion override emotion, or vice versa

Reebok released a print advertisement in 2012 that said, “Cheat on your girlfriend, not your workout.” Such brand disasters are qualified by Twiteratti as an #Epic-fail. While it raised indignant eyebrows, the advertisement made it to Huffington Post’s list of “Top 10 advertising disasters

for women” in no time. One can sit back and wonder what level of arrogance the creative team must have possessed to conceive and execute such a derisive idea. The execution was flawless. It did not lack wit. And yet, the creator was so possessed with his passion for the product that s/he failed to consider the basic question, “Will the consumer like it?” Clearly on this occasion, it did not. After it was widely condoned by social media globally, Reebok had to make a scamper for face-saving tactics. The ads were pulled down and every trace of them vaporised in a jiffy.

The automobile world is rife with several examples of highly functional cars with hideous designs. The creators of these cars were driven by the myopic emotional drive for customer comfort, while grossly overlooking the basic need for making a good looking car.

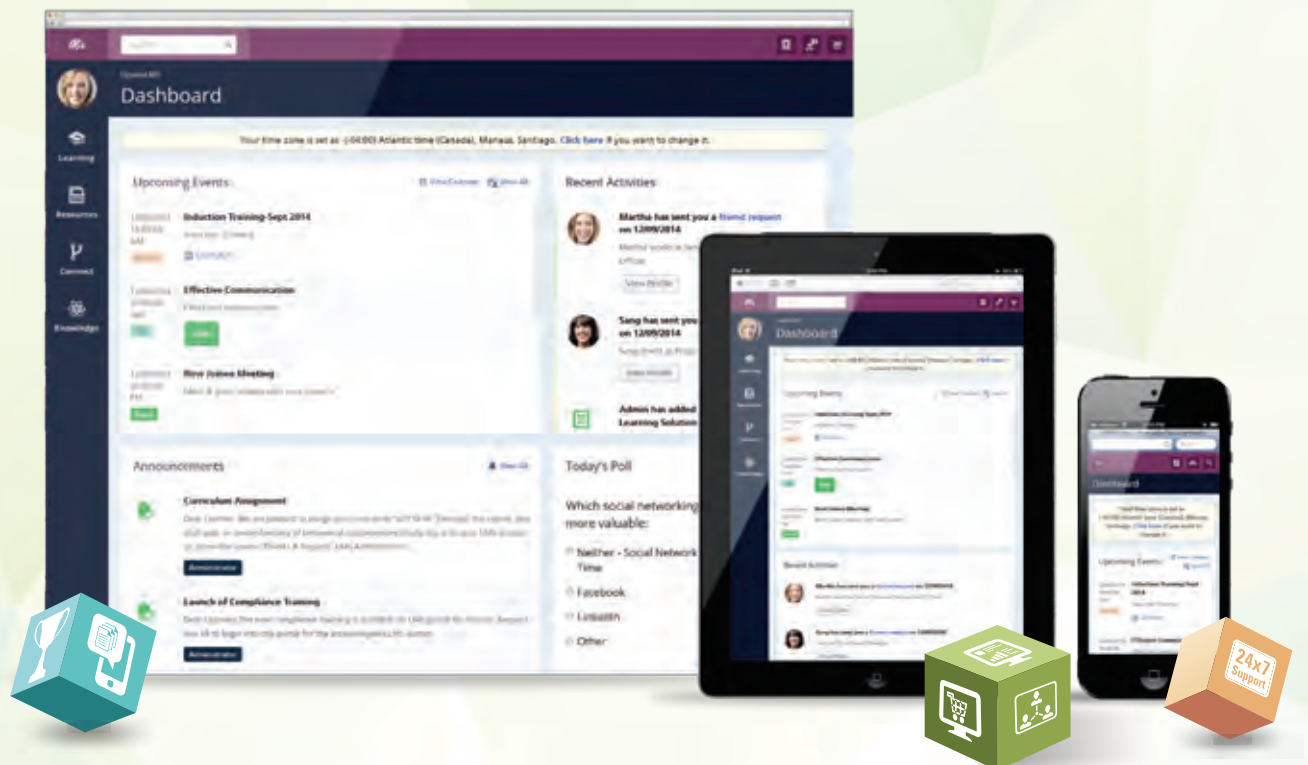
What drives us to work every day? Is it the passion to create a work of genius? Or is it the drive to make a customer happy? It may not be necessary to view emotion and passion as an everyday conflict. Maybe a good thought to ponder before the start of every day could be, “Is genius of any use without utility?” 🧠

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Bhopal gas tragedy – Was it in vain?

An industrial tragedy at a tremendous scale, a rape that prompted the government to ban this company and a fraud the scale of which India has never seen – all these instances point to one thing: People take a backseat when it comes to profit

By Anu Babu Kurian

Corporate responsibility in India is often confused with Corporate Social Responsibility. CSR is defined as the overall positive impact that the company has on the society and the state through various activities. This was plugged into the new Companies Act 2013 (2% of the company's profit must be channelled to socially beneficial projects under CSR). However, what I am trying to highlight is the responsibility that the company has towards the employees and the general public at large. While most companies are initially set up on the bedrock of a brilliant idea that would find multiple takers, the ultimate aim of any company is simple – Make money. There might be a few set up to serve a larger purpose, but those are fewer in number.

Three recent developments in the business world has put the spotlight on corporate responsibility. Even today, there is still a question mark on how to hold corporations accountable for their actions, especially when they have widespread ramifications not just in terms of the employees, but also the larger public. We take a look at three major instances involving high-profile companies and look at how companies responded to them and the legal battles they endured and if their response was justified.

Bhopal Gas Tragedy

What happened: December 2, 2014, marks the 30th anniversary of the worst industrial accident in the world. That night a pesticide plant in Bhopal, which belonged to Union Carbide, leaked a deadly gas – methyl isocyanate – and other chemicals into the air. More than 8,000 people lost their lives in the first few days and many were left with permanent and partial disabilities. More than 20,000 have lost their lives in Bhopal to various illnesses from inhaling the toxic chemicals. The water, air and the soil continues to be filled with toxins and to this day victims of the Bhopal gas tragedy are fighting for their rightful compensation for the industrial accident.

What did Union Carbide do wrong?

Everything. Firstly, the plant that was set up in Bhopal at a place where there was a





significant civilian population. Even more alarmingly, it was not the same standards as the plants in the US either in terms of technology, trained personnel or design features despite the plant handling very dangerous chemicals. That itself was the foundation for the disaster. Intentionally using inferior manufacturing set-up with a majority of the staff hardly been trained points to malpractice.

Former employee T. R. Chouhan recalls that though there were many instances of minor leaks at the plant, the top management did not take cognisance of it. They did not even have the right kind of safety procedures in the event of a gas leak. No alarm was sounded. Neither the public nor the local authorities were warned about the deadly nature of the gas. They, in fact, tried to downplay the accident. When reports of deaths started pouring in, that's when they acknowledged that the gas was Methyl Isocyanate. In fact, their inhouse doctor Dr Loya told the press that it was not a deadly gas but something similar to tear gas.

Union Carbide's complicity in the catastrophe is telling. It has always maintained that it had nothing to do with the Indian plant although it was a subsidiary. It reached a settlement with the Indian government to pay about \$5-7 million in aid. But what followed stunned the nation. The Central and the state governments did nothing to take action against Union Carbide. CEO Warren Anderson was given the red carpet treatment and taken to a guest house where the local court had issued a summon for his arrest. Thereafter, he flew to US never to return. He died there this year. In June 2010, eight Indian employees, including

Both Union Carbide and Uber followed the letter of the law in the US, but failed to do so in India. Are lives in India that cheap?

Keshub Mahindra—the patriarch of Mahindra & Mahindra—were found guilty of negligence and not culpable homicide, and were eventually let off on bail.

To this day, Union Carbide, which has now being taken over by Dow Chemicals, maintains that they did nothing wrong and there was sabotage involved. All the evidence on the ground points to the contrary. This is one case where the government could have done a lot more. Instead, it showcased how the law machinery completely broke down and the people of Bhopal continue to suffer since 1984.

Satyam Fraud Case

What happened: In 2009, Satyam Computer Services Chairman Ramalinga Raju confessed that the company's accounts had been falsified. According to market regulator SEBI, Satyam had made financial misstatements to the tune of Rs. 12,320 crore.

Soon after the scam was unearthed, the government had stepped in and ordered an auction for sale of the company and it was eventually acquired by Tech Mahindra and was later merged with it.

What did Satyam do wrong?

To start with, Raju, his family members and other accomplices sold or pledged shares at inflated prices, which was done by overstatement of bank balances, creation of fake customers, over-statement of revenues and under-statement of liabilities. The SEBI probe also found more than 7,000 fake bills furnished by a single executive. Fictitious invoices were created to show fake debtors on the Satyam books, bank balances were inflated and there was a huge mismatch in the TDS amounts. When the news of the Satyam scandal broke out, it turned out to be the biggest corporate fraud case in the country.

In December 2014, a Trial Court in Hyderabad sentenced Raju and his brother Rama Raju to six months imprisonment and a fine of Rs 10 lakh each. Former CFO Vadlamani Srinivas and ex-CEO of Satyam Ram Mynampati were also sentenced to six months imprisonment, beside a fine of Rs 10 lakh each. Ideally, the scandal should not have happened in the first place as the company had engaged global body PricewaterhouseCoopers as its statutory auditors. But, they were caught napping and the US Securities and Exchange Commission fined the Indian arm of PwC a record \$6 million for not following its code of conduct and auditing standards. Funnily enough, the company had just the previous year (2008) won the the coveted Golden Peacock Award for Corporate Governance under Risk Management and Compliance Issues.

Uber rape case

What happened: In the second week of December 2014, a young woman who was going from Gurgaon to Delhi in an Uber cab alleged that the driver had taken her to a secluded spot and raped her. The police through various leads managed to nab the accused, Shiv Kumar Yadav, at his hometown Mainpuri in Uttar Pradesh. It turns out that Yadav is a serial offender as many more women have come forward with testimonies accusing him of raping them. He has five cases of sexual assault against him, three cases under the Goonda Act and one case for illegally possessing firearms.

What did Uber do wrong?

In the initial few hours after the rape was reported, Uber did two right things. One, they acknowledged that the driver was



While there have been many changes in the Companies Act, the government needs to ensure that private corporations don't take either the government or the public for granted

driving an Uber cab and that his services would be immediately suspended and two they put out a statement that they were cooperating with the police to help nab the accused. However, the police did have a tough time dealing with Uber, according to news reports. In fact, they spent almost two days trying to find the office of Uber. While they put out a statement supporting the victim, they have not contacted the woman or the driver. As news of the crime spread, there were calls to ban Uber as they did not verify the background of the driver properly. It turns out that the accused had produced a false police certificate. However, the Centre banned the services of Uber in Delhi NCR and then followed it up with a countrywide ban, deeming it unsafe for travel as one could turn off the GPS by uninstalling the app or switching off the phone. While most people are divided over the action taken against Uber, everyone agrees that the cab company had the responsibility to ensure that the driver was not wanted in any criminal cases. Uber does background checks of its drivers in the US, but clearly in this case it had not done its homework.

Check them before it becomes too late

You can be global, but have to be local too
When Uber launched its services in India, it soon became the preferred mode of transport for many. But, while it worked perfectly well in countries like the US, in India, the story is a whole lot different. This is because women's safety has been a very contentious topic throughout the country. Despite the strides that women have made in many aspects of life, family folk always worried about their wives,

daughters and mothers who were out late in the night. In a country like India, the Uber incident was waiting to happen. Uber, which has been facing flak across the world for disrupting the taxi service area, has hit the biggest hurdle in India as the government is readying to take action against the San Francisco-based company. While an app may be applied globally, it need not necessarily have the same results everywhere. Uber needs to be cognizant of the Indian scenario before it takes any further steps.


Firms adhere to US laws, not Indian ones

The Bhopal gas plant is a classic example. When the plant was set up, the company did not bother to keep the same level of design, robustness and safety in place as the parent plant in the US. Not only that, in the name of cost cutting, Union Carbide cut down the maintenance of the plant and the staff. They did not adhere to any of the emergency procedures they would have normally followed in the US and left the people of Bhopal to fend for themselves.

In the Uber case, the company officials in India admitted that they did not verify the background of the 4,000 drivers working for it in Delhi. The only thing that Uber did with its drivers was a four-hour training where they were taught how to talk and behave with the customers and use the app. In the US, all ridesharing and delivery partners must go through a rigorous background check, which is a three-step screening including county, federal and multi-state checks.

What is it in India that prompts companies to ignore the laws here? While both the companies mentioned above ensured that they followed the rule of the law in the



US, they completely ignored that in India. Is it because the justice system is so ineffective that they know that they can get away with it? Has precedence or history taught them that it is okay to work around the law here? Are lives in India that cheap that no one really cares if a major catastrophe continues to poison the sons and daughters of our land?

While there have been many changes in the Companies Act, the government needs to ensure that private corporations don't take either the government or the public for granted. And this will need much more than a change in legislation. The government of the day has to show that it is serious about taking action against corporates if they go against the law – no matter who they are and how mighty they are. While the Narendra Modi government is busy wooing multinationals to set up shop in India, it would do well to remember that a robust judicial system and a strong law would prevent these corporates from indulging in fraud or malpractice. With many companies eyeing India for exponential growth, the country needs to clean up its act and fast. 

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Openness leads to innovation

Harsh Mariwala, Chairman, Marico Industries Limited spoke about his learnings, his journey at Marico and more at the 6th Inspired Leadership Conference at SOIL India

By Anu Babu Kurian

Q Take us through your journey of how you joined the family business. What led you to establish Marico?

A I wasn't fortunate enough to do management studies even though I wanted to. I couldn't get into IIM-Ahmedabad at that time and I even wanted to go abroad but my father instead asked me to join the family business, the Bombay Oil Industries Limited. It was a small company with a turnover of Rs 5 crore in those days and it was managed by my father and his three brothers. I was the first person from the next generation to join the family business, but I had no one to mentor me. In my first year, I learnt how the business was being handled.

We were selling edible oil those days. While we had Saffola and Parachute brands, most of the sales took place through large 15 litre tin packs and the business was not doing that well. I thought to myself that if I could turn this into a branded business, then I would be able to create a sustainable and profitable business. Soon, I started retailing products from Jalgaon to Nagpur by road and the kind of response we got was truly amazing. To this day, I remember the excitement that I got from making my first sale and that feeling has never been surpassed. As the business grew, I started roping in more professionals to run the business. I read a lot of management books to help me hire MBA graduates as I myself didn't have an MBA. I loved reading those books and still do. I have also learnt a lot from people I have met and that is how my journey in terms of learning has taken place. However, by 1988 it became very difficult to attract talent to the organization. Professionals entering the organization had rightly placed fears about their relationship with the company as there were many family members in the organization. So I proposed to my elders to hive off the company as a separate business. At that time, the business had grown from Rs 5 crore to Rs 100 crore, out of which Rs 80 crore came from consumer products. I just wanted the freedom to manage the enterprise on my own and

was not really concerned about the ownership. Looking back, I think it was a very important decision as I would not have been able to operate in a company with so many constraints.

Q How does the organization's culture help it to innovate?

A Marico was born in 1990 and within a year we had recruited 30-40 managers. We didn't have enough resources to attract good talent, but our ad agency managed to pull off a really good campaign. When you have high aspirations and low resources, innovation flourishes. One of my first recruits was the Head of HR and then with him on board we recruited 30-40 managers. We realized very quickly that our organization was a melting pot of different cultures and that we needed to define what we stand for. I sat down and wrote many pages about our values, culture and what we stood for. I shared those with my team who made it more structured into People, Products and Values. Creating values is the easy part. Converting those values into sustainable long-term culture is the difficult part. So, we asked the entire team to give their inputs about encoding the values. The two-day exercise helped me discover two things: One, when you involve people, you get their commitment and two, it helped us to identify the value gaps within the organization. A lot of people think that such involvement is a wastage of time. Participative style of management will take longer to produce results, but you will have the commitment of your people and this helps in the long term. For any values to take deep roots, you need to reinforce them on a perpetual basis.

Openness is very important in an organization as it helps in getting new ideas and leads to discussion of ideas



We decided to have an open house across our offices and factories where plans for the next year were drawn up and people were encouraged to ask any questions, no matter how awkward they were, to the management. Today, workers are very keen to know how the organization is planning its future rather than their salary or bonus. We wanted to keep a non-hierarchical way of doing things and make the environment more open. Openness involves a lot of dialogues, which ultimately leads to innovation. Openness is very important in an organization as it helps in getting new ideas and leads to discussion of ideas. One of our values is trust. We reinforced that by asking managers to maintain their own leave records and also by not having an official sick leave but take sick leave as & when you are not well.

There are two important days of your life: One is the day you are born and the second is the day you find your true purpose in life

The biggest challenge comes when you acquire a new business, especially in a different country as you need to integrate those values with the ones you already have implemented.

Q What is innovation according to you?

A Innovation is not just making new products, but it cuts across processes, products and manufacturing. Let me illustrate with an example. About 20 years ago, we wanted to set up our manufacturing facility and in those days the best place in terms of location, cost etc turned out to be Kerala. However, in terms of industrial relations, Kerala was not a good state to set up operations. Against all advice, my Head of operations and HR decided to take up the challenge. They personally selected workmen after talking to their parents! They also found that if the workmen were engaged with some activity, they did not indulge in unionism. Hence, the company divided the workmen into four houses like you do in schools and there was healthy competition between the houses. We also rotated the workmen through different parts of the organization to ensure that they did not get bored while working with us. That effort paid off. We have not lost a single day in production and it also gave us huge financial returns.


Another area where we did innovation was in putting Parachute in a plastic bottle. We wanted

to be market leaders in the coconut oil segment, but were not able to increase the market share beyond a point. While it was cheaper than tin, many retailers were wary of using plastic oil bottles as rats used to gnaw at them and oil would drip out. But we got a specially designed round bottle made, in such a way that the rats could not bite the bottle. That played a major role in increasing the sale of coconut oil. Another thing that I learnt is that while innovation is necessary, it is also equally essential to follow it up with rigorous processes. Normally, people don't associate rigour with innovation.

Q How should an organization define its purpose?

A Organizations have a purpose and the business is accountable not only to its shareholders, but also all the other stakeholders – employees, the associates they are working with, the consumers and finally the society. There are some interlinkages between different stakeholders and whenever organizations in the West have concentrated only on one of those stakeholders, it has led to a crisis like the Enron or Lehman case. I am of the strong belief that if you give something to each stakeholder, it will come back to you. If I treat my members (that's what we call employees at Marico) well, give them extra inputs in terms of training or coaching, they would be far more motivated to succeed, to do a better job and far more engaged. This will reflect in better results. If the results are good, the profits will increase. If the profits increase, then the shareholders benefit. You might not be able to directly link this with society, but you will be able to attract better quality talent if you have the good image of a responsible corporate citizen. It reflects in how the organization is perceived. A study conducted by Jagdish N. Sheth and Rajendra S. Sisodia, book – The Firms of Endearment has conclusively proven that organizations that have a purpose and took care of all their stakeholders fared much better than those who didn't.

Q What is the purpose of an individual?

A There are two important days of your life: One is the day you are born and the second is the day you find your true purpose in life. The search for realizing why you were born goes on for years and you have to constantly ask yourself why you are here. The day you start working towards finding the answer to the question, you will be more satisfied than anything else you achieve in life. 

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Practicing what is preached

People Matters L&D Leadership League

The six winners of the L&D Leadership League 2014 showcase the best practices that beat industry expectations and improved business performance

By Vikram Choudhury



of offers and hoping that most will join. Also, post-joining, the company invested approximately 60 days for training before the candidates were placed in actual assignments. The company realized that it required making recruitment and onboarding process much more efficient.

The company created an out-of-the-box gamified platform to engage and involve selected candidates in the months between offer and joining. Through the gamified learning and on-boarding platform, candidates were pre-wired to actual work situations, issues and conditions through badges, leaderboards and e-learning. The platform has participation incentives and leaders are provided with joining incentives and company merchandise. As a result of the engagement the platform created, the company was able to significantly increase offer to joining ratios and reduce the formal training period to 21 days. In terms of direct revenue impact, the platform's direct cost savings and profitability impact was to the tune of approximately \$ 4 million in a month.

End-to-end gamified learning

NTT Data Global Delivery Services Ltd is a highly learning-oriented organization. Learning is equally a business need for the organization as it is a talent need. The organization, however, realized that learning delivery of the large 75,000+ employees was not standardized or need-aligned. As a result, not only was learning ineffective, it translated into low engagement with the learning process. Learning engagement continued to drop year over year and the overall satisfaction of the workforce dropped. All learning metrics such as participation deteriorated. Another key problem the company faced was that while the content was really impressive, people in the organization did not know about them. For a company so reliant on learning, these issues started showing direct impact on business performance.

The company implemented a gamified learning platform called Catalys, which included elements of storytelling, real-time feedback and clue-based games. The

Like last year, this year's People Matters' L&D Leadership League brought forth some of the most progressive L&D practices in India. From ingenious process-level innovation to complete overhaul of the learning structure, these practices demonstrate exemplar execution of L&D teams and commitment of leadership. Some of the high-level insights gleaned from these practices are profiled below.

Social-driven career self-navigation

HCL Technologies was faced with the challenge of an alarming number of HiPo attritions. Understandably, the non-availability of resources at critical junctures of the business had a direct impact on business execution and profitability. Upon deep investigation, the company realized that a key reason behind the problem was the fact that it was unable to match aspiration with development opportunity.

The L&D team took up the challenge of matching aspiration with opportunity by creating an aspiration-led talent rotation model. The model was based on social-media called Career Connect. The platform gave one access to counsellors and career resources to allow self-steering of one's career. Within a year, 20,380 employees joined the platform and over 10,000 choose to use it actively to steer their careers. Besides being a cost-effective platform, the beauty of this practice lies in the fact that participants get a chance to self-navigate their careers leading to greater ownership and more transparent accountability.

Gamified pre-joining onboarding

One of TCS' service units catering to high volume service requirements had alarmingly low offer-to-join ratio besides the fact that the time-to-productivity of new recruits was higher than desirable. The traditional campus recruitment program revolved around doling out a high number

platform also had simulation capabilities to enable learning through experience. The gamified platform incentivized participation, identification of learning resources and motivating team performance. Badges, points and team standings were regularly displayed to engage and keep employees motivated. The gamified platform also centralized all of the company's learning processes and resources. Within a short span of time, the company started seeing an increase in participation in learning and engagements with learning based activities increased.

Cultural change through business excellence

Owing to a merger, Sesa Sterlite Limited, Aluminium & Power, a subsidiary of Vedanta Group faced several human capital and business-level challenges. They included low engagement, high attrition, lack of company culture and negative profits. As a result of these issues, business efficiency was suffering. Culture was one of the biggest challenges the company faced and some of the manifestations of the problem included a lack of job role clarity, a lack of ownership and a lack of pro-active approach to solve problems.

While the company wanted to implement a world class manufacturing (WCM) model to standardize culture and measure outcome consistently. At the same time, the high costs to implement a WCM model served as a hindrance. With that in mind, the company implemented a customized business excellence model. The capability model was unique both in terms of format and delivery. It not only had the capability to integrate work with learning, but also had interesting business simulation capabilities. The program was also a channel for fostering creativity and innovation. Rather than focus on short-term wins, the company's management approved the requisite budgets based on a structured business case that the L&D team built showcasing the risks and recommendations to minimize them. Such a detailed business case helped secure budgets for the program.

After launch of the program, the company was able to improve on every business and talent metric, but most importantly was able to inculcate a common culture all throughout. It also reduced ambiguity about job descriptions and increased overall engagement. The business results were clear through improvements in revenue and EBITDA. In terms of people capabilities, a large number of participants got TQM and six-sigma certified and the number of employees with direct involvements in these improvement exercises increased significantly.



Gaining market share through diversity

S H Kelkar Group, a fragrance and flavours company, felt the need to expand globally and stay in the competitive race. Considering the business is highly culture dependant, the need to focus on diversity to integrate the external and internal culture of the organization was necessary. The lack of diversity increased competitive threats for the company.

The company's top management drove the diversity initiative, with each leader involving themselves in developing policies, practices, programs and services. After implementation of the diversity initiative, the company witnessed improvement not only in business outcomes such as sales and EBITDA, but also in people results such as engagement, retention and overall satisfaction. The company also has built a sustainable cultural base to expand globally with diversity-rooted values at the core.


Making lessons stick through long-term engagements

Research and advisory company Neilsen India wanted to improve its manager effectiveness score. The move was aimed at improving its talent branding because one of its exit survey analyses revealed that past employees were less likely to recommend the company. Also, the survey revealed that employees had little visibility into how their contribution led to business impact.

To improve its manager effectiveness, the company rolled out a long-term engagement model of learning comprising a mix of online and offline programs spread across six months. While it did run the risk of higher dropouts, the chances of the lessons sticking were higher. The online and offline channels included a mix of classroom, virtual trainer led course, intranet based programs, Skill Soft and Harvard Manage Mentor Program cata-

logues for self-learning. It also included leadership talks.

It is critical to note that rather than implement immediate steps, such as manager excellence programs, the company chose the long route. The key to such an approach is not to be driven by immediate results, but start with the intent to make lessons stick. After implementing the practice, the company witnessed improvement in scores in their three-yearly survey across all major manager effectiveness parameters.

While the above profile the six winners of 2014, several other exemplar practices were shared in the L&D Leadership league. All of these leading practices not only indicate positive intent of the L&D team, but also a great level of willingness on the management's part to drive and sponsor them. 

2014 marked the second edition of the L&D Leadership League Awards in partnership with Center for Creative Leadership, Cornerstone OnDemand, KNOLSKAPE, Pearson TalentLens & Great Lakes Institute of Management. The People Matters L&D League provides insights into the best learning & development practices of Indian and global organizations and helps create an environment where they can build their strategic capability. People Matters held the 2nd L&D Leadership League Annual Conference on the 5th of November at Crowne Plaza, Gurgaon, which saw the attendance of more than 200 HR leaders from across various sectors. This year's theme was Learning for the Learned: Moving from the virtual to a cerebral plane.

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To do or not to do

15 HR dilemmas of 2015

A People Matters-
The Strategist
research pinpoints
the 15 predicaments
that will resurface
with greater force
if HR managers are
not able to address
them sufficiently

By K. Srinivas Rao &
Dr. Saumya Goyal

Like Shakespeare's Hamlet weighed the moral ramifications of living and dying through his question 'To be, or not to be...', HR professionals are in a constant state of quandary wherein we must evaluate and choose from the contrasting alternatives, which the workplace relentlessly throws at us.

The ever-changing business and workplace scenario ushers us into 2015 – the year of dilemmas. The predicaments, which we have been encountering all the time, will resurface with a greater force now than ever and if not addressed proactively may throw our plans out of gear. The Strategist and People Matters list out 15 such dilemmas, which we will need to address this year.

1. Business Value or Organizational Values?

Do strong organizational values result into business value? Or does a strong balance sheet with sufficient funds enable enough resources for investing into building organizational culture (values)? Another dilemma with similar spirit – Do ends justify the means and what kind of culture tone does that set in the organization?

This dilemma continues to exist across various stages and areas in the organization but the universal truth is simple—Are we looking at short-term hype or are we interested in creating an institution of tomorrow? If we are building an institution of tomorrow, then the answer is that organizational values will lead us to business value and HR has to ensure that this message percolates deep into the organization. Examples in the form of artefacts and structural interventions need to be set across to propagate the same.

2. Mind or Heart?

We encounter the heart versus mind dilemma in every sphere of our lives and HR is not untouched from it either. In fact, HR faces it more than other functions. Mind or the Yang, which is the logical/rational part, is extremely business driven and is focused on ROI and numbers. Heart or Yin represents the softer aspects – it is emotional and extremely people driven. The challenge for HR is to decide, which aspect should dominate the strategic (or even the everyday) decision-making.

The answer lies in trying to achieve the fine balance between Yin and Yang – Heart and Mind. The new age HR needs to “Think by Heart and Feel by Mind”. A perfect blend of Yin and Yang wherein when we crush numbers by mind we don't ignore or neglect the softer side of it and when we are managing emotions we retain some degree of rationality.

3. Build Leaders or Acquire Leaders?

This is one debate that is becoming more heated with each passing day not only because the pressure to perform at the top every quarter is increasing but also because of the creation of new positions as the business grows.

Home-grown leaders command more respect from employees, are in touch with the company's reality both in terms of business model or culture and hence are more practical. On the other hand,

acquiring external leaders helps bring a fresh 'outsider' perspective to the table, which is often missed or ignored by home-grown leaders.

External leaders can play an effective role when the organization is looking to disrupt the existing setting of the organization. If the intent is to continue with what's prevailing, then home-grown leaders are the perfect fit.

4. Hi Tech or Hi Touch?

The dilemma of 'How much to automate?' cuts through the entire employee life cycle – starting from recruitment to training to even employee communication. For each of these areas (and several others), the question we face is how much and what all we should automate (Hi Tech).

The technological innovations have no doubt given us powerful tools which if used wisely makes the life of a HR professional easier and less stressful. They give us leverage in the workplace environment and reduce the time and expense. However, relying too much on them not only dilutes employee trust, but also creates an environment of materialistic transactions and takes away the charm of human touch, the bedrock of a relationship.

The key is not to be obsessed with technology and not to automate every aspect of HR function. A fine balance has to be drawn and one of the founding principles for the same is to automate only those components, which are transactional in nature where human intervention can't add any

Organizational values will lead us to business value and HR has to ensure that this message percolates deep into the company

value like updating leave records. But avoid things like automating birthday wishes through eCards as physical cards or phone calls or personal wishes can add more value to the interaction.

5. Meritocracy or Inclusivity?

As organizations adopt a more comprehensive global view, they are becoming increasingly serious about diversity and inclusion. The efforts are evident in how the offices are being designed, how policies are being modified and how recruitment is being done. In this zeal of inclusivity and sustaining the culture of meritocracy, organizations are creating an environment wherein all the groups are chasing the same set of targets with differential abilities and resources thereby causing tensions. Many of us believe creating differential targets is a dilution of culture of meritocracy.

We, however, are missing the point that inclusion doesn't mean giving the same work to everyone and expecting the same outcomes regardless of a person's ability. The section of workforce that

has special needs – specially-abled, new mothers, employees on flex-time etc. will surely lose if equated with ‘regular’ employees.

Foremost, job roles should be worked out for employees with special needs. Their goals have to be tailored and performances should be reviewed accordingly. A culture that promotes respect among diverse work groups has to be created to avoid tension. Organizations are no doubt in the ‘meritocracy’ business and want results but defining what ‘merit’ means for diverse groups will take them a long way.

6. Organization Policies to cater to Gen X or Gen Y?

Few of us tend to dismiss these terms as mere labels but on a closer look we’ll discover that if one is from Mars, the other is from Venus. Two distinct but coexisting generations, which make up today’s workplace, have different drives as they are at different stages in their lives. Gen Xers are those born between early 1960s and early 1980s. They are currently working towards accumulating wealth and are occupied with taking care of their children and parents. Gen Yers or Millennials – those born after Gen Xers and till about 2000 – is the ‘instant’ generation with a need for instant gratification – a generation of abundance, which is completely driven by technology.

HR & organization should appreciate and accept that these are two different set of employees and a single policy outlook will not help anymore – after all ‘one-size-doesn’t-fit-all.’ Their expectation of work, motivation at work, career goal, expectation from manager, work environment, learning needs – everything differs. Their differences are real and here to stay. We need to acknowledge those and build our practices around them. What will work is ‘differential outlook for differential generations.’

External leaders can play an effective role when the organization is looking to disrupt the existing setting

7. Interviews or Conversations?

Interviewing is often one of the most dull and uninspiring process. Not so surprisingly, most of the candidates don’t like it either – rather few even dread it. Currently, an interview is a process where a candidate’s skillset is assessed through a list of questions. But can it be an opportunity to do more than that? Are we hiring just another resource or keen on creating a brand ambassador?

What needs to be realized is that interviews and conversations need not be mutually exclusive. A good interview actually makes both parties communicate equally and hence involves conversation. This engages and interests both and can provide great insight to them. ‘Conversational Interview-

ing’ or ‘Flexible Interviewing’ as it is often referred to takes the best of both worlds and combines mandatory/fixed questions with non-scripted elements of feedback and follow-up questions.

8. Engaging All or Investing in High Potentials?

Engagement is one of the top agenda items as enough researchers have proved that engaged employees outperform those who are not. The battlefield question, however, is whether to focus on engaging the entire workforce or concentrate efforts on a select few – those who are high performers and have delivered consistently. Engagement programs utilize a lot of company resources and organizations wonder whether trying to engage someone who has ‘checked out’ mentally is a lost cause.

Engaging, or at least making an effort to engage all employees, is a great way to make employees feel that they are valued, which would result in moving some fence sitters to the engaged lot. It pays to concentrate on the bigger picture and to think of employee engagement as a holistic practice and part of organization’s fabric. Simultaneously, a parallel culture of valuing high potentials with transparency in the system is not a bad move either.

9. Individual Heroes or Team Champions?

Organizations achieve the unbelievable because of few individual heroes who are game changers whereas they survive the daily ordeals because of the untiring teams that work and weave the magic. At the end of the year, who gets the cheers is the dilemma that organizations struggle with.

It is vital to celebrate all kind of successes, albeit, team victory or individual heroes as acknowledging a job well done is more critical than anything else. What is also important is to ensure that the under performers don’t get shielded by this and mustn’t get a breather to survive few more quarters / years. Also, a culture of differentiation in terms of the nature of awards can be designed to distinguish based on the criticality of the success to the organization priority.

10. Retiring or Rehiring Boomers?

Boomer-ang! – Well the boomers are back and that too with a bang. If we talk to them, we’ll know that some were never gone. Retiring them does create space for the younger generation to move up and brings in fresher and diverse perspectives to the table, but what one loses is decades of valuable insights and experience. Rehiring them can bring that experience and know-how back and moreover doing so saves on the cost of hiring and training a new employee.

Retiring employees at a particular age because of a policy or checklist may not be a great idea if the employee is fit both physically and emotionally and can contribute to the growth of the organization. Phasing the retirement of existing employees or rehiring baby boomers as part-time employees or consultants is an option that should be explored. Boomers are excellent Subject Matter Experts and

losing them abruptly to retirement can be an irreversible damage.

11. Classroom cases or Games?

The good old classroom training format with case studies is the most trusted and favoured by any organization's L&D function. It is simple, straightforward and often considered quite effective as well. However, with the younger generation entering the workforce, increasing virtual and geographically distributed teams and most significantly lack of time to attend classroom sessions, new possibilities have to be explored.

Who doesn't mind a good game! Organizations can explore games as a mechanism for induction, specialized skill development, competency awareness etc. wherein the content and delivery is standardized to a great deal. Games as a mechanism to teach complex topics like decision making through scenario making can be explored too. Classroom teaching cannot be or rather shouldn't be replaced but gaming as a technique should surely be integrated in it.

12. Sticking to the Rule Book or Showing Compassion?

In the current economic scenario, dynamic circumstances often land people champions in situations that are neither not foreseen nor forecasted. This makes the rule book often redundant. So does one deviate from the rule book and show compassion as a fellow human or does one stick to the rule book?

One of the expectations from the stakeholders for HR is that the function will be fair and transparent at all times. To do so, it is important that HR respects distributive justice and procedural justice, which means that not only should the outcome be fair and equal but the process adopted to arrive there should be fair as well. Any deviation / exception often compromises this and thus should be avoided. If the rule book itself becomes obsolete, then perhaps it is time to write a new one.

13. Carpet Bombing Induction or On-the-job Assimilation?

First impression is the last impression—this applies to both employees as well as employers. Employee induction is a great way for the employee to integrate and socialize in the organization and to set the foundation of a successful, productive and long-term working relationship. However, carpet bombing induction looks at dumping all the required information on employees in the initial few days. On-the-job induction is a slow and methodical process of assimilation of employee with the organization.

Carpet Bombing expects / assumes that the employee is inherently intelligent enough to appreciate and understand all the information instantaneously, which unfortunately is not possible in all the cases. Carpet bombing also doesn't give space to the employee to integrate with the organization culture. A good way is to space out the induction process without creating too much of administrative load for team HR.

14. Broad-based or High Visibility Leadership?

Do we need a single (or a few) charismatic leader or should leadership be fostered throughout the company? The traditional leadership models were rooted in military where a single person commanded many people. But, in the current workplace dynamics, the old models and definitions have become irrelevant. Earlier, leadership was all about telling people what to do, hand holding them and solving problems. Now, it is about empowering them, guiding them and tapping their talent.

Now everyone is a leader. An organization can be successful only if it can capitalize on each employee's talent. While hiring, organizations are keen to take individuals who are not only self-motivated, but those who can mobilize others as well— in short, they should have the DNA of a leader. So it is best if leadership is not reserved as a territory of only the most captivating personality. Creating leaders right from the CEO to the house-keeping staff is the key to building a successful new age organization – if may not have glitz and glamour but it definitely works better!

15. Reskilling Talent or Hire & Fire?

The ever-changing skillset to carry out a role is a major challenge for businesses today. Adding on to the woes is the widening skills gap between what they have and what they need.

A current employee might possess soon-to-be-obsolete skills, but he is well aware of the organizational goals, is in touch with the company's reality, and moreover can be a great ambassador for the company when the company invests in him. 'Skill Family Tree' is an essential component for reskilling. Reskilling existing employees in the family tree is much more cost effective (as skills belong to the same genre) than hiring new ones as it saves on the recruitment, orientation, as well as training costs.

Nothing is black and white in this world of dilemmas; everything is different shades of grey. When we face them, let us pause and ponder – Is having a dilemma really such a bad thing after all? The key is not to rush into choosing one. Our ability lies in appreciating them and realizing that the solution is not 'either-or' but AND.

We must select in such a way that there is a fine balance. We need to unite diverse approaches and get the best of both worlds. So let us hope that 2015 – the International Year of Light – will throw light on the both brighter sides of the dilemma and will enable us to traverse the journey of AND rather than either or, that is, Co-Create rather than just Collaborate. ☺

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ABHIJIT BHADURI



Blue Ocean Strategies for HR

In the New Year, HR will have to start customizing employment experience as 2015 will be the Year of E-Commerce

What is a Blue Ocean strategy in HR? I don't know. Maybe I should ask what would be considered blue enough – a new form of hiring. Does HR need to find a new way to engage employees or to develop talent? Maybe HR professionals should find a new way to grow the business. Could the blue ocean opportunity lie in customizing the employment experience? Let 2015 be the 'Year of Digitizing HR'.

The Sunrise Sector Advantage

Each time a new sector emerges as a sunrise sector, there is hope for Human Resources to reinvent the function. 2015 will be the Year of e-Commerce. Today it is 1 per cent of Indians who are shopping online. When the country has 1.3 billion people, we know that this is an industry that is going to take off. Amazon, Flipkart and Snapdeal together form the holy trinity of this sector. They are in the business of changing habits. They will have to start by rethinking who they hire and how they hire.

Other start-ups like Uber have tried to craft their own method of hiring. They focus on finding people who are strong on numerical ability, creative and take decisions based on data. While hiring one of their senior leaders, they asked all the finalists to run a social media campaign to sign up new customers and get them to try out their service. What they have done is to simulate as closely as possible one of the key deliverables of the role. The selected candidate outsold the others by a factor of five. It was not hard to decide who would be successful in that role.

Customized Hiring

Hiring methods need to be customized to address the needs of the sector, the role and to predict the probability of success of the new hire in the firm. Could there be a



hiring approach so unique to the firm that it guarantees the success of a new hire?

What are some of the things they could do?

- Scale up the interview process by using analytics and technology. Leverage the database of candidates who they have selected or rejected to create a profile of who are their successful interviewers.
- Run "Wrong Hire Analytics" on senior leaders who have not been successful hires to understand what is missing in the hiring process.

Using Technology

Leagas Delaney in Germany has designed an app that gives a prospective applicant a copy test. The Copytest app is used to demonstrate the applicants' creativity and talent. Could there be a mobile-based app that helps build the employment brand or one that helps candidates self-select themselves?

To rethink the HR function, one needs to be tech savvy and curious

Could we use the device to generate alpha waves when we need to solve critical problem? There are already apps available on the smartphones that help people learn, track their goals and lead healthy lives. Every HR process is ripe for disruption. Let this be the "Year of the HR App".

Reverse Mentoring Conferences

I would like to see conferences invite the freshly minted HR professionals to run entire conferences. Call them Reverse Mentoring Conferences. Attendees should be people who have had more than 10 years of HR experience. No speaker in these conferences should have had more than 3 years of work experience. Why should conferences only invite speakers who have decades of experience?

In a VUCA world, very often past experience is not very useful if one is trying to discover new solutions to problems. Maybe have new conferences where we invite speakers from other disciplines and functions to present how they would rethink the HR function. To rethink the HR function, one needs to be tech savvy and curious. Maybe that is the blue ocean opportunity! ☺

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Q & A

Good managers are the ones who foster trust

Professor Michael Gibbs, Clinical Professor of Economics; Faculty Director of the Executive MBA Program, University of Chicago Booth School of Business, talks about rewarding employee suggestions, the economic impact of employee rewards and fostering a culture of trust

By Lipi Agrawal Khandelwal



Q How do you think organizational dynamics impacts overall employee productivity?

A The importance of good managers has a huge effect on people's productivity and employee turnover. Various studies show that the impact of having a good or a bad supervisor is very high. However, many managers don't realize this. The relationship between an employer and employees is mostly very unpredictable and complex. It is subject to change over time and as the relationship evolves, it will put the employee at risk as expectations from them will not be the same as when they were hired for the job. This will in turn affect the employee's engagement to do the job properly or come up with new ideas.

Good managers develop trust between the employee and the company and with that level of trust you are more likely to get positive results, have employees going extra miles to do their best, sharing ideas and insights about ways to improve processes/services and so forth. Many managers are very hierarchical in the way they deal with people. My Asian students often say that a concern in the Asian economy, including India, is that many managers are very hierarchical and I think if that's true it can reduce productivity and there is a strong need to change the practices in India.

Q What was the key outcome of your study 'If implementing a reward program would actually boost company performance or not' and what can organizations learn from the same?

A We studied an employee suggestion program in a large IT services company in one of the Asian countries. The policies at this company were quite similar to most other technology companies, including in India. The idea was to encourage employees at all levels to make suggestions for improving the business, be it internal operations or the client's

All of your employees are potential sources of innovation. You may be able to tap into this pool with something as simple as an employee suggestion system

business. The idea was to try and create a culture where all employees are involved in innovation. So the organization set up an experimental incentive plan to see if they could motivate the employees through rewards to share more and better ideas.

This study showed that the incentive plan did in fact encourage more employees to get involved in suggesting ideas and secondly the ideas were of better quality, higher value and more likely to be implemented. Our finding was quite surprising because many psychologists have argued that pay for performance would have an opposite effect, but our study showed the opposite. This company recently shared some statistics revealing that the propensity for employees sharing ideas has continued to increase and they are creating more value for customers, resulting in substantially improved profit margins. As a result of the innovation, the customers are extending the amount of business

they have been doing with the company. These are real and measurable economic effects of employee innovation.

Q What would be a key learning for organizations?

A All of your employees are potential sources of innovation and you may be able to tap into this pool with something even as simple as an employee suggestion system and it is possible to increase the effects through a well-designed reward program too. You will then be able to see real economic effects like profitability, customer retention etc.

Q What does an employee suggestion system look like?

A It's a very simple online system where employees can login, provide the description of their new idea, a brief description or an estimate of the cost for implementing the idea and the estimated potential benefits, specifying how the idea would be implemented, who all in the organization would be involved in the same. The supervisor reviews the idea within three days of the submission and then helps the employee refine the idea. Then it is submitted to a panel of high-level executives who meet every 20 days to evaluate all the new ideas and decide which ones to accept. The accepted ideas are either passed on to the client in case their approval is needed or are just implemented. These ideas are available to all other employees for knowing what their colleagues or peers are suggesting and further feel motivated to do the same. The implementation of these ideas is tracked over time and the company estimates the profitability of the ideas and in many cases they even ask the clients to rate the ideas on a 1-5 scale.

Q What keeps employees motivated to come up with new innovative ideas?

A Most employees are intrinsically motivated to do a good job. For instance, in case of this technology company, people are highly interested in learning and reflecting on their work so the intrinsic motivation is significantly high in such a situation. Secondly, the CEO in this company has been trying to encourage a culture of innovation for years. There are some other programs designed to embed this as a culture and then there is the reward program for motivation.

It rewards employees for the acceptable ideas they suggest. Initially, there were reward points that could be used to buy consumer goods, but now they even get cash rewards. This is a model that organizations of any industry or scale can implement easily.

Q What are the key challenges organizations nowadays face in engaging and retaining talent?

A The biggest challenge is that many of the supervisors or managers are not very skilled or sophisticated at dealing with their people. They may be heavy handed, hierarchical or may lack the capability of fostering trust. The second challenge is finding better ways to recognize and reward people each year for their contribution.

My advice to upcoming HR professionals is – learn statistics so that you can be comfortable with data to get ahead of the curve. You can add a lot of value like that as companies have huge amounts of data waiting to be decoded

Moreover, it takes the top management or the leadership of an organization to convince that better management is important and valuable. If they do not pay attention to it, giving it its due importance, it leaves no reason for the middle management to worry about it and they will only focus on their day-to-day operations. It is generally believed that 'people don't leave organizations but they leave managers'. In such cases HR always tends to see what makes people quit, but if they try to bring about a change in managerial behaviour they are most likely to be ignored by other managers as well. This is why it is solely the responsibility of the top management to ensure better managerial and people skills at all levels.

Q As an economist, how do you foresee the future of HR in the coming few years?

A I think it will continue to be strategically important as it has been for the last decade-and-a-half, but at the same time I feel that it will struggle to get as much attention from the top management as is necessary. The field is becoming more analytical and quantitative and I would advise those in the field to start thinking about what kind of data analytics tools can be used as it is becoming a very big trend in Human Resources.

Q A word of advice to emerging HR professionals.

A My advice to upcoming HR professionals is – learn statistics so that you can be comfortable with data to get ahead of the curve. You can add a lot of value like that as companies have huge amounts of data waiting to be decoded. In addition, analytics is one thing that managers in all other functions also tend to respect. **CM**

ABOUT MICHAEL GIBBS

MICHAEL GIBBS studies the economics of human resources and organizational design. He is a co-author (with Edward Lazear) of the leading textbook in his field, *Personnel Economics in Practice*, and a Research Fellow of the Center for the Study of Labor (IZA), the Institute for Compensation Studies, and is on the board of Huy Vietnam.

RICHARD WELLINS

Get Strategic, Sooner!

The role of HR is evolving from “partner” to “anticipator”, according to the Global Leadership Forecast Study



In my last column, I wrote about the impact analytics will have on our profession. In this issue, I will talk about another, but related trend: The Evolving Role of HR. All the data I share comes from the Global Leadership Forecast (GLF), a major research study DDI conducted in partnership with People Matters and The Conference Board involving over 2,000 organizations around the world.

As I mentioned in my past People Matters column, I find my “older” age gives me a unique perspective. I have been in the field of talent management for three decades, witnessing massive changes in both practices and our roles. In our new Global Leadership Forecast study, DDI put together a description of three possible roles HR professionals could be playing:

The Reactor: Ensures compliance with policies/practices; responds to business needs by providing tools/systems when asked.

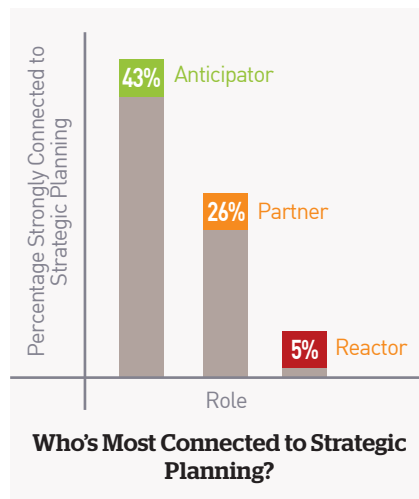
The Partner: Openly exchanges information with the business about current issues; collaboratively works toward mutual goals.

The Anticipator: Uses data to predict talent gaps in advance; provides insights about how talent relates to business goals.

The reactor is more an antiquated role when the HR function was often known as the “personnel department”. Over the past decade, the label of “partner” came into vogue and represents a more collaborative role between lines of business and HR. At the time, it was the right move, but I for one of am sick and tired of the word “partner”. In our work with one of our clients, we saw a new role emerging we labeled the anticipator. This is a far more strategic role and one that means looking ahead, not behind. Ram Charan, describes this shift eloquently, “HR, he says, needs to move from a seat at the table, to setting the table”.



Of the 1,500 plus, HR professionals we surveyed, 22 per cent, (over one in five) were still playing the traditional reactor role! The good news? Sixty per cent classified themselves as partners. But, as expected, only a small percentage, (18 per cent) saw themselves as reactors. If you access the full Global Leadership Forecast study, (<http://www.ddiworld.com/glf2014>), you will have access to a more in-depth view of the critical differences between partners and anticipators.



Every organization has a strategic planning process. But, talent planning comes after the strategic plan, or worse yet, not at all

There is one critical difference we would like to present here. Every organization has a strategic planning process. Yet, the majority of the time, strategic workforce or talent planning comes after the strategic plan, or worse yet, not at all. We find it incredulous that the link between an organization's available talent and the ability to execute on business strategy is little more than an afterthought. The exception? Those organizations with anticipators in the HR role. As the figure below shows, anticipators are almost twice as likely as partners to be involved early in business planning. And, this early involvement makes a difference. Those organizations who were in the top 20 per cent in terms of a five-year composite financial index, were over six times more likely than the bottom 20 per cent to have talent management professionals who are involved early in the strategic planning process.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

RICHARD WELLINS is a DDI Senior Vice President. He is responsible for launching DDI's new products and services, leading DDI's Center for Analytics and Behavioral Research and its major research projects and developing & executing DDI's global marketing strategy.

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Why are you looking so stressed?



I am having hard time recruiting suitable candidates for the upcoming project.

But we already have lined-up candidates for Interviews this week, so what's the worry?



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Is capability the same as capacity?

There are some frameworks to create fungible talent that can battle all kinds of variables

Capacity, Skills & Capability – Are they synonymous? It really depends on the context of usage. Intuitively, we know that ‘skill’ refers to a specific ability & competency is an underlying characteristic that is causally related to effective performance, but both typically refer to an individual. However, capability is something more omnibus. While one can refer to capability with reference to an individual, it lends itself to a more pluralistic and institutional interpretation. Capacity, in an organizational context, would refer to the bandwidth or threshold requirement of “table stakes” that are needed to participate in the game—assets, manufacturing facilities, technology, intellectual capital in terms of brands, patents etc. ‘Capacity’ comes with an inherent risk of erosion and with certainty of obsolescence – Assets depreciate, brands plateau and decline, new technologies replace old technologies. Capability is something deeper & enduring – it is skills, competencies and capacities leveraged to the maximum in pursuit of the company’s vision, strategy & goals! It is built through

a rigorous focus on the human capital (knowledge, skills, competencies, experience, commitment), the social capital (companies relational capital with employees, customers, shareholder, vendors, industry bodies and other external environment) and structural capital (infrastructure that enables leveraging of human capital – hardware, software, policies, processes, manuals, knowledge management & dissemination systems etc).

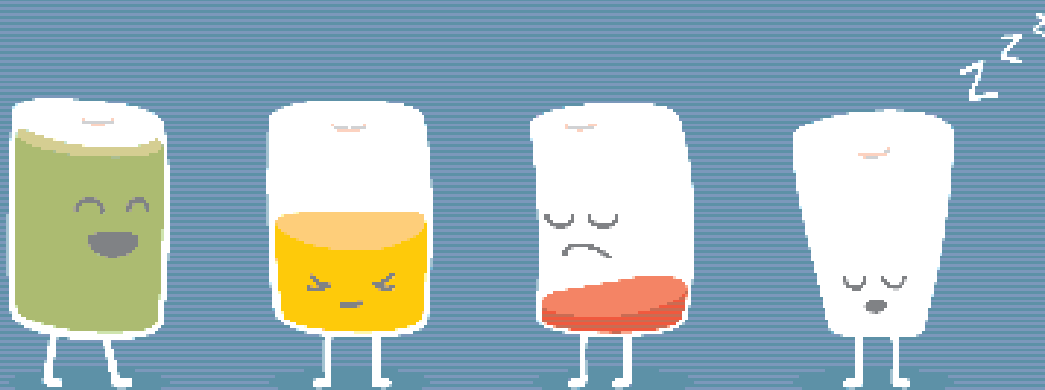
In the words of Shumeet Banerji, Ex CEO of Booz & Company, “Capabilities, in

contrast to capacity need, never expire. They are defining strengths that any company must have to help it compete. They are proficiencies held by the company as a whole that establish its right to win in a given industry. They include people, knowledge, systems, tools or processes that are deployed in the service of the company’s overall purpose and direction.”

Organizational capabilities are those signature characteristics of a company that make it distinctive and enable it to win. They enhance the customer value through responsiveness, relationship and service quality. Above all, organization capability rigorously built, enhances uniqueness because it is difficult to imitate as imitation requires changes in the way people think, act and interact. The uniqueness pertaining to Human Capital is achieved through complex social engineering processes such as culture, teamwork, leadership, which are neither well understood nor easily replicated.

Organizational capabilities have four critical elements:

Capabilities, in contrast to capacity need, never expire. They are defining strengths that any company must have to help it compete





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- Shared Mindset – common understanding of goals/congruence with customer expectations
- Collaboration – complement & integrate with one another
- Capacity for change – anticipation, adaptation, reflectiveness, self-renewal.
- Leadership – ownership, passion and empowered actions

India – A Brief Macro View

When we extrapolate and apply a ‘group of capability systems’ to a macrocosm like a “Slate” or a country, the same can become its defining strengths. In India, in certain sectors like the services sector, which contributes 65 per cent to the GDP, it can be ‘innovation’, ‘service quality’ and ‘mass markets’. Prof. Vijay Govindrajana has been championing Reverse Innovation and shifting the center of innovation to India and the developing countries. This opportunity must indeed be exploited.

However, in the context of India as a manufacturing hub and the ‘Make in India’ approach, we need to do a realistic assessment of the country’s capabilities. When we look at capability & skill building for India Inc., the challenges are manifold.

Growth & Employment

Just consider this: Agriculture currently accounts for approx. 13.7 per cent of GDP, while its share in total employment is 58.2 per cent. The decline in agriculture’s share in output has fallen from 26.9 per cent in 1993-94 to 19.2 per cent in 2004-05 to 14 per cent in 2011-12, its share of employment has only fallen from 64.8 per cent in 1993-94 to 58 per cent & 2004-05 and has remained constant at 58 per cent thereafter! Manufacturing sector contributes 15 per cent of the GDP which has remained stagnant at 15 per cent over the last two decades with only a very marginal growth in employment from 10.4 per cent to 12 per cent. This is contrary to the experience of other countries where when manufacturing grows its share both in the output & employment increases significantly. For example, between 1965 and 1980, manufacturing in South Korea saw its share rise from 17.7 per cent to 30.6 per cent and employment rose from 9.4 per cent to 21.6 per cent. The unorganized workforce constitutes 90 per cent of total workforce and 93 per cent of total workforce is in the informal sector meaning they are beyond the purview of legislation, taxation, social security and any other benefits. The demand side is constrained by archaic labour laws providing over protection making the organized/formal sector baulk from formal employment. The supply side is hamstrung by erratic and inadequate education/skill development.



Organizational capabilities are those signature characteristics of a company that make it distinctive and enable it to win

Many problems are endemic to the primary education itself. The demographic dividend is not equally spread but is weighted toward south & west of India. So, it is clear at the present level that the country’s human capital base is not sufficient to meet the needs of business and the so called demographic dividend is only in numbers and not in skills. Skill building at the grassroots and capability building in the larger/ organizational and corporate context is an appetizing challenge.

The Capability Building Challenge – Corporate India

I did a small research of my own with a cross section of MDs & CEOs of Corporate India from a sectorial mix to understand their perspective on capability building. This brought out some very interesting aspects:

Creating capability is a virtuous cycle – capability not only to produce immediate results but capability to create capability. Foresight, vision, anticipation and willingness to evolve change and adapt – that is what Jim Collins discovered while researching ‘Good to Great Companies’ where one of the counter intuitive finding was “first who then what”. Most of the great companies did not begin with a vision or strategy, they started with “who”- they first got the right people on the bus and then figured where to drive it.


One of the CEOs looked at a photo frame in his room in an individual talent/capability context and had this to say, the capability/talent is the larger part – ‘the frame’ and the job/role is ‘the picture’ inside. Earlier, one would look at the individual from the photo (role/job) perspective, now we look at talent from a Frame perspective – this has more to do with leadership, & strategic abilities while straddling short term successfully.

Another CEO uncannily mentioned something similar - capability may have different levels and nuances across geographies, times and businesses and yet the challenge is how you create talent, which is fungible across these variables again more like the frame & the photo above! Also like something similar to what Jim Collins said – Put your best people on your biggest opportunities not on your biggest problems.

The same CEO mentioned about the choice of identifying talent, which is a distinctive risk - a trade-off between those who comply & ‘fit in’ vs. those that are ‘contrarian’ and ask questions.

Another common theme that emerged was to view ‘capability’ from the perspective of Change Management. Based on the assessment of where the organization is and wants to be, a need to do the change readiness assessment at three levels – individual, groups and organization.

All were unanimous in their view pertaining to the key aspect of talent management, acquisition, retention and development, the part EQ will increasingly play in leadership roles, the need for developing leadership capabilities at all levels of the organization.

In summary, while the micro and macro challenges are numerous, they are also great opportunities. There is enormous scope for both the public and private bodies to partner and bolster various aspects like primary, secondary & higher education, vocational skills, skills specific to service sector, hard & soft skills etc. and for ‘corporate India’ in the areas of knowledge Management, Innovation, culture building. 

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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GLORY
PRIDE**

**IT ALL COMES
DOWN TO THOSE
WHO MADE IT
TO THE LIST**

people
matters

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22nd January 2015, Gurgaon

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VIDEO RECRUIT
ANOTHER RECRUITING ALGORITHM

2014 REWIND

As the New Year dawns, we revisit some of the major news developments of 2014 and reflect on the lessons they have taught us in ways we can't imagine

By **Vikram Choudhury**

“And it’s another goaaaaaaaaaal,” roared the commentator on TV as Germany scored its third. Barely 15 minutes into the start of the semi-final against the prolific host team, the precision and discipline of the Germans made the Brazilian eleven look like a university team. By the time the two outfits were walking back to the stands at half time in the semi-finals of the FIFA World Cup 2014, 26 billion people across the globe were in a state of utter disbelief. Surprise! Yes, surprise, shock, amazement and awe are just some of the adjectives one may use to describe how one experienced the roller coaster of year 2014. Through the screens of our iPads and LCDs, through the morning newspaper, and through newsfeeds on Facebook and Twitter, we saw a new world order emerge in front of our eyes. From the depths of a global pandemic to the heights of the successful Mars mission, the year that went by was nothing short of spectacular.

At the end of it, the events of 2014 taught us some key lessons—of discipline and bravery, of leadership, and most importantly of responsibility and humanity. 2014 was a year that displayed the power of the community and of a society characterized by the increasing influence of social. Whether it was BJP’s election campaign in India, upsets and triumphs of the FIFA World Cup, or Flipkart’s ‘Big Billion Day’, social influenced the world’s thinking around the events of the year like no other. Crowdfunding of the Aam Aadmi Party’s campaign, an emotional apology by Flipkart’s founders, and the global business community’s apathy on the Ebola pandemic was all captured and disseminated by social media.

2014 was also a year of exemplary leadership. The king and the king-maker—Modi

LESSONS FOR TALENT

2014 TAUGHT US SOME KEY LESSONS—OF DISCIPLINE AND BRAVERY, OF LEADERSHIP, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY OF RESPONSIBILITY AND HUMANITY

and Amit Shah—showed just how effective partnerships can make invincible organizations. It's a lesson not just of trust and mutual respect, but also of courage. Another example of courageous leadership came from the prolific coach, Louis van Gaal, who altered old formation paradigms, made unconventional substitutions and created aggressive game plans to lead the Dutch team to third place in the World Cup.

The world watched in horror as the events following the outbreak of Ebola unfurled, while at the same time marvelled at the bravery and humanity of those involved in relief and restoration. Besides gripping the world in a state of perennial mortal fear, the pandemic also brought forth some chilling facts about humanity in today's world. Ebola raised a very central question for the global business community: Does the human responsibility of an organization stop just because an epidemic has hit the far reaches of West Africa? Should the premise of a company's CSR be restricted to the immediate vicinity of business operations and its customer locations? Is this the fine line where the human from the business disintegrates?

Let us recap the game changing events of 2014.

ADD TO CART

COVER STORY

On September 24, an orbiter satellite from India was launched into Mars' orbit unscathed to the awe and amazement of the whole world. "Nobody gets it right in the first try," said the Times magazine, "The U.S. din't, Russia din't, the Europeans din't. But on Sep. 24, India did." Since that day, the Mars Orbiter Mission from India, or "Mangalyaan" as it is fondly called, painted the town red. Mangalyaan features in Times' list of top 25 inventions of 2014 at #2. At a total cost of \$74 million, a key reason why Mangalyaan is India's favourite child of 2014 is its cost efficiency. It is cheaper than the

cost of the Hollywood movie 'Gravity' and more economical than any other Mars mission – by a mile-and-a-half.

A symbolic message

Mangalyaan's success ensured that India joined an elite league of nations—the US, the European Space Agency, and Russia—successfully completing a Mars mission. Even China and Japan had attempted earlier and failed. The impact of Mangalyaan's success transcends far beyond the world of science. Mangalyaan has far reaching impacts in how it will change global perceptions about business in India, its human capital and the flow of funds into the country. It also sends a strong message to the entire global IT, manufacturing and R&D community and investors could seriously look at India as a viable global research and development hub. China unveiled its Mars Rover project on the 10th of November in an attempt to catch up on the massive economic branding opportunity that Mangalyaan presents.

IN A SINGLE STROKE,
MANGALYAAN HAS
CHANGED THE WORLD'S
PERCEPTION OF INDIA AND
ITS HUMAN CAPITAL

PAINTING THE TOWN RED- MANGALYAAN



At one-tenth the cost of the US Mars mission, India showed the world through Mangalyaan how indigenous talent and materials can be used to the nation's advantage

HBR authors Douglas A. Ready, Linda Hill and Jay A. Conger in their study, "The Talent market in BRIC" recommend a great framework for attracting and retaining talent in an emerging economy such as India. International talent seeks opportunities through the lens of purpose, culture, opportunity and brand. An event such as the successful Mangalyaan mission has already provided Indian organizations with a strong brand and the ones who are able to demonstrate intent to provide a great career platform will outrun the others in the race for talent. Talent acquisition teams should be quick to analyse the talent opportunity that the Mangalyaan mission's symbolic message has presented to them. The high-tech, manufacturing and R&D sectors should be among the direct benefactors of this brand opportunity. This is the time for Indian organizations to attract skilled workers from across the globe especially in the fields of scientific research, product development and technical roles. One case example stated in "The Talent Market in BRIC" study is of TCS, and its strategy to attract great talent from its global locations through referrals. These referrals come in wide and large because the company invests in bringing in its early recruits from global locations to India to experience the company and the opportunities it presents. These early recruits then go back to their home countries and become strong brand ambassadors.

The power of indigenous

It is estimated that Mangalyaan's cost is actually one tenth the cost of US space agency's mission Maven. It has set a new cost benchmark through the use of indigenous materials, local expertise and alternative build approaches. While breaking conventional norms and standards, the project's extraordinary success reiterates the new world order of making things work through innovation and genius. The Mangalyaan mission relied heavily on several small and medium enterprises that built components for ISRO and its units. For example, a manufacturing company of book binding machines in Kerala, Wellbound, built the PS4 fluid systems for the small motor aboard Mangalyaan for placing the craft into orbit. Did someone say that indigenous and local cannot have global standards?

It is a big lesson for organizations that are over-reliant on external vendors. Organizations rarely leverage the complete array of skills and capabilities of its own employees. Some companies, however, have done exceptionally well in gathering and putting to productive use the strengths of its employees for positive business impact. Start-ups and e-commerce firms, owing to their agility and flexibility, are able to make quick changes to their people and resource utilization plans, giving employees the opportunity to explore and experience a wider array of jobs. At the same time, lack of agility should not become an excuse for a company's inability to exploit the full potential of its own employees, thereby justifying

a reliance on external vendors. Google is a great example of a company that has not let its sheer size become a deterrent for opportunity. Google's message boards are accessible to all employees where anyone can offer to teach a colleague a skill s/he could teach. They can range from baking to programming. These message boards can be credited with the multitude of innovation and enhancements to Google in the last several years.

Inspiration from a great vision

The tiny non-descript island nation of Fiji played host to 18 of India's top scientists and engineers for tracking India's Mars mission. The island nation provided the crucial logistical support, much needed for the success of the mission. Mangalyaan's success also paved the way for better political relations between India and Fiji. The basis for this collaboration was purely scientific, paving the way for both nations to leverage ideas and future research and development opportunities. The Mangalyaan story is one of extraordinary passion and commitment. It is also a story of a vision, which was so strong so as to

ORGANIZATIONS ARE OVERTLY RELIANT ON EXTERNAL VENDORS. THEY DO NOT FULLY LEVERAGE THE SKILLS AND CAPABILITIES OF THE TALENT WITHIN, THUS IMPACTING THEIR ABILITY TO BE AGILE

inspire and bind communities and constituencies from other parts of the globe. The true test of Mangalyaan's extraordinary vision was when several other nations in the South Pacific Ocean allowed the India Mars mission to set up strategic monitoring stations.

What attracts and retains both talent and customers is a leader's vision. Organizations that showcase a leader's vision effectively will continue to maintain an edge over competition.

Press is good, even bad press

The New York times released a cartoon in the first week of October about a Dhoti-clad turbaned man with a cow knocking on the doors of "The Elite Space Club." While it soon released an apology for hurting Indian sentiments, it also faced censure over racism. Without doubt, it ignited a wave of nationalistic sentiments all across the globe, both among resident and non-resident Indians. The controversy helped showcase many of ISRO's other projects to the rest of the world. For example, through all the press that ISRO received from the controversy, it was able to demonstrate to the world that its remote sensing and communication programs, IRS and INSAT, were critical in successfully predicting the extent and magnitude of Cyclone Phailin and helping the administration minimize damages. Any kind of press isn't bad after all. 🐮

NEW PARADIGMS OF DEMOCRACY—ELECTIONS 2014

Customer insights and innovation can help an organization overcome complacency. And in today's VUCA times, social media.

COVER STORY

The general elections in India are the biggest spectacle of democracy in the world. In the 2014 election, data from the Election Commission of India state that there were more than 800 million eligible voters in India. The Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) emerged as the single largest party and the National Democratic Alliance led by the BJP toppled the 10-year regime of the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA). Exit polls and optimistic projections could not predict the actual outcome of the election; the BJP securing an absolute majority. Unarguably, the

single largest factor behind this thumping victory was the Modi-wave—a factor of anti-incumbency, unprecedented marketing techniques, and general economic insecurity of the electorate.

Elections 2014 truly exemplified the virtues of new communication techniques, ground-breaking strategy, and the organizational death-trap called complacency. BJP's campaign was a success story carved from hard-work, innovation and customer insight. Narendra Modi's campaign travel across far reaching corners of the country could well be the most extensive one in the history of Indian democracy. Social media played a central role in increasing the campaign's reach and impact. Besides that, the BJP's manifesto was reflective of the biggest pain points that the people in the country faced and ways to mitigate them. In all, the run up to Elections 2014 sprayed some crucial lessons on the wall. Some remarkable highlights include the following.

Social-media leading the charge

While most contesting parties invested in traditional print and broadcast channels, BJP showed the

SOCIAL MEDIA PLAYED A CENTRAL ROLE IN INCREASING THE REACH AND IMPACT OF NARENDRA MODI'S POLL CAMPAIGN. MILLIONS OF INDIANS COULD CONNECT DIRECTLY WITH HIM ON TWITTER AND THAT PROVED TO BE A GAME-CHANGER

country's political think-tank the power of social media. Much before the elections, Narendra Modi already had more followers on Twitter and 'Page Likes' on Facebook, than the PMO. Not only were these accounts managed professionally, Modi himself built reputation as a social-media savvy politician, clicking 'selfies' and using hashtags. His social media clout was far higher than 90 per cent of all other celebrities in the country. The educated electorate had a direct connect with Modi- they could directly post questions to him and receive personalized responses. It represented abolition of the invisible walls between the leader and the voter. BJP's social media campaign was an eye-opener on the importance of fairness and transparency in this era of open information and the millennial generation.

Earlier this year, the American CEO magazine presented the findings from a word-cloud analysis that researchers gleaned from articles and write-ups about the 20 most successful CEOs. The analysis reveals that playing the role of a relationship builder is among the top mantras of successful leaders in this day and age. Modi's social media drive reveals this quality amply. It is a great lesson in self-leadership for all CEOs and business leaders.

Shah-Modi partnership

People call them the Jai-Veeru of Elections 2014. If Narendra Modi was the face of BJP, Amit Shah was the brain behind it. Coming from a radically different background than that of Modi, but bound by a common ideology, Shah was an omnipresent force in building his war strategy. He virtually oversaw almost everything else around the BJP's ascent to power, including the PR, budgeting, and administration. To the BJP camp, Shah was the cold and calculative strategist who would handle crisis and never let the face of the party down at any stage- a heady mix of Tom Hagen and Luca Brasi in Mario Puzo's masterpiece, *The Godfather*.

Playing the role of a king-maker is equally important for an organization as making a leader effective. In these times where most organizations are in a scamper for hiring the best leaders, how many have consciously carved out plans to hire king-makers? A famous general in history once quoted after facing defeat, "God has a good sense of humour. He made me the greatest leader in history, but look at what he gave me to lead." It is critical for the success of any leader that s/he has a follower who is willing to translate his vision into tangible results. While the model of followership as a leadership concept is still in its nascent stages, history has shown that it is true that every successful leader had support from a silent king-maker who influenced, motivated, and enabled the translation of her/his vision.

Learning from competition


While the anti-incumbency factor across the country was unmistakable, AAP dealt a serious blow to BJP's battle strategy. The Delhi elections proved to be a sufficient reason for concern, with AAP emerging as the giant killer. But unlike other political parties, who were more busy maligning

AAP's reputation, the BJP think-tank chose to watch and learn from AAP's success. After having observed the strategy of their biggest threat, the BJP adapted a new approach, one that still upheld the foundations of its campaign but adjusted to the changed conditions. While the BJP campaign still hinged around the agenda of development, it also incorporated populist agendas learning from AAP such as anti-corruption and civil development.

We've often heard anecdotes about 'the great divide' between employee voice and business strategy, mostly a consequence of the organizational leadership's ignorance. The same American CEO magazine's word-cloud analysis mentioned earlier reveals that adaptability, effective communication and customer advocacy constitute qualities of great modern-day CEOs. Are organizations putting together processes and practices that allow the actual voice of the organization and the market to reach the leadership? More importantly, how are we measuring the leadership's commitment and holding them accountable for employee voice?

ANOTHER MAJOR FACTOR THAT HELPED THE BJP WIN ELECTION 2014 WAS THAT MODI HAD NOMINATED AMIT SHAH AS THE BRAIN BEHIND THE CAMPAIGN AND THE RESULTANT PARTNERSHIP HELPED THE PARTY TO DOMINATE THE POLLS

The AAP effect

The emergence and success of the AAP was perhaps the most exciting phase in the run up to Elections 2014. From a local pressure group based in Delhi, the AAP emerged as a winner in the Delhi Assembly elections outnumbering many leading parties and being invited by the Governor to form the government in the state. A win in Delhi was of exceptional strategic significance as it gave AAP the impetus to go national and contest the Lok Sabha elections from across the country. While the experience and battle hardiness of the BJP prevailed in the end, it cannot be denied that the emergence and unprecedented success of the AAP altered many paradigms in the political landscape in India. For instance, AAP's success showed that the limitations of resource, age and experience can be overcome through technology and neo-age tactics such as crowdsourcing, strong market research and investment in the right customer communication. AAP emerged as a fresh face with a novel way to operate a democratic process and it caught the fancy of the electorate. They could as well have pulled it off, lest for the wrong decisions at critical junctures which the party's leadership took in an attempt to make maximum impact in minimum time. Whatever said and done, the emergence of AAP indicates the changing times of Indian politics— a system democratised through technology and crowdsourcing. 

Jobs of the week



Sampoorna Computer People

ER & Compliance Lead

Location: Gurgaon

Job ID: 16170009

Description: To apply strategic and business targets to HR processes, products and services, in labour relations, employee services & employee relations.



Multi Recruit

Human Resources (HR) Manager

Location: Bengaluru / Bangalore

Job ID: 16115524

Description: Must have a clear understanding of their employer's business objectives and be able to devise and implement policies which select, develop and retain the right staff needed to meet these objectives.



Grassroots BPO Private Limited

LEAD RECRUITER - US STAFFING

Location: Bengaluru / Bangalore

Job ID: 15164660

Description: 5 - 7 years of total experience into US recruitment, with at least 1 years' experience as a Lead.



Cynosure Corporate Solutions

Manager - HR

Location: Chennai

Job ID: 15237393

Description: Establish action plan for recruitment forecast and achieve the recruitment target as per the organizational manpower needs.



Adept Talent Search & Recruitment Consultants

Manager - HR Business Partner

Location: Bengaluru / Bangalore

Job ID: 16168498

Description: Execute HR strategies, which support Business goals, Adjust HR execution plans, as needed, to respond to changing business requirements.



HINPA Incorporation

Manager - Human Resources

Location: Surat, Valsad

Job ID: 16127429

Description: The candidate shall be responsible for all talent acquisition for below Asst. Manager category. He shall be handling functional testing of competencies as well as psychometric analysis.



Travellex India Pvt. Ltd.

Corporate Recruiter

Location: Mumbai

Job ID: 16163233

Description: 6 - 8 Years of experience in recruiting senior and executive hiring in Finance, IT & Compliance for corporates.



Golden Opportunities Private Limited

HR Operations Assistant Manager

Location: Chennai

Job ID: 15886409

Description: Strong background with strengths in managing operations with abilities in simplifying complex problems on the relevance and impact parameters through idea-led solutions.



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Jobs of the week



Anthroplace Consulting Private Limited

DGM HR

Location: Kolkata

Job ID: 16008846

Description: The designation would be of DGM HR. Incumbents with prior exposure to large IT/ITES organization would be preferred.



People Logic

Recruiter / Senior Recruiter

Location: Bengaluru / Bangalore

Job ID: 16132800

Description: 2 - 5 years of experience in Staffing from a Consulting/Corporate side.



Zakat Consulting Private Limited

HR Manager

Location: Gurgaon

Job ID: 14993748

Description: Maintains the work structure by updating job requirements and job descriptions for all positions.



Ikya Human Capital Solutions Pvt. Ltd.

Recruitment Lead / Manager / Sr. Manager

Location: Bengaluru / Bangalore, Mumbai

Job ID: 16105678

Description: Will be responsible to bill invoices for each month and Qtr as per the management timelines and guidelines.



Futures Ahead

Manager - Training

Location: Mumbai

Job ID: 16029400

Description: 5 - 6 years of experience in the field of training including course design.



NIIT Technologies Limited

AM - HR Compensation & Benefits

Location: Noida

Job ID: 16116330

Description: Should be able to handle the role independently with very less supervision and co-ordinate with various departments for certain deliverables.

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The biggest sporting event of the year brought the concepts of leadership and performance to the fore be it Messi not firing on all cylinders or the German team winning the Cup

THE SOCCER SPECTACLE FIFA-2014

The FIFA World Cup is unarguably the biggest global sporting event. The 2014 edition in Brazil was watched by more than 26 billion people across the world and economists peg its contribution to the Brazilian economy at \$3.03 billion. Further, if we consider the indirect and induced financial transactions, the total contribution would hover around a whopping \$11 billion! EY estimates job creation in Brazil from FIFA 2014 to approximately 3.6 million new jobs contributing to approximately 4 per cent a year to the country's economic growth.

As an economy, the wave of new jobs that the country produced as a result of the mega event and its long-term contribution to the nation's economy is hard to ignore. After Beijing Olympics 2008, it altered the world's view about the nation and the economy. From the erstwhile perceptions of an impervious culture, China suddenly became part of the global tourist and business map. It is fascinating to observe the socio-cultural and economic transformations these mega events bring to a nation and Brazil will continue to enjoy the benefits of the nation-branding from FIFA World Cup 2014 in the years and decades to come. In addition, several events in the World Cup threw forth some deep insights about teams, leadership, and human behaviour.

Controversies galore

The World Cup 2014 was marred with several controversies, which erupted right at the onset of the tournament. Brazil's star player Neymar got away with only a booking in the hosts' opening match against Croatia for a foul worthy of a red card. In another first round match involving Mexico and Cameroon, two of the South American team's goals were disallowed. While conspiracy theorists were quick to connect these events with a deep-rooted collusion between the host nation and FIFA, the less cynical also admit that the outcome

WHEN AN ORGANIZATION SHOWS LENIENCY TOWARDS A STAR PERFORMER, IS IT IN ITS LONG-TERM INTEREST?

of the tournament could well have been different if some of these controversial incidents had panned out differently. For neutral sports enthusiasts from across the globe, these events were not taken lightly and there was widespread social-media fire over them. FIFA, in the past, had faced 'consumer ire' over allegations of imperialistic practices, but never was it so pronounced. It brought to light a glaring reality of the information era—social media is 'socialist' by nature and corporations are better off trying to catch up than fight it.

There is a central talent leadership question that the controversies of the World Cup brought to the fore. Just because participation of star teams was central to the popularity of the championship, was it OK to be unfair to the rest? Very often, an organization shows blatant leniency towards a star performer or a HiPo. While it may mean that the organization achieves immediate objectives, what long-term impressions do such incidents leave in the talent market?

Corruption row and sponsorship threats

Amidst all the fanfare of World Cup 2014, a scandal threatened the very future of the World Cup. FIFA faced acquisitions of corruption in the allegedly dubious selection process of its next two World Cup host nations—Russia (2018) and Qatar (2022). Sony, one of its main sponsors withdrew its sponsorship from FIFA and there were serious doubts about another couple of its long-term sponsors, Visa and McDonald's pulling out too. One of its oldest sponsors, Coca Cola, which was associated with the brand for over 40 years also reconsidered its association with the event. The names of the implicated FIFA officials were cleared after a year-long investigation accompanied by many controversies of its own but not before the FIFA World Cup brand name suffered a serious damage.

Four Ivey Business School scholars observed that companies track three elements while hiring a leader—competencies, commitment and character. Of the three, their research boldly indicates that character is the most difficult to assess and the least understood. How many organizations actually choose character over competencies while selecting leaders? In the race for achieving business outcomes, choosing a leader with a "proven track record" appears like the easy choice.

Too hot for the stars

World Cup history is proof that many star players crumble at the big stage. When the prolific Diego Maradona failed to make any impact at the 1990 World Cup, the press felt that the team was lugging him along as dead weight because "Brand Maradona" was bigger than the team. While many stars shine brighter than ever at this stage, it is also true that many find the World Cup heat too difficult to handle. Argentina's star player Lionel Messi won the Golden Ball in 2014, amidst acquisitions that his performance was only a shadow of his potential. The stars who scripted Spain's dream story in 2010, Fernando Torres and Iniesta, also failed to fire in Brazil 2014. Stars shine the brightest before

they ebb, and managing a dying star is an ethereal problem for any organization.

Making the hard decision of 'benching' a prolific star is never easy. Jack Welch writes that the only person contended with accommodating an individual in a project team who does not belong there is the star herself. "Before you know," Welch adds, "other stars will feel insulted and even some mid-range performers will feel resentful." That's a heavy price to pay just for having star presence in the team.

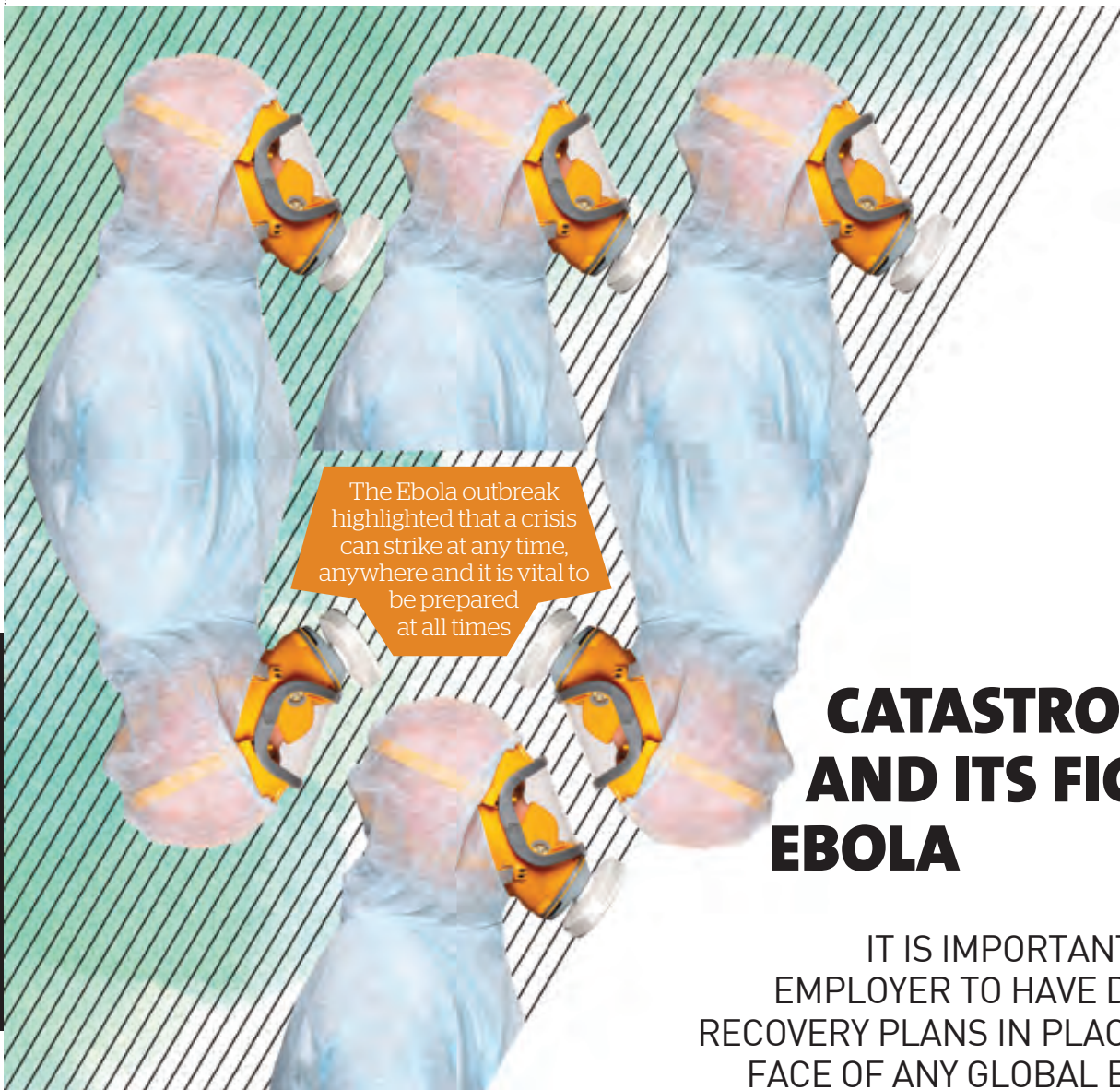
Brazil's humiliating defeat

Brazil's defeat in the semi-finals was perhaps the most humiliating in the nation's history of participation. While the championship saw a flurry of goals, the 7-0 margin of defeat revealed some genuine cracks in the team's strategy. Despite the presence of star players such as David Luiz and Hulk, and the prolific striker Neymar, the score line at the end of game, was shocking to state the least. Once again, the match result firmly reiterates that team factors such as coordination, trust, and collaboration in today's VUCA world far outrun individual brilliance.

IN THIS VUCA WORLD, COLLABORATION AND TEAM WORK FAR OUTRUNS INDIVIDUAL BRILLIANCE

Where angels dare to tread

The Dutch team, historically known for its 4-3-3 formation successfully experimented with a new formation, 5-3-2. Behind the team's unconventional tactics was the coach Louis van Gaal's bold decisions that were put under the scanner as much as they were decorated. Van Gaal made no attempt at hiding his intent to "go for the kill" during the 96th minute at the semi-finals when he traded his last substitution card for the striker Klaas-Jan Huntelaar contrary to all expectations. He could have easily played safe in the dying minutes and used the opportunity to bring in the prolific goalie, Tim Krul. Krul was instrumental in the team's quarter-final win in the penalty shootout against Costa Rica, where he came in, incidentally, as a substitute. The team lost the match, ironically in a penalty shootout, but went on to win the third spot in the championship. One may continue to debate whether van Gaal made the right choices, but the fact remains that he displayed a rare quality in leadership—to trust his instinct and experience and take decisions even if they may not be popular. USA's coach, the ex-German star, Juergen Klinsmann set examples of brave gameplay and shone like a beacon, steering the underdog team toward a truly inspiring performance. While the team did not progress beyond the round of 16, two of its team members, Clint Dempsey and Tim Howard, attained star status in the country. There were several other examples in the tournament where coaches exemplified courageous leadership though bold substitutions, formation changes, and strategy. 🏆



The Ebola outbreak highlighted that a crisis can strike at any time, anywhere and it is vital to be prepared at all times

CATASTROPHE AND ITS FIGHT-EBOLA

IT IS IMPORTANT FOR AN EMPLOYER TO HAVE DISASTER RECOVERY PLANS IN PLACE IN THE FACE OF ANY GLOBAL EPIDEMIC

With a 71 per cent mortality rate, no fear gripped the world greater than the Ebola virus outbreak in 2014. The first signs of the disease were reported in the West African nation of Guinea, and within a short span of time spread across many other countries, including Liberia, Mali, Sierra Leone and Senegal. It was a phenomenon to observe and sympathize for the rest of the world before a couple of reported cases in the United States and Spain made the fear real and present. In no time, airports and other entry ports in countries across the globe started to equip themselves to prevent the spread of the disease. More than 17,000 suspected cases of Ebola were reported until the end of November 2014 leading to more than 6000 deaths. The emergence and spread of Ebola made us aware of some harsh realities of existence in our times.

It's a global village

The virus was first detected in December 2013, in the small country of Guinea and within a few months, it became a global phenomenon. Considering the disease was reported thousands of miles away in a different continent, the sheer distance cushioned the fears of many across Europe, Australia, Asia, and the Americas. In no time, the threat was knocking at the very doors of those who felt safe and protected. A new case is equally likely to be reported in New Delhi now as it is in New York. It taught us a very important lesson that preparedness is vital and that no one is completely shielded from a phenomenon just because it occurred in some far reaching corner of the globe.

It is important for an employer in any industry or any type- global or local- to have disaster recovery plans in place in the face of any global epidemic. Safeguarding health is a primary expectation that employees have from an employer. Partnership with a benefits provider is often considered

as a “check-in-the-box” exercise rather than an important part of an organizational talent management plan. AON Hewitt’s ‘Total Rewards Survey’ across the last three years have consistently show that an organization’s commitment to employee health is one of the key factors of attraction in the Indian market. Organizations which offer excellent health benefits to employees stand at an inherent advantage to attract and retain talent. It is on occasions of crisis such as these that an organization gets the opportunity to review a relationship with a benefits service provider.

You can hide, but you cannot run

The Wireless Application Services Providers of Ghana (WASPAG) donated GHS 50,000 for medical research to prevent the spread of Ebola across the globe. A mining company based in Ghana, Newmont, actually built a simulation exercise to prepare contingency plans and scenarios. The coming months will see many more such examples of how organizations gear themselves for the worst. Newmont has also partnered with the Red Cross and other companies to finance Project C.U.R.E. for medical supplies. The WHO has actively contributed to the prevention and cure of the disease in the affected countries. The United Bank of Africa (UBA) announced the donation of US \$1 million to assist the fight against Ebola.

It is not difficult to miss that most contributions and efforts have come from corporations and businesses that have a direct stake in the affected region. If we calculate the total amount of monetary and non-monetary contributions of corporations who are not directly connected with Ebola affected countries it is a negligible fraction compared to contribution of the ones who are directly facing the heat of the problem.

It almost appears that a majority of the global business community is shrugging off common responsibility though they are well aware that everyone has a stake in the problem. Most organizations outside the zone of direct impact have made their contributions as a source of PR branding, rather than CSR. Western Union, for example, came under the fire of critics for the sheer size of their donation for Ebola. The corporation, which earns a sizeable chunk of its revenue from expatriate money transfers from Africa, donated a paltry sum of US \$ 25,000. The company earns a sizeable cut from the US \$ 7 billion that Africans pay to remit money on and to the continent. The Press termed this move as “humiliating” and insulting, akin to kicking someone half dead and then throwing a Tylenol at them.”

Commitment to the community and society is one of the key factors of millennial generations to choose an employer. The Forbes article, “CSR: A Lever for Employee Attraction and Engagement” published last year presents findings from various research studies from across the globe about preferences of today’s generations for choosing an employer. One such survey in the US, from Net Impact, states that 53 per cent of workers choose a job where they can make an impact. They state

that having an employer which is socially responsible is important for their happiness. Results from various studies globally reveal the same sentiment of workforces in different countries composed of diverse skill sets. Maybe it is time for organizations to rethink their CSR strategy and assess how to include it as a key ingredient of their branding strategy.

Plan for business continuity

Many leading global companies are showing the way of how to face the threat of a catastrophe through several steps and measures to educate, prevent and treat people. One of the immediate steps which global organizations have taken is the restriction of non-essential travel to affected countries. Many companies are trying to prevent the fear psychosis through regular communications with its employees to educate them about safe habits. Shell Oil Company has posted all information related to the disease on its health and travel website. IBM created a blog, which is run, administered, and maintained by the company’s medical personnel. Several companies demonstrate care for

COMMITMENT TO THE COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY IS ONE OF THE KEY FACTORS THAT MILLENNIAL GENERATIONS CONSIDER WHILE CHOOSING AN EMPLOYER

their employees by evacuating them from affected countries, while others have issued notifications and guidelines about what constitutes safe habits and prevention. Firestone Tires built a whole medical centre in Liberia, their largest source of rubber, when the wife of one of its employees was infected with the virus.

The Ebola epidemic exposed several gaps in organizational preparedness to continue business. Business Continuity Planning (BCP) in many organizations is either restricted to paper plans or in worse cases, missing altogether. The Disaster Recovery Preparedness Council, an industry body based in America to check and control Disaster Recovery (DR) practices among IT companies, said in its report, “Disaster Recovery Preparedness Benchmark Survey 2014”, that almost 3 out of 4 companies are inadequately prepared for disaster recovery. Karl Palachuk, a disaster recovery expert and author of several books on the subject, has seen five common problems companies have in their disaster recovery plan — no plan, inadequate plan, wrong technology, untested plan, and insufficient information management. It is appalling to see that despite all the talk and investments in BCP and DR, most companies fail to conduct a basic hygiene check about disaster preparedness. A company, which prides itself about being a great place to work, is expected to demonstrate its commitment to employees in every aspect, including disaster recovery and employee safety. 

Of the many battles fought, none of them were as pitched and fierce as the e-commerce battle of 2014. In the middle of this wolf fight, some remarkable achievements also inspired and set new standards. E-commerce will continue to be among the biggest newsmakers in the coming times. E-commerce funding reached new heights, brand battles got more intense than ever before and the flurry in the talent market was serious.

Gartner estimates the India e-commerce market to grow 70 per cent between 2014 and 2015 and reach \$6 billion. One of the key concerns with the e-commerce market in India is that service providers are so focused on execution and win-

ning customers at this point that at many times, it comes at the cost of future vision. Mergers and acquisition activity is increasing, thereby increasing the scale and breadth of services and operations of individual players. At the same time, many challenges continue to plague the market, including low internet penetration, low volumes, and logistical issues.

Buying loyalty through stocks

Hiring and recruitment data from this year's IIT placements reveal that e-commerce has propelled itself to becoming one of the top preferences for candidates this year. The promise of a collegial work environment, faster growth opportunities, bigger incentives and the freedom to carve one's own career are seen as the biggest crowd pullers to the e-commerce space. These are some of the best times for e-commerce firms and data shows that e-commerce companies are able to attract some of the best talent from the premier institutes in the country.

Compensation is the primary tactic for e-commerce companies to attract and retain talent at this point. The common notion in the talent market in India is that an offer with an

THE PROMISE OF A COLLEGIAL WORK ENVIRONMENT, FASTER GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES, BIGGER INCENTIVES, AND THE FREEDOM TO CARVE ONE'S OWN CAREER IS HELPING TO ATTRACT TALENT TO E-COMMERCE COMPANIES

THE BRAVEHEARTS- E-COMMERCE WARS

Talent from other industries and B-Schools are flocking to e-commerce companies, which will soon enter a phase of consolidation

ADD TO CART

e-commerce firm comes with an increment of 60-70 per cent in salary. The salary figure of Rs. 1 crore has almost become a benchmark for salaries in business and functional head roles. At the senior leadership levels, Rs. 6-crore plus salaries is commonplace. The primary difference between packages offered by e-commerce firms compared to traditional firms is in the structure of compensation. While traditional firms believe more in providing cash, e-commerce firms are more reliant on stock. With the option of offering stock, e-commerce firms are able to inflate salary packages much higher than traditional firms. The tactic, at this point, is working because current talent trends indicate that the talent market is happier to have a higher overall compensation package with stock options compared to a lower package with more cash.

Another key advantage of offering stock is the inbuilt long-term loyalty that comes with a reward system based on company performance. While it may mean higher payouts, e-commerce companies are building loyal and committed executive teams through the premise that the real benefits of stock options come only in the long term.

Sales do not equal total shareholder returns

The dramatic Flipkart-Snapdeal face-off in early October was a story of polarities. For the lucky customers who were able to avail some big deals, it was a dream-come-true. For many others, online shopping turned out to be a harrowing experience, with payments failing, web sites crashing, and information overload. While the e-commerce story was scripted similar across the globe, one e-tailer showed the world a new paradigm of conducting online commerce. Alibaba's 'Singles Day' was the biggest event in the history of global e-commerce, with the Chinese company making total sales of over \$9 billion on one single day. Borrowing its name from a conversation about the day belonging to four singles, 11/11, the 'Singles Day' will forever be etched in online commerce history as a day which emphatically showed the world that online commerce is here to stay. While online commerce companies in India try and play catch up with Alibaba, it is a benchmark that sets the highest levels of service, technology, and planning.

Flipkart kicked off the war and Snapdeal responded with equal intensity. Snapdeal announced a shopping bonanza on the same day with a flurry of discounts and deals to ride on the great big online shopping wave. Customer acquisition is the biggest focus for e-tailers in India and companies in this industry are maintaining their single-handed focus on this objective. At the same time, it is no secret that e-tailers in India are losing money, as customer acquisition costs are much higher in this industry compared to any other industry. Most believe that the flow of funding is the only reason why online commerce firms are staying afloat despite the magnitude of losses. While clearly, sales volumes

have become a primary business target for online retailers in the country, they are not necessarily translating into total shareholder return. 2015 will likely be a year of consolidation for the e-commerce industry in India with major M&A activity.

Many e-commerce companies in India also came under the scanner for the wrong reasons. Customers complained that e-commerce companies increased the marked prices of products before offering discounts, thereby making the discounts appear more inflated. While this worked in many cases as an excellent marketing tactic, it was not too long before the market started to brand them as unethical. It also opened up questions on ethical business practices, enough for the Competition Commission of India (CCI) to take notice. The Ethics Research Center, an American non-profit research body, in its publication, "Building a Corporate Reputation of Integrity" states that ethical leadership is a key contributor for top talent in an industry to choose an employer. While faced-paced growth may be a key area of focus for the leadership, they have to consider the impact of their actions on the talent market.

TAKING A LEAF OUT OF FLIPKART'S BIG BILLION SALE FIASCO, ONE CAN SAFELY CONCLUDE THAT OWNING UP TO A MISTAKE IN TODAY'S NETWORKED AGE IS NEVER A BAD IDEA

It is alright to be human

The Bansals of Flipkart came up with an emotional apology to their customers for letting them down on the 'Big Billion Day' sale, and it did surprisingly strike a chord with many. It was a brave display of leadership intent, which many call a masterstroke. Despite receiving its own share of criticism from various quarters, it displayed that owning up to a mistake in today's networked age is never a bad idea. What clicked on this occasion was the fact that the organizational leadership made a strong statement both to its customers and its internal and external talent pool that it is okay to be human. In an industry where everyone is trying to project the organization and the leadership's image as the role model of perfection, here is an example of a brand that was open to accepting its human side. It was this very human move that propelled Flipkart back to its spot as India's answer to Amazon. 🙏

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TANVI GAUTAM

When crisis calls, you answer!

We can't choose our crisis, but we can choose the lessons to curate out of them



Imagine this. You have been looking forward to one of the leading conferences of your industry for months. You are going to moderate a panel with MDs and thought leaders with whom you have spent time mapping the questions and content of discussion. You have packed your bags, you check in for your international flight and you are filled with anticipation and excitement when suddenly.....shooting pain. The kind you have never known. The kind that makes it difficult to speak!

This was me. As I got ready to board my flight for the annual National Human Resource Development conference to Mumbai, I had to cancel my tickets on the spot and go to the emergency room straight away.

I have to admit it was a bit surreal. One always assumes things like this happen to "other people". While I will spare you the gory details of what happened around diagnosis and recommended course of action, I do want to share what this taught me about decision making and self leadership in a crisis situation.

Three things I will try and remember for next time:

Don't look back

I admit, albeit sheepishly, that even as we drove towards the hospital I had thoughts about the pain reducing and catching a later flight! Two hours later despite high intensity pain relieving injections, I was still writing in pain and they called a surgeon in for consultation. The answer was clear. However, the self induced anxiety I inflicted on myself was needless. I was confusing the operational and the emotional! Operationally, I knew it could not be done emotionally I was not wanting to let go of my trip. Lesson learnt: Agonizing over what could have been or could be only makes it difficult to move forward. Accept



what is and move forward with conviction. Don't look back once a decision is clear (as a side note - make health a priority over work!!).

Know your professional SWAT team

I knew I did not want to leave the team in a lurch. I had to find someone to step in. I was able to get hold of one such expert right away who I knew was attending the event. She graciously took over the mantle. Lesson that I have known always was reinforced: Networks are your network. You are only as good as the network you are plugged into. Nurture and celebrate the strengths of your network. If you network only when you need it, it is like digging a well when you are thirsty. Your networks raise you tall and - as was evident in my case - catch you when you fall! (as a side note - SWAT stands for special weapons & tactics - a group of elite marksmen who specialize in high-risk tasks such as hostage rescue)

Marvel at what went right

The flight was an hour late - which meant if it had been on time, this crisis would have

Agonizing over what could have been or could be only makes it difficult to move forward

unfolded mid-air! I shudder to think what that would have been like. Some times events make sense only in retrospect. Things could always have been better but things could also have been worse. This lesson was taught to me by my father in another crisis and I have adopted it as a mantra—look back at marvel at what went right! One can't control a crisis, but one can learn to make peace with the aftermath.

Ultimately, we can't choose our crisis, but we can choose the lessons to curate out of them. When crisis calls, we have to answer. And most of all, be grateful for every mundane, healthy, regular moment of your life because things can and do change in an instant! ☺



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To be or not to be in VUCA times

Battle-ready organizations need to be agile and nimble to the changes around them as VUCA can throw up immense possibilities

By Anu Babu Kurian

The terminology VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity and Ambiguity) was first coined by the US Army War College in order to denote the extreme conditions in Afghanistan and Iraq in 1990s. Though those extreme conditions are not present in many parts of the world, they have come to represent the constantly changing business climate. Initially, we would make plans or solve problems to deal with the uncertainty. But now, we have to actively engage uncertainty and that requires our leaders to be very very agile.

Though many business leaders and management gurus are familiar with the concept, not many know how to combat VUCA. It was for precisely this reason that the National Human Resource Development, a national-level body representing Human Resources professionals across the country, chose a VUCA-related topic as the main theme for its 18th Annual Conference in Mumbai on November 20-22, 2014. The topic "Sustainable Growth in VUCA Times: The New Talent Agenda" saw many industrial leaders sharing their thoughts and

views on how to grow a business and still keep talent at the top of the agenda in VUCA times. In this report, we take a look at some of the key highlights of the event and what it means for you.

Developing leaders in a VUCA environment

According to Paul Kinsinger, Clinical Professor, Thunderbird School of Global Management, and Executive Director, Thunderbird Executive Education (TEE), a leader who is looking to adapt to turbulent times must be willing to let go of what defined success in prior roles and organizational models; essentially he/she needs to shed all the old paradigms and design and set measures new ones. Secondly, he/she must keep his ego in check and have a keen ability to learn. He/she must have the ability to see the new leadership and new organization as an escalator to on-boarding a whole new set of skills. The most major skill that a leader will be

Authenticity, influencer and walk the talk are some of the qualities a VUCA leader should have

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developing would be being able to work with contradictions and paradoxes that they would come across in the VUCA world.

Leaders such as Hindustan Unilever's Chairman Harish Manwani have taken VUCA so seriously that it was the topic of his speech at the Annual General Meeting held on 26th July, 2013. Manwani said and I quote, "A few years ago the Lebanese American scholar Nicholas Taleb introduced the concept of black swans - events that are difficult to predict because they are low probability outliers so the past provides no reliable precedent. And yet these black swan events have a huge and profound impact. Think of the September 11 terrorist attacks or the rise of the Internet.

We live now in a VUCA world surrounded by black swans. This is the New Normal."

Authentic, influencer and walk the talk are some of the qualities that should be in a VUCA leader.

Working in VUCA times - What do organizations need to do differently

Organizations need to ensure that messages that are communicated down the leadership chain are aligned to the overall vision and are consistent. In a world where priorities constantly shift, communication needs to be direct and clear. This would not only keep the communication channels clear, but also reassure talent that nothing is amiss.

Today, Internet of Things is no longer a concept and is the driving force behind VUCA

The VUCA world is all about anticipating, learning, adapting and delivering in evolving new context. For example, the evolution of the Internet and the Financial Crisis of 2008 were events that have shaken up the existing business eco-system and also changed the way companies now look at talent. Adversity leads to developing stronger talent and this is where VUCA comes in. If a leader in VUCA times has no thought of what is in the future, then he/she will find sorrow near at hand. While the organization needs to anticipate risks, it also shouldn't make very long-term plans that are too rigid. Plans have to be flexible as uncertain times sometimes can throw up good opportunities. So, if the organization is agile enough, it must be able to capture the chance to innovate. HR must lead that change. HR will need to reinvent and realign many of the policies and practices so that it can be in a better position to respond to talent challenges that rock the organization from time to time.

Digitization is changing the workplace like never before. If earlier companies were hesitant to let people check emails in the office, now those very same companies swear by social media and have sought to engage employees through several other mediums like Yammer and other gamification models. Internet of Things is no longer a concept

and we are at a stage where it is distinctly possible to make that a reality. The SMAC concept is not just changing workplaces, but also the way organizations look at talent. Today, this is the driving force behind VUCA.

Dealing with GenY in a VUCA environment

Going forward, the mantra for many CEOs would be to do more with less. While companies will need leaders who are multipliers of energy, engagement, ownership and passion, they will also need people who will listen, focus on asking the right questions, have no desire to command and control but infact co-create solutions and get genuine joy out of seeing a thousand flowers bloom. VUCA is here to stay and India is the best laboratory to develop talent.

GenY graduates are more than willing to test unexplored areas and experiment with roles outside their subject of study. Hence, their chances of continuing in the same organization have become more and more less. If organizations were to be cognizant of their ever-changing needs, then it might be in a better position to arrest the growing numbers that leave in order to pursue opportunities out of their own domain. For example, many executives are making their way to e-commerce companies as they present a whole gamut of experiences for them - one, they get to own a business role, which normally does not happen in a traditional organization. Two, working in an e-commerce company requires one to be socially agile. For a generation that is dependent on social media for communication, this works out fine. Three, the flexibility and the experiences that the role offers is priceless. While most companies today are offering part-time or flex-time working options, GenY still feel constrained that they have to work within a certain set of hours. GenY wants more 'Life' in work-life balance.

With VUCA times upon us, companies would do well to remember that its workforce not only comprises of GenY but also is multi-generational. Companies need to have a strategic plan to transfer knowledge from the Baby Boomers, who are probably waiting to retire in the next few years, to GenY for whom time is not an essence. GenY does not believe in waiting long either for promotions, or raise, or for taking up leadership roles. While companies are happy to rope in the young, they realized that they will need the critical skills that only the more experienced will be able to impart. Today's organizations need to let employees express dissent and be loyal at the same time. At the same time, the employees should also know what they want and should ask for the same. They shouldn't wait for someone to reach out.

It is time to take a leap of faith. Resist the temptation to cling to the past processes and plans. Create new ones, ones that are more agile and more in tune with your surroundings. Be curious. Be innovative. That is the only way you can beat VUCA. 🙌

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Total REWARDS

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Organizations across the board are moving away from the traditional domain of guaranteed cash and incentives to incorporate a much bigger focus on intangible rewards, benefits and work-life balance.

ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL

With changing demographics, companies cannot now afford to create a standardized template for Rewards & Recognition

by Ankita Sharma Sukhwani

A 20-something force of youngsters has invaded the workspace, propelled by India's changing demographic and suddenly the monochromatic view of the workplace has become much more colourful like a kaleidoscope. The changing demographics have always presented a huge challenge to organizations, irrespective of their size or industry, especially in the Rewards and Recognition space. Today, R&R is like buying birthday

retaining the best employees. However, organizations that came out on top innovated or made the most of a holistic rewards proposition that went beyond cash compensation.

Reward trends in 2014

Last year, the rewards segment moved away from the traditional domain of guaranteed cash and incentives to intangible rewards, benefits and work-life balance. That trend has now caught on traction from companies across various sectors making a conscious effort to move from a 'One size fits all' program to personalized rewards strategies through a complete employee value proposition (EVP).

Mayank Kumar, Consultant, Hay Group India says, "Companies are moving from a 'One size fits all' to 'Bespoke rewards strategies'. They are creating total rewards strategies aligned to employee needs across various segments and demographics and are experimenting more than ever before. This experimentation was further driven by the fact that a not-so-great financial performance in the last couple of years had restricted the size of increment war-chest available to HR."

Business Linkage: One of the biggest changes in the rewards space is the morphing role of performance. In the last few years, most companies have established stronger linkages of rewards to business results. More companies are clearly defining the business success parameters and linking employee rewards elements be it fixed salary increments or long/short term incentives to the achievement of these business results. Even start-ups offering competitive fixed salaries present significant upside through equity linked long term incentives.

Mix advantages: Across different levels in the workforce, the spectrum of R&R is now varying. With a mix of millennials in the workforce at the entry levels, the focus is more on providing better work and growth opportunities. Companies are

Companies are making a conscious effort to move from a 'One size fits all' program to personalized rewards strategies through a complete employee value proposition

presents for the son, father and grandfather—Each generation has its own way of defining the experience of getting rewards. That is what the HR community is grappling with these days. It has dawned on them that the strategy of "One size fits all" does not work anymore.

When looking at compensation, the market until last year was not very conducive and salaries saw restrictive growth. The average salary increase is projected at 11 per cent, according to a Mercer survey (in which more than 700 companies participated) released in February 2014. However, the actual increase was 10.6 per cent. Likewise, sales and performance incentives in 2014 fell way short of the targets that organizations had expected to pay out based on 2013 performance. Business performance in many organizations was below expectation, impacting their ability to pay as forecasted. However, 2014 saw organizations struggle even more with balancing compensation costs and the continuing challenge of attracting and

trying to provide international stints/deputations, fast track promotions etc. to attract and retain talent. At the mid-levels, the mix includes paid vacations, family health policies, sabbaticals policies, with some companies offering sabbaticals of up to six months at half the pay. At the senior levels, rewards are considerably bigger with companies offering housing, club memberships etc. in addition to long-term incentives.

Health & Wellness: Health and wellness requires a special mention when we look at last year. From being a part of mix advantages, health and wellness is evolving into a whole new gamut of rewards. Companies are expanding their wellness offering to include incentives for individuals who are focusing on their health with gym memberships, wearable devices etc.

Niche Skills: With niche skills gaining ground, hot skills are being rewarded at market aligned levels, even if it means that the company has to deviate from its standard pay and reward levels. There have been instances of top-tier management graduates being hired for niche roles in traditional industries like manufacturing, at significantly higher levels of salaries and rewards compared to the generic pay scales/levels.

HiPo performers: High or rather 'Hyper-performers' are being recognized, empowered and rewarded more than ever. There is a trend of some progressive companies moving away from the traditional 'bell curve' in their performance management, and focusing more on identifying, nurturing and rewarding their best performers.

Long term rewards: Within long term incentives, ESOPs have taken a beating due to the poor and volatile market conditions in the last few years for established companies. However, cash strapped start-ups still offer a significant part of the salary package as ESOPs. For other companies, LTI schemes like Performance Units have gained traction.

What does 2015 hold in store?

With so many changes in the past year, the rewards space looks more complex for an HR professional, but very simplified for individual employees. A number of HR professionals also believe that introducing an Employee Value Proposition (EVP) at the hiring stage could make the R&R space very attractive for prospective employees as well. So what will the New Year hold for the HR industry when we look at rewards?

Compensation: According to Amer Haleem, Business Manager, Productized Services, Hay Group India, the pay raise in 2015 for India will remain in double digits.



Like the last financial year, the median salary increase will be between 10 % and 11 %

The general market can expect the median salary increase to stay between 10 per cent and 11 per cent like the last financial year. In reference to specific sectors, the Chemical industry is expected to lead the market, followed by FMCG and Oil & Gas industry. The salary increase would be lower at higher levels, with maximum increment at clerical levels, followed by junior management. Also, some industries like Oil & Gas, Retail, FMCG and Media have been variable pay friendly. In 2015, it is expected that some other industries like manufacturing will actively push the boundaries when it comes to variable pay.

Political influence: With the installation of the new government, speedy economic revival has led to positive expectations in the employment space. The positive outlook has not yet translated into hiring on the ground but could show significant changes in the coming months.


No one size fits all: The trend of companies moving away from a 'One size fits all' to 'Bespoke rewards strategies' will continue in 2015. Over the past three years, we've witnessed how the difference between the rewards offered to average employees vis-a-vis a top performer has been growing sharper. This trend will make its way to the next year. For example, some companies offer their top performers a 16-18 per cent hike compared to a 10 per cent hike for an average performer.

Social recognition: Social recognition is becoming the order of the day and is rap-

idly gaining prominence with companies working to include a complete online system. Girish Khare, Consultant-Marketing at Grass Roots India said, "Social recognition creates a transparent organization. One that allows top management to get a sense of how the organization is working, how people react to situations and peer-to-peer collaboration or the lack of it. But most importantly, it helps create a conducive environment, allowing for both high performers and mediocre to co-exist and operate at their optimum within their comfort zones."

Health & Wellness: In the coming year, wellness could move to be a part of the compensation package. With increasing reimbursements for cycling to office, car-pooling, gym memberships etc. wellness is becoming a significant part of rewards.

Speaking to Anandorup Ghosh, Dir, Talent & Rewards, Aon Hewitt, India, he says, "The focus on lifestyle benefits like flexi-working hours, health and wellness has gone up and will receive more attention in 2015 as well."

A reward can have different meanings for different people and that change in perception has reached the HR fraternity. It is safe to say that the spectrum is no longer monochromatic. 

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SHANTHI NARESH

Limited budgets force firms to think beyond pay

Muted business sentiments are affecting compensation globally and hence the focus on Total Rewards will be more holistic

11 per cent was the average salary increase projected by a group of 700 plus companies who participated in a Mercer survey released in February 2014. However, the actual increase was 10.6 per cent. Likewise, sales and performance incentives paid out in 2014 fell way short of the targets that organizations had expected to payout based on 2013 performance. Business performance in many organizations was below expectation, therefore impacting their ability to pay as forecasted. However, the year saw organizations struggle even more acutely with balancing compensation costs and the continuing challenge of attracting and retaining the best. Organizations that came out on top innovated or made the most of a holistic rewards proposition that went beyond cash compensation.

Companies will have to increase emphasis on offering structured career paths and skill-building opportunities

Prominent trends in rewards this year

2014 saw a more segmented approach to rewards distribution. Hot skilled and high potential talent got treated differently, with hot skills attracting pay premiums, while employees identified as the future of the organization were exposed to enhanced career opportunities.

Another big trend was the resurgence of Employee Stock Option programs across all levels of employees, especially among technology and E-commerce start-ups. Post the global financial crisis of 2008, stock options had lost their sheen. However, the emergence of new technology start-up companies in the last two years has led to these programs regaining popularity. Cash-strapped compared to more established talent competitors, these organizations are positioning stock options as a reward that will provide a huge upside sometime in the future. The success of these organizations and by deduction their stock programs seems

to be further endorsed by investor confidence that these organizations have enjoyed in recent months.


Many organizations also made some smart trade-offs particularly in the areas of employee health and wellness. Rising health coverage costs have led to a change in focus from “health insurance” to “health assurance” resulting in many more organizations investing in gym memberships, health check-ups, health talks, and work-life balance programs. In addition to being more cost effective and reducing claims related health insurance premiums, these rewards programs communicate that the company cares for the employees and their families and increases the bond between the two.

The last and most interesting development we have seen is for organizations to enhance workplace facilities and offer a trendy and attractive workplace as a reward in itself. Brightly lit workplaces, physical and virtual spaces for collaboration between employees, gourmet food are some examples.

At Mercer, this year we worked on reinforcing our recognition schemes in which employees are nominated on a quarterly basis for role modeling the company's values. In addition, a monthly sales recognition program has been introduced giving consulting employees a chance to compete with global colleagues to win global recognition and a cash award.

Focus on full spectrum of rewards in 2015

In the coming year, we believe that companies will continue to build and compete on the full spectrum of Total Rewards. Initiatives to offer structured careers and skill-building opportunities will emerge as a key rewards component. A Mercer study of employee engagement ranked Career Growth and Training as the number one and number three drivers of employee engagement in India, with fixed compensation being ranked in the middle. We expect to see a lot of organizations appeal to the 20-something employee by committing to provide avenues for developing critical skills that will enhance the employee's market value. We also see companies doing much more in clearly defining and articulating career paths for employees, and putting in place mechanisms to enhance employee mobility.

Mercer's recent survey of organizations across industries indicates that the salary increase forecast for 2015 is again at 11 per cent. Is this driven by positive economic sentiment or the reality of each company's improved results? The next few months will confirm whether this sentiment leads to the anticipated action. Regardless, it is clear that the rewards initiatives each organization implements will go beyond cash, be dynamic, and closely follow the organization's business context and its ability to compete effectively in the talent market. 

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

SHANTHI NARESH is the India Business Leader-Information Solutions of Mercer India

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HARSHU GHATE

Equity compensation – A stakeholder's perspective

Any ESOP scheme should address the expectations of all stakeholders and not just the employee

Equity-based compensation in the form of ESOPs or any similar form is often looked at and evaluated as a compensation tool. The decision-making often is restricted to how much an employee makes from it. However, the fact that there are other stakeholders in this initiative is often ignored.

Any equity-based compensation scheme has three prominent stakeholders apart from the employee – Shareholders, Regulators and the Compensation committee or the Management. Each of them has their respective views and perspectives about such schemes. Unless the aspirations of each of the stakeholders are addressed, the scheme is unlikely to take off.

As a shareholder, I would want the lowest possible dilution in my stake (value as well as % holding) as larger the number of shares that are issued, higher the dilution will be. I will also not like it if the company were to hurt its profitability by tak-

The scheme should aim at improving company performance and vesting of options should be linked to that performance

ing an accounting charge of such a scheme. If the company issues ESOPs to employees at a discount to grant date market price, the discount has to be accounted for as a charge to profits over the vesting period. Both these factors (more shares and lower profits) adversely impact company's Earnings Per Share (EPS) and hence the market price. As a shareholder, that is the last thing I would want.

I would also expect that the program aims at improving company performance and vesting of options should be linked to that improved performance. Improved market price (result of improved performance) will partially compensate the cost of dilution.

As a regulator, I would like to ensure that the instrument is not misused by the promoters to increase their shareholding or by the senior man-


agement to get exorbitant allocations of grant. I would expect companies to disclose as many details about their schemes and options as possible to the stock exchanges and shareholders to ensure transparency. I would also expect that the company management does not take its employees for a ride and is always fair and reasonable by not altering the grant terms unfavorably for the employee. The revenue will expect controls to ensure taxes are appropriately collected and paid on the gains made.

The compensation committee or the senior management, which is responsible for administering the schemes, would like to ensure that the plan objectives of attraction of talent, retention, reward and improved corporate performance are achieved. The Board will expect that best practices in corporate governance are implemented and necessary compliances are adhered to.

As a beneficiary employee, I will expect clarity in terms and conditions and what is expected of me. I will also prefer an instrument where I am not penalized (inconsistent stock price movements) in spite of delivering performance and whatever is expected of me and that I'm able to unlock the value of whatever is offered to me. It does not serve my purpose if my gains will always be on paper.

As a process owner, it is critical for us to know that unless these expectations from all the stakeholders are optimized (they may not be entirely met), the scheme will not be a success. If the scheme is too employee friendly (for instance ESOPs are given at a deep discounted price), the shareholders will not approve it. At the same time, a scheme entailing too few shares / benefit to employees (to ensure low dilution) will not be attractive for employees and will not take off. However, it is possible to optimize on these expectations. For instance, zero dilution can be achieved by resorting to purchase of shares from the secondary market. A discounted price to employees can be justified if the vesting is linked to corporate performance.

Some of the typical trade-offs that need to be addressed while designing the scheme are (i) dilution vis-à-vis accounting charge (options at a discount mean lower dilution but carry accounting charge), (ii) coverage vis-à-vis quantum (given the limited pool, you cannot cover more and still give substantial benefit) (iii) phantom plan vis-à-vis equity backed scheme (phantom will avoid dilution but entail heavy cash outflows whereas equity backed scheme will entail dilution but zero cash outgo, as the market will pay for it).

The skill is in optimizing and finding the midway route, which will address most of the stakeholder expectations, if not all. 

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

HARSHU GHATE is the Co-Founder and CEO of ESOP Direct

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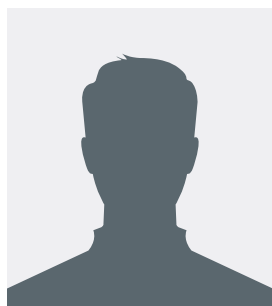
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RUPERT PICARDO

Incentivize teams, not individuals!

The intrinsic motivators of recognition have always been higher for a group or team than for an individual

We work in an environment that requires us to collaborate, function as teams, have common goals and yet, when it comes to rewards, we gravitate towards placating individuals. It's but natural for us to be a little more than just skeptical of the system. How can we be part of the team and yet aim for personal achievements? If your intention is to increase productivity and efficiency, incentivize teams. If it is purely for retention, it doesn't matter.

The intrinsic motivators of achievement and recognition have always been higher for a group or team than for an individual. Sports provide the best examples of this and stand testament to its continuous need.

There is no single formula for incentivizing teams. But it is important to know the motivating factors for each team. While a sales team might be incentivized through team competitions or contests, a development team might find a group workshop more alluring.

What you need to provide is the opportunity for every team to spend time together, bask in a celebration of achievement and be further motivated to perform together, not as individuals.

The intrinsic motivators of achievement and recognition have always been higher for a group or team than for an individual. Sports provide the best examples of this and stand testament to its continuous need.

Rewards, recognition, achievement and motivation come in different forms. In my opinion, music is one of the most underrated group activities that can help motivate a team, but it's also one of the most effective. While not strictly a reward in the manner we would define it when planning our annual programs, music has been used to enhance team pride and a sense of achievement – both of which are key ingredients in any reward program.

Recently, a high performing team from one of India's best known telecom companies got together at a premium hotel in Mumbai for their meet. As a group, they had performed magnificently and almost everyone in that room could have been called to receive an individual award. Instead, the company decided to throw them a challenge - to be divided into four different groups, learn various music instruments and come back to perform as a symphony of peers—all of this in just two hours.

The company needs to provide opportunity for every team to spend time together, bask in a celebration of achievement and be motivated to perform together

The challenge was accepted, facilitated and delivered—almost to perfection. A fourth of the group played violins, another quarter learnt and played flutes, the third quarter performed using harmonicas and the last group sang in harmony while they did a collective rendition of Carl Orff's O' Fortuna. Just two hours from never having played a musical instrument to performing.

The energy of the group at the end of the session was unbelievable. They were inspired and motivated. Chest thumping, high fives and proud nods all around. This was a group that had just been through an almost impossible task and they came out trumps yet again. It was far better than being called one-at-a-time for an award; far better than seeing just one or two of their members being shortlisted for fast track or leadership development. The group had built a greater sense of pride in each other and they had just experienced what they could achieve together.

Go ahead and think out of the box and be creative. But remember to incentivize your teams, motivate them and build that pride in the collective, not the individual. It yields better results for the organization. 🎵

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

RUPERT PICARDO is the Director of d'frens Management Consulting India

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AMITABH SINHA

The Seven Pillars of R&R

The seven-pillar approach offers a framework to view Reward & Recognition from multiple dimensions of the employee life cycle

During the past several years, the concept of rewards and recognition has progressed considerably. HR leaders have practiced and experienced the power of leveraging multiple factors in rewards management to attract, inspire and retain talent. Today, companies understand that their rewards and recognition programs empower them to engage talent in a better way. We, as a company, deliver a seven-pillar approach that identifies the ecosystem and includes business vision, HR strategy, culture and employee focus where R&R operates. It offers a framework to view R&R from the multiple dimensions of the employee life cycle within an organization. Certainly, a company's culture, external brand value, geographical and cultural influences, engagement practices play a critical role in overall employee R&R as well.

HR managers will understand that reward & loyalty is not a program, but a journey and a strategic business goal

The most effective motivators at any workplace are:

Work-Life balance: A concept that actively supports efforts to help employees achieve success at both work and home and enhance quality of life.

Compensation: It is not only about 'what a person is paid' as compensation, but also the direct and indirect rewards and benefits

Overall Benefits: This refers to other motivating benefits such as tax-friendly benefits, health policy, life insurance policy, paid vacations and leaves, membership to clubs and customized benefits.

Performance: It is about managing delivery of work and establishing expectations, assessment, feedback and continuous improvement towards accomplishment of business objectives and organizational success, rewarding milestones during the journey.

Recognition: It has a greater impact on the workplace and these recognition activities reinforce the values that the organization promotes among all its stakeholders.

Rewarding: It is an important aspect for employee engagement as it helps in building employee aspiration for achieving organization objectives.

It also boosts employee morale and the feeling of team spirit.

Community Bonding: One of the greatest pillars of the framework that focuses on bringing in a feeling of community or family amongst employees through various initiatives through our incentive management program and encouraging internal social interaction. The end result is to enhance team spirit. These Seven Pillars mutually define Sodexo's strategy and offering to manage and deliver the complete employee engagement framework. What's showing great results is our successful offering to a leading national telecom operator for its employee engagement program through development of customized website, program management, communication centre for regular engagement and Periodic MIS & measurement mechanisms.

Future trends for the coming year

In today's dynamic business, engaging employees has become more important and challenging than ever. That is why we are going to see a number of key trends unfolding over the next year.


Rewards as a strategic business goal: Human Resource managers will increasingly understand that reward & loyalty is not a program — it is a journey and a strategic business goal. Initiatives around it will focus on engagement and building long-term framework for achieving desired results.

Relevancy: Today's employee wants loyalty programs to be 'about me' — individual, relevant, meaningful, etc. Companies need to understand their employees' profile, needs and aspirations to show their employees that they're listening and give them what they're asking for.

The 'Now' strategy: Human Resource managers will take a more strategic look at 'Now' initiatives rather than later, looking at how best to use all the employee touch points including mobile in terms of both messaging and communication.

Social Recognition and Engagement: Organizations need to embrace this medium to be with their employees in real-time to understand the dialogues and discussions happening. Mobile involvement and Social gaming are two upcoming trends that would build lasting relationships, engagement, brand affinity, and brand loyalty.

Social recognition like peer-to-peer nomination and recognition of efforts and a dialogue window on these social platforms has a great importance for employees and brings an immense sense of being valued and recognized. It engages them fully with the program and is a great way to communicate efforts and achievements.

Customer and employee emphasis programs will play an important part in strategy for organizations and we expect to see greater focus on these areas in 2015. With engagement comes loyalty, advocacy, trust, passion—the soft side of the employee relationships that directly impacts the bottom line. 

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

AMITABH SINHA is Vice President Marketing at Sodexo SVC India Pvt. Ltd.



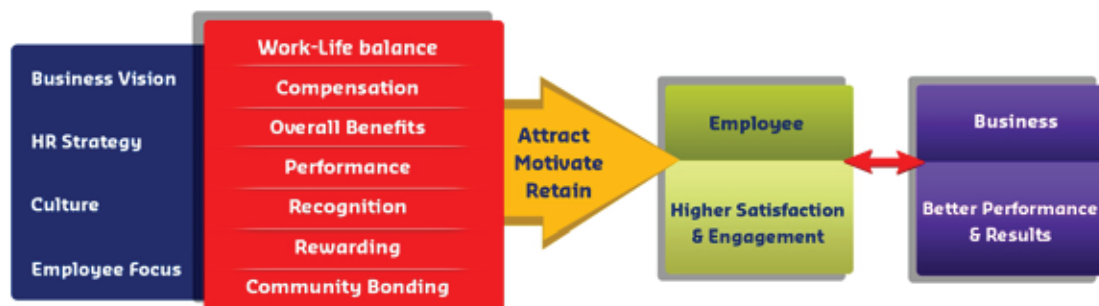
Delivering end-to-end solutions for robust Employee Engagement

A leading global process outsourcing company having multi location presence with over 5000 employees was facing issues that were seen as impediments to the growth and development of the business.

Challenges: High Employee churn, reducing employee motivation, decentralized multi-location reward system, unstructured rewards management, lack of ownership of Rewards & Recognition (R & R) program and absence of dedicated and dependable R & R partner.

Need of the hour: Robust and scalable mechanism to breed a culture of appreciation amongst employees, peer to peer recognition, manager to peer nominations with simple approval mechanism, systematic budget allocation & control, and ease of fulfilment of rewards with ample choice across the organisation.

Sodexo's Seven Pillars approach to Rewards & Recognition



Solution:

Sodexo offered its robust and scalable web based internal R&R platform combined with Social Recognition and Reward Fulfillment Capabilities. The features:

- Flexible and easy to use platform for the employees for peer-to-peer nomination/appreciation
- Manager nomination and multi-level approval system
- Leader Board & Hall of Fame, Employee Spotlight and eCard Centre
- Customized rewards/gifting catalogue based on demographics & wallet size of reward points.

Results: Total control over the allocated budget and parity in rewards with greater flexibility and ease of use for employees, who highly appreciated it. The client is extremely satisfied with Sodexo's R & R Platform that delivered results in last six months:

1939 employees have been recognized with Badges, 769 employees nominated for various awards, 499 employees got approved and rewarded, 381 spot rewards are given through the platform to employees, 1mn points allotted (50% redeemed).

We are proud to witness these celebrating moments of Employee engagement, Motivation, Recognition and happiness with them.

We have the ability to pick insights across multiple industries and apply these best practices to facilitate cross industry implementation and learnings to deliver end-to-end Rewards Management. Thus, Sodexo is able to bring the complete range of gift fulfillment to its clients from general purpose gift vouchers to a catalogue experience.

Sodexo is a dependable Employee Rewards & Recognition Strategy partner to more than **4000 Corporates & PSUs** from diverse sectors across India having employees spread across more than **500+ cities**.



GIRISH KHARE

Social recognition has now come of age

Companies are working to include comprehensive online recognition programs to attract and retain employees

One of the most prominent developments in the rewards space this year has been the change in the way companies look at their employees. It is not just enough to know if individuals are performing but the levels of his/her motivation, peer interaction, innovation and engagement with the organization. This key new trend has companies looking at transforming a very mechanical evaluation mechanism into an interactive and real time platform. Unfortunately, even today one still witnesses HR departments working in isolation and their initiatives unable to percolate down to the last man.

HR and corporate heads should take a leaf out of current marketing think tanks' method: A single window view of customer life cycle. Imagine the huge benefits of a single window view of each

Social recognition creates a transparent organisation. One that allows top management to get a sense of how the organisation is working, how people react to situations

and every employee? This holistic reality helps the organization understand what makes individuals tick. A deeper understanding of softer issues that keep people happy can actually assist the organizations in creating tailor-made reward & recognition offerings targeted at deriving better results.

R&R is no longer restricted to tangible gifts and incentives. Social recognition is the order of the day and is rapidly gaining prominence with companies working to include a complete online system. Social recognition creates a transparent organization. One that allows top management to get a sense of how the organization is working, how people react to situations and peer-to-peer collaboration or the lack of it. But most importantly, it helps to create a conducive environment, allowing for both high performers and mediocre to co-exist and operate at their optimum within their comfort zones.

Within Grass Roots itself, we have implemented a global platform called the Bubble for our employees. Being spread across 16 different countries with varied time zones, interaction is difficult yet important. The Bubble acts as an open user blog where conversations can be continued across time zones. It is a great platform for social interaction between people working in offices and increases a sense of camaraderie. We followed it up with Buzz, a global online recognition program. This acts as an instant recognition platform where achievements can be shared on a social recognition platform. This forms a great part of our rewards and recognition program as it acts as a 360 degree spotlight on employee comfort and performance. The system has some built-in rewards that are automatically triggered when an employee reaches a given goal post. But a large percentage of rewards are personally communicated and delivered, while the whole organization is aware of what is happening, almost real time.

Future trends

The future is heading for a revolution in the work environment. The focus on a conducive work climate will actually become the central focus and an extremely important differentiator; what with the pay package wars reaching fever pitch and the constantly climbing attrition rates. Employers will fight pitch battles to attract and retain better talent. Hence, the struggle to keep the young and restless happy and content, with one eye on the equally important experienced and older generation will become one of the prime KPIs for HR. While IT and such will be the first movers, the manufacturing and other core sectors that will decipher the writing on the wall. Remember in such sectors, work defines the environment. A loosening up of controlled and rigid reporting lines will blur as individual responsibility increases manifold. With the onus now on individual, rather than solely on 'the manager' or 'department head', it will be more about correct alignment of person with job profile. To be able to extract greater value, the spotlight will be on freedom in the work place and in certain job profiles freedom of work location.

We now have three generations of people working together. It is a nightmare to contend with three different sets of aspirations, goals and objectives. This will force a change in the outlook from minute to minute reporting to an output point of view, without ignoring processes. It will have to change: high lighting individual contribution and celebrating team efforts. The expectations for the outcome of a task will differ from team member to team member but the unity of team work will not be dismantled. It's going to be a tough ride for head honchos and HR alike; as the human touch will have to travel all the way to the last man/woman down the line. [Gm](#)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

GIRISH KHARE is Consultant-Marketing, at Grass Roots India



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Improve people decisions in the SMAC world



ORGANIZED BY: Confederation of Indian Industries (CII)
EVENT THEME: Changing face of HR in the SMAC world

The Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) organized the National HR Excellence Award Confluence 2014 & Conclave on the topic of “Changing Face of HR in the SMAC World.” The event, organized on the 5th of December 2014, was presided by HR and business leaders from several large organizations across India. Union HRD minister Smriti Irani was the Chief Guest of the day and presented the HR excellence awards to the winners.

Transformation of the HR world in the face of SMAC is a big topic of discussion among HR professionals in India. Nishchae Suri, Partner & Country Head, People and Change at KPMG India, said, “Before we start talking about transformational change, it is important to understand the meaning of transformation at first.” Senior leaders attending the event had a wide diversity of views about transformation. While transformation for some simply meant change, others felt that change is meaningless without positive impact. For Sridhar Sarathy, Vice President– HR of Tata Capital, change in today’s volatile and uncertain environment is the acceptance of the fact that technology would be on the forefront of transformation. Accordingly, organizations will sooner or later give in to the demands of technology-led transformation or perish.

Ashu Malhotra, Head-HR at Jabong.com, an online commerce company, said that the very existence of business corporations in these times is dependent on analytics. If a business entity conducts all forms of analytics on customer data to make better business decisions, then there should be no reason why analytics will not be instrumental in making people decisions. He does agree that an online commerce company is technology led and its workforce comprises a majority of young professionals. Companies have a great opportunity to learn from how online commerce companies gather data and intelligence from the market and apply these concepts to the people management function as well. A. D. Burman, General Manager-HR, People Development at Maruti Suzuki India, said manufacturing set-ups employing a large number of blue collared workers should be among the first to adopt people analytics for improving decision-making. 

upcoming events

9th January 2015

THE PEOPLE AGENDA 2015 CONFERENCE

ORGANIZER: HR Sangam

VENUE: The Hilton, Chennai

WHO SHOULD ATTEND: CHROs, HR leaders, business leaders, HR professionals, OD specialists & L&D Heads

EVENT THEME: Building Dynamic Organizations

20th January 2015

SUMMIT-CUM-AWARDS ON SKILLING INDIA

ORGANIZER: The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India with Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship

VENUE: Hotel Le-Meridien, New Delhi

WHO SHOULD ATTEND: HR leaders, business leaders

EVENT THEME: Realigning Skilling Towards Make In India

22nd January 2015

ARE YOU IN THE LIST AWARDS NIGHT

ORGANIZER: People Matters

VENUE: Crowne Plaza, Gurgaon

WHO SHOULD ATTEND: CHROs, HR Heads & Business Heads

EVENT THEME: An award evening to recognize the winners of People Matters’s flagship initiative, Are You In The List 2014

SPONSORS: DDI, Cornerstone OnDemand, Jaipuria Institute of Management, Video Recruit, Stern India

3rd February 2015

TOTAL REWARDS CONCLAVE

ORGANIZER: People Matters

VENUE: The Leela Ambience, Gurgaon

WHO SHOULD ATTEND: CHROs, HR leaders, business leaders, C&B

EVENT THEME: The Changing Spectrum of Rewards

27th February 2015

EDGEFARM - CII WR HR CASE STUDY WRITING COMPETITION

Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)

VENUE: Prin. L. N. Wellingkar Institute, Mumbai

WHO SHOULD ATTEND: B School Faculty, HR Professionals

EVENT THEME: EDGEFARM - CII WR HR Case Study Writing Competition for B School Faculty

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Are we harnessing our human capital?

Experts at the Jaipuria Annual Management Conference emphasized the need for leadership-driven employee engagement endeavours

By Ankita Sharma Sukhwani



Sharad Jaipuria, Chairman, Jaipuria Institute of Management, felicitating A. K. Balyan, MD & CEO, Petronet LNG

Leading off the discussion on harnessing the human capital across industries, Jaipuria Institute of Management, Noida, organized its Jaipuria Annual Management Conference (JAMC-2014) on December 13, 2014, at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi. The event saw a number of distinguished speakers and panelists in the day-long event including A. K. Balyan, MD & CEO, Petronet LNG, Vipin Sondhi, MD & CEO, JCB India, S. Y. Siddiqui, Chief Mentor, Maruti Suzuki India, Kamal Singh, Director General, NHRD, and G. P. Rao, management advisor. There was also a gamut of learned speakers from government, industry and academia gracing the occasion.

Sharad Jaipuria, Chairman, Jaipuria Institute of Management, in his welcome address emphasized upon the event theme 'Employee Engagement: Harnessing Human Capital and the benefits of competitive advantage, productivity and growth for all the stakeholders in the organization.

Chief Guest Dr. A.K Balyan emphasized the need for leadership driven employee engagement endeavours. He vouched for emotional connect and commitment of employees towards the organization and showed

There is a need to develop a culture of respect, empowerment, commitment and ownership within an organization

the immense possibility of engagement effects on the bottom line of the business. He further emphasized that without emotional bonding and psychological commitment of employees the seeds of employee engagement will not yield any fruit.

The first session on leadership values and brand alignment was chaired by Esther Martinez Hernandez, Editor-in-chief, People Matters with eminent panelists Pradyumna Pandey, Chief GM-HR, JK Tyre, Deepak Dobriyal, VP-HR, Birlasoft, Usha Subramanian-VP, Technical and Campus-Mphasis and Rajiv Kapoor, CPO-Fortis

Healthcare. The session highlighted the different methods of defining values and their evolution. They also discussed the relationship between values and brand creation. Fortis' Rajiv demystified organizational values saying that they are an extension of the values people grow up with. The session was based on experiential sharing about how an organization defines, cascades and disseminates the organization's values.

The second panel session on employee engagement strategies and best practices was led by Shampi Venkatesh, CPO-NIIT Ltd with panelists Sushil Baveja, President-HR, DSCL, Ashu Sawhney, VP-HR, DCB Bank and Abhay Kapoor, AVP-HR & Corporate ER, Escorts Ltd. The panel discussed the role of engagement by the three key stakeholders – Reporting Manager, Business Leader, and HR. They also spoke about engagement at various stages of the employee life cycle and for the various generations. Also discussed was the role of communication, automation and entertainment in engagement.

S.Y. Siddiqui summed up the event with his special address about expectations of employees of different categories and age groups and the various aspects of leadership like mentoring, listening, influencing, networking etc. He emphasised on the need to develop a culture of respect, empowerment, commitment and ownership within an organization. He shared that the best strategy for employee engagement is to develop an element of pride among the employees. He also discussed various HR initiatives at Maruti Suzuki along with his insightful experiences.

Kamal Singh presented very relevant data on employee engagement, which was backed by research and rating agencies of the likes of Dale Carnegie, NHRDN and Tower Perrins.

While delivering the vote of thanks, Shreevats Jaipuria appreciated the engaging deliberations of all the guests and opined that employee engagement is a value chain and all the stakeholders should chip in to complete this important chain in organization. While organizations are taking important initiatives in this direction, business schools like Jaipuria Institute of Management is also ensuring that it is inculcating the right values and ethics in its students who will be the future flag-bearer of employee engagement in organizations. As the session reached its end, the distinguished guests were honoured by presenting mementoes as a gesture of gratitude. 🙏

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Trawling an ocean of talent

Over 250 delegates attended the second edition of the TA Leadership League Annual Conference in Mumbai this year

By Ankita Sharma Sukhwani

Talent acquisition in the 21st century is akin to trawling an ocean to catch the right-fit resource. Despite evolving efficiencies, newer, faster technology and path-breaking tools and techniques, appropriate talent continues to be elusive. As the brief gets more complex, the avenues get narrower and the risks increase. Taking up this burning discussion of talent acquisition, the second edition of the TA Leadership League Annual Conference took place on December 11, 2014 at ITC Maratha, Mumbai. The theme 'Talent Acquisition: Trawling an Ocean' boldly highlights the analogy that talent acquisition professionals experience every day across sectors. How, despite everything, they are plagued by that nagging question – have we got the right person on board?

Nitin Sethi, Partner, Consulting at Aon Hewitt, kicked off the first session of the day on the changing paradigms of talent acquisition. He said that less than 15 per cent of the talent emerging from engineering institutes was employable and this scenario was not very different across other sectors as well. "Some people believe that the war for talent is over and talent has already won. Rather, it is time for organizations to see how they can attract

this talent and get them to come and work for them," he said.

The second session of the day was an interesting Bistro session with 20 different groups discussing solutions and strategies on how to wow a candidate. The session got over 250 attendees to deliberate on the top challenges any organization faced in attracting talent and some steps they can take to improve the situation. The top steps discussed included placing the candidate at the center and having transparency in the hiring process along with an Employee Value Proposition right at the interview stage. The recruiters also discussed their problems of fatigue from mass hiring and

Mobile and big data will be the biggest disruptors in the talent acquisition space and the concept of a resume will change drastically

the pressures of reaching the right talent. A new concept of Sounding Board was also introduced to the gathering where personal mentorship was introduced between attendees and the speakers.

Another interesting session was on future predictions and what talent acquisition would look like in 2020. This session was moderated by Prashant Bhatnagar, Director, Sapient and the panel included Kamlesh Dangi, Group CPO, Religare, Vaishali Vaid, VP Global HR and Learning, KPIT Technologies, Saurabh Nigam, VP-HR, Snapdeal and Saurabh Kalra, Associate Director-HR, Makemytrip.com. Everyone agreed that mobile and big data will be the biggest disruptors and the concept of a resume will change drastically. Some deliberated the merits of getting into the education space early and nurturing talent to meet the future needs. A number of recruiters agreed that that by 2020, talent acquisition may not remain a specialist function but a function for everyone. Naveen Narayan, Global Head, Talent Acquisition, Mobility and Learning & Development at HCL Technologies led a very interactive workshop on 'Why a candidate should join your team?'.

One of the most engaging sessions of the day was the Elevator Pitch in which 16 teams presented their pitches to the audience in a bid to compete with each other for the Most Popular Best Practice Award. The session saw a collection of innovative presentations with a mix of music, singing, gamification and some heart rending emotional acting. To decide the winner, a voting process was put in place where the audience was the deciding factor. The elevator pitch session was followed by the awards ceremony for the Talent Acquisition Leadership Awards for 2014 in six different categories. Congratulations to the winners! 🏆



Winners of the TA Leadership League Awards

TA LEADERSHIP LEAGUE

BAJAJ ALLIANZ GENERAL
INSURANCE - BEST IN DIVERSITY



SAPIENT - BEST IN
CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE

WIPRO TECHNOLOGIES - BEST IN
TALENT ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGIES



INTEL TECHNOLOGY & ROBERT BOSCH ENGI-
NEERING - BEST IN EMPLOYER BRANDING

WNS GLOBAL SERVICES - BEST IN
RECRUITMENT REENGINEERING



LENOVO INDIA - BEST IN SOCIAL HIRING

SPI CINEMAS - MOST POPULAR BEST PRACTICE



ELANGO R

What is your buzz this New Year?

As 2015 dawns, the one thing you should always do is have fun and spend time with your loved ones

30 things to do before you turn 30, 20 places to see, 10 things every dad with a daughter must know etc...the list is endless. With the New Year round the corner, we will be deluged with resolutions, how to keep them, break them... so I decided we will do something different! After all, this is the Different Strokes column!

Let us become the Buzz of the Year by doing all the right things in 2015 like the three things that will make you the buzz of the career circuit or the champ racing through the corridors of power.

So rather than read the buzz, here is my take on how you can be the buzz-ing- bee!

Communication

I am sure you are reading this and rolling your eyeballs and saying "Here we go again! Another article on how communication is critical, do this, don't do this etc. to communicate effectively." Just hold your horses and give me a chance to get into the details. I am proposing that you adapt a slightly different approach this time around. Here are a few examples:

Take a deep breath (politely saying shut up for a few seconds here☺): Give the other person a chance to speak please!

Remember the time when you were young and angry, your mom would tell you to count slowly till 10 and take a deep breath and then speak? Well, she was preparing you for life ahead as well. Practice listening this way. Listening does not come easily to many like talking does.

Talk less, do more: For starters, let your actions speak louder than words. And when you choose to use words, I'm sure you will agree that not everyone is on the same page as far as vocabulary is concerned. So how about trying to focus on the message using simple words and stop showing off your fancy, ambiguous vocabulary!

Different strokes for different folks: Let's go beyond emails and try other ways of communicating to the people who matter.

Social media: It is a great platform to build a brand. While communicating externally, maybe you would want to stop shoving business cards in everyone's face and instead let the social space do the talking. Ensure you keep an updated profile on LinkedIn, post regular updates on your network such as twitter, engage with thought leaders in the industry to learn and be inspired. Join groups, share articles related to your field, comment on posts related to your professional areas of interest.

Take it on: "Tell me what you want me to do and I might forget it, but do it in front of me and I will never forget it." – Ever heard of this saying? Well now that you have time to put it into practice, how about going out there and being there where decisions are taken, taking an assignment that matters, making that presentation to the senior management and throwing yourself out there!

Let your actions speak louder than the words. And use simple words and don't use any fancy vocabulary!



And while you do communicate here is a request, please avoid unnecessary repetition... don't be a broken tape recorder for crying out loud!

And hey, while you are at looking at communicating differently, start by taking time out to send out a few New Year wishes or a happy holiday's message☺

Curiosity skilled the cat: So you learnt curiosity killed the cat, but that was eons ago. Now your version that you will pass onto the next generation will be curiosity skilled the cat. Yep, this is no typo, you're reading it right. Curiosity did not kill the cat, it skilled the cat.

Release your inner child: Eleanor Roosevelt said "I think, at a child's birth, if a mother could ask a fairy godmother to endow it with the most useful gift, that gift would be curiosity." Somewhere in our journey to being adults, we learn to do the opposite. Time to change things around and there is no better time to start than close to a New Year.

Ask yourself what are the three things I am going to be curious about? Maybe you could pick a few things in common with your spouse or child too?

Jumpstart your day: Ask yourself what makes me come alive? Discovering a passion that fuels that inner fire is often easier said than done, which is all the more reason for you to take the time to ask yourself this question. Once you discover your passion, use it to kick start your day! For the CEO of Starbucks running at 4:30am helps her kick start her day, what is it that makes you jumpstart your day? Whatever it is—be it yoga, some quiet time, meditation, play time with your daughter—include that into your schedule every day! For me, it is personally a good session of yoga followed by some quiet time over breakfast with my wife and son.

How do I want to be remembered? Mark Twain said and I quote "Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover."

There is no room for regret so time for you to build your brand consciously by dreaming, exploring, discovering facets about you that you didn't know existed. Curiosity will lead you down the roads you would have not normally travelled. Ever heard the saying stay curious and stay sane? In the fast paced world we live in, being curious is no longer an option—it is a necessity! Constantly ask questions if you want to be on the path of continual learning, growth and success.

Recharge not just your mobile device but yourself as well: As you build new relationships with team members, socially etc also make it a point to invest in rebuilding the old ones and the ones that currently exist. Call this a RR-Relationship Refresh of sorts.

Invest in building relationships as you do not exist in a vacuum, so invest your time and energy well in building mutually beneficial relationships



Invest in building relationships on both your personal and professional fronts as you do not exist in a vacuum

both on the personal and professional front. Relationships that are genuine, built on trust, respect, honesty!

How can you do that? Here are some ways that can be easily achieved:

Step in: How about stepping in to help before you are asked? Most people help when asked anyway, but very few volunteer to help before.

Let 'Just like that' be the only reason: Here is another way of adding a little bit of zing into relationships you value: Take a little time every day to do something nice for someone you know not because you're expected to but simply because you can. Don't send flowers only on birthdays or for New Year's, how about sending them flowers on a 'just like that' day?

Refresh: Recreate that first date with your wife, do something with team members together as you have never done before—for instance for team engagement paint a house for the poor together or participate in a marathon to raise funds.

Go out there and have fun, most importantly, stay happy and enjoy yourself as you build a successful career one step at a time! Here is wishing you all a very happy 2015! 🍀

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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CAMPUS PLACEMENTS

IIT salary offers hit the roof

THERE IS A SALARY REVOLUTION happening in the campus space. The placement season in the IITs has made news for the wave of generous offers doled out. The Economic Times reported earlier this month that Google offered Gaurav Agrawal, a computer science student in IIT-Indore an offer of Rs 1.7 crore. Agrawal was just one of the benefactors of a trend among global companies to hire talent from premier institutions in India at high salaries. Oracle offered a student from IIT-BHU a package of Rs 2.03 crore and Facebook offered an IIT-Bombay girl an offer of Rs 2 crore.

While the best offers touched the roof in the IITs this season, there was also a darker side to the story. Students in the IITs apparently reported high levels of stress owing to the pressure to compete for salary offers. The stress factor was mostly an outcome of parental pressure. The trend of students facing parental pressure was witnessed across IITs this year. It lends serious fuel to the fire raging among many who argue that premier institution in the country have become more like placement cells. With such trends creeping in the Indian



talent market, questions on the motivations of talent in India towards the science and engineering streams will be put under question.

Even Indian companies drove the trend of hiring IITians for critical positions. Among them, e-commerce companies such as Urban Ladder, Flipkart were among the top hirers. Auto companies, as well, had healthy hiring numbers from the IITs. In all, the IITs managed to stay in the news all through November and December.



JOB OUTLOOK

It's going to be a good year

SEVERAL REPORTS FROM various sources report that 2015 will likely be a good year for people in jobs as well as people looking out for new opportunities. The Government of India is planning to open up more than 3 lakh job positions in the Government at various levels. Such similar sentiments will also be reflected in the private sector, with more than 15-20 per cent increment in the number of job positions in the private sector in India. While pay hikes will not likely show a very strong spike, most reports predict pay hikes across industries to hover between 10.5 and 12 per cent.

Mercer's 'Total Remuneration Survey' predicts average pay hikes in India to be around 11 per cent. Hay Group pegs the average hikes in salaries to be around 10.5 per cent. The medical life sciences sector will likely show maximum pay hikes, the high tech industry will likely show the least. Companies are likely to offer double-digit salary hikes to attract talent. The India market will turn out to be among the most optimistic markets in the world during this period.



OVERACHIEVING

Disabled employees return high productivity



COMPANIES HIRING DISABLED employees are enjoying the benefits through higher productivity and more engaged teams. Hiring disabled employees can translate into several short-term and long-term benefits for an organization. Among them the biggest motivators can be the fact that disabled employees can translate into much higher productivity than regular employees and can have a very positive impact on team motivation.

An Economic Times news report states that one such disabled employee was able to achieve 140 per cent of target at an IT consulting service company. The report also provides the case of a visually disabled

recruiter regularly overachieving her targets. There are research studies that prove that teams with disabled employees are usually more engaged, have higher levels of bonding and morale, and have greater empathy toward each other.

An increasing number of companies are making disabled-friendly plans and policies in 2015. Some of these include braille-enabled business cards, having disabled-friendly infrastructure, and HR policies and career paths specially tailored for the disabled. Many companies are also conducting workshops among senior leaders to sensitise the entire organization for disabled employees.



3-month standoff ends at Bosch

Bosch employees, who were on an illegal strike since September 16, 2014, finally reached a wage settlement pact with management on December 8, 2014. The management of the company was in talks to settle disputes with the Workmen Union Mico Employees Association (MEA) for introducing International Industrial Engineering Standards (IE) and standards for improving productivity. The management of the company agreed to provide a basket amount of Rs 8,500 per month with a performance-linked incentive scheme. In a statement to the press, Managing Director Dr Steffen Berns said that despite disruptions to the business, the management agreed to make a generous offer to its workers.

TTK workers protest closure



Workers at TTK Protective Devides Ltd. launched a protest on December 6th in Chennai to protest the closure of a plant. The company had stopped production in the company's unit in Pallavaram, which is located close to Chennai, and offered voluntary retirement scheme (VRS) to its employees. Among the 182 employees in the company, only 32 agreed to avail VRS. The remaining 150 did not agree to avail

the offer and continued to protest and demanded salary and resumption of production at the unit.

Oil India's CMD search continues

After headhunters PESB were unable to find any of the six applicants for the Oil India CMD job suitable, the Union government may invite fresh applications for the job. Public Enterprise Selection Board (PESB) interviewed six candidates for the nation's second biggest state exporter in mid-November and had to take the decision to reject all of them later in the month. The body made a statement saying, "The Board decided to see more candidates." Including others, the Board did not find the company's existing finance director, R. S. Borah suitable. Besides Borah, the Board interviewed several leading Directors and CMDs from other PSUs in the country.

Labour laws to be structured in five codes



As per the government's labour law reforms, all existing laws will be classified into five broad codes dealing with key issues. The move will be introduced to ensure uniformity of terms and definitions to remove anomalies. All the existing 44 laws will be reclassified into the categories of industrial relations, wages, social security, safety and welfare, and working conditions. According to the government's statements, the pro-labour move

is aimed to make it easier for workers seeking recourse under standard definitions and the introduction of uniform codes will remove differences across 44 acts governing employment of labour in the country.

89 strikes reported in 2014

A total of 89 strikes were reported in 2014 leading to a loss of 11,67,987 man days and production loss of Rs. 119.95 crore. Similarly 16 lockouts leading to a loss of 6,20,626 man days and production loss of Rs. 14.95 crore was reported in 2014. The Labour ministry holds consultations with central trade union organizations on major policy issues and their demands for harmonious industrial relations. The industrial disputes act in India is an award that are binding on both employers and employees or workmen.

TRIVIAM



The maternity dilemma

Does equality of gender favour mothers favourably or infavourably. Read on to find out

A RECENT STUDY BY Economists, Givati and Trioano, finds some striking correlations between the society's tolerance for gender inequality and length of maternity. Maternity leave in the Scandinavian country of Sweden is the highest, with either parent eligible to receive a maximum of almost a year of maternity or paternity leave. Maternity leave in the United States is the lowest, compelling more young mothers to leave their jobs. There is a clear trend that more number of mothers of new-borns leave their jobs in the US than in Europe.

The study by the economists suggest that cultures that are more tolerant toward discrimination between opportunities and pay between men and women are willing to offer greater lengths of maternity leaves compared to economies and cultures which don't. Which one is preferable? To stay in a country that has no tolerance for gender discrimination and hence, very little maternity leave? Or to stay in a country which has a greater tolerance for gender divide but where women can retain their jobs and careers even after childbirth? A chilling dilemma, right?



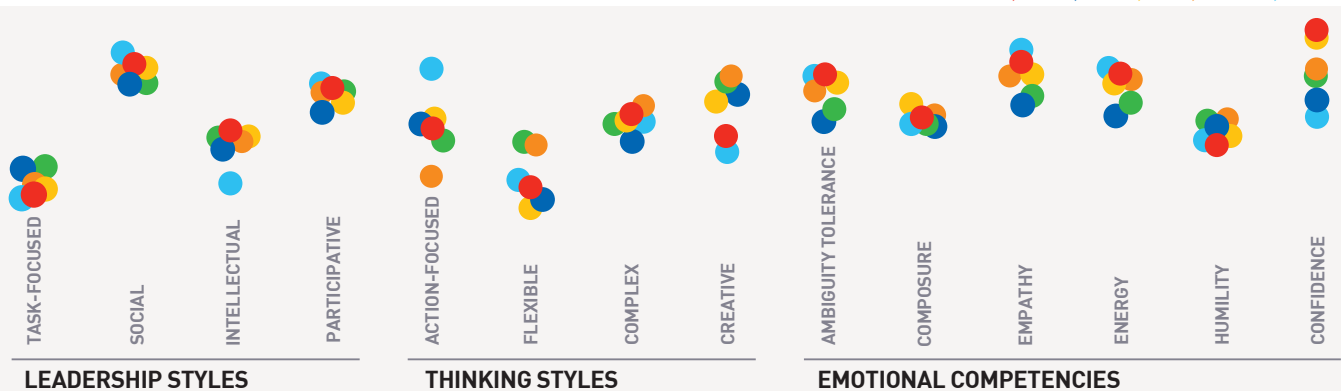
LEADERSHIP TRAITS

CHROs make great CEOs

A study published by Ellie Filler, an industry analyst, and the world-renowned HR scholar Dave Ulrich finds out that CHRO and CEO traits are closest compared to any other leadership role. As a result, Filler and Ulrich are of the opinion that CHROs are candidates to make great CEOs.

Filler and Ulrich analysed 360-degree assessment of thousands of leaders in six C-suite functions- CEO, CFO, COO, CIO, CHRO, and CMO. In the exercise, each executive was ranked on 14 aspects of leadership on a scale of one to seven. The results show that CHRO traits match closely with those of CEOs.

CEO, CFO, COO, CIO, CHRO, CMO

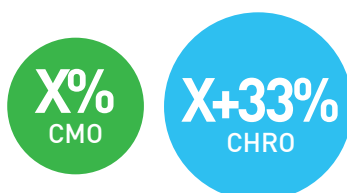


Source: Ellie Filler and Dave Ulrich

CEOs and COOs are the highest-paid executives. But CHROs are next, with an average base pay 33% more than CMOs. "Great CHROs are very highly paid because they're very hard to find," Ulrich says.

C-SUITE PAY COMPARISON

CHRO's pay compared to CMO



Lastly, according to the researchers' data, 42% of high-performing CHROs are female—more than double the share in the CMO position, the next highest (16%). One implication: If more companies envisioned CHROs as potential CEOs, the number of female CEOs could dramatically increase.

HIGHEST PERFORMING ROLES FOR WOMEN

Percentage of high performing women in C-suite roles





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MINDS,
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- STRATEGIC HRM
- EMPLOYER BRANDING
- DIVERSITY
- HR TECHNOLOGY
- TRAINING; COACHING AND LEADERSHIP FOR DREAM COMPANIES
- BUILDING AGILE COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS STRUCTURE
- TALENT MANAGEMENT & RECRUITING AND STAFFING BEST IN CLASS
- MEASURING THE IMPACT OF HR FOR PERFORMANCE AND BOTTOMLINE IMPROVEMENT

SPEAKERS

- **BARBARA OPOKU**, Head - HR, AFB (GHANA) LTD: A MEMBER OF THE AFB GROUP
- **ELFARINA ZAID**, ACC, CPCC, MSI, Chief Engagement Officer, Leadership Coach | Facilitator | Speaker, Co-Founder - Elf Coaching Associates
- **NINA E. WOODARD**, President & Chief "N" Sights Officer, Nina E. Woodard & Associates
- **RAJEEV DUBEY**, President - Group HR, Corporate Services & After-Market & Member of the Group Executive Board, Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd.
- **S. V. NATHAN**, Director - US India Talent, Deloitte Consulting India Pvt. Ltd.
- **SAAGARIKA GHOSHAL**, Director - HR, Metro AG
- **DR. WENDY AXELROD**, Managing Partner, Talent Savvy Manager, LLC
- **PROFESSOR INDIRA PARIKH**, President, Foundation for Liberal And Management Education
- **ALKA TIWARI**, Training & HR - Strategist, Facilitator, Speaker & Consultant, Founder - Talent Rewired
- **SUJITH UDAYASIRI BANDULAHWEA**, Marketing Manager - Education Times, Wijeya Newspapers Ltd.
- **FRANZ GASTLER**, Executive Director and Co Founder, Yuwa
- **JASVEER MALANEY**, ACC, (ICF), ACTA (WDA), ACMC, Executive Leadership Coach, Trainer, Speaker, Mentor, Facilitator, ACQUIRE GLOBAL COACHING
- **Dr. KATHLEEN BATES, Ph.D.**, Assistant Professor - Brandman University - Chapman University System and Performance Improvement Consultant/Coach Leadership Advisory Group
- **ALAN FELL**, Senior International Associate, Balanced Scorecard Institute

& many more...



15th February, 2015



15th February, 2015



16th February, 2015



16th February, 2015



16th February, 2015

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NEWSMAKER OF THE MONTH

Smriti Irani proposes 'Good Governance' day



EDUCATION MINISTER SMRITI IRANI ruffled quite a lot of feathers when she proposed that December 25 should be observed as 'Good Governance' day in schools. She sent a circular to the government-run Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti to hold activities to observe 'Good Governance' Day on Christmas day.

The notice mentions saying, "You are requested to ensure that Good Governance day is celebrated in all JNVs under your region." Irani has also asked schools in all regions to submit video and photographic evidence of observing the event through e-mail. The Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti runs 595 residential schools all over the country.

On December 16, Times of India had published an article saying that the HRD ministry had issued a directive to CBSE run-schools to celebrate 'good governance day' on Christmas to mark the birth anniversaries of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Hindu Mahasabha leader Madan Mohan Malviya.

She advised all schools to conduct an essay competition. In an attempt to make amends, Irani tweeted in the morning of December 15th, "Deliberate mischief by ur reporter on the front page today. All schools closed for XMas, essay competition only online." The ministry also clarified later that the celebrations were limited only to Navodaya schools, which did not have a winter break. Students who stayed back at these residential schools during the winter have the opportunity to participate in the online essay competition.

However, TOI has decided to stand by its original report and pointed out that the original circular was issued by the Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti by Commissioner GS Bothyal. He had asked schools to conduct the following activities: Declamation contests on topics related to good governance, quiz competitions, screening of documentaries and films on best practices in good governance and organisation of various activities through child cabinets in the schools.

The circular, a copy of which was also shared on Twitter, adds that schools were also asked to encourage student participation in these activities and submit a report on how the day was celebrated. The opposition was quick to jump on the development and criticize the government. According to the Congress party, it was a move by the government to utilize the education platform in the country to drive religious views.

WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Arundhati Bhattacharya assesses flexi-work in SBI



IN A FIRST OF ITS KIND, Arundhati Bhattacharya, the Chairperson of State Bank of India indicated that the establishment is assessing options of work-from-home for women

employees. The move, quite unprecedented is hailed as the changing times for the public sector in India. Bhattacharya is seen as a role model for many women in the country, as she is the first woman Chairperson of the bank. Bhattacharya is considering the move to promote more women to join the SBI workforce as well as retain more women employees. Currently, only 20 per cent of SBI's workforce comprises women.

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Mukesh Bansal redefines Myntra's way of working



THE CEO OF MYNTRA and Head of Fashion, Flipkart, Mukesh Bansal's vision has translated into a swanky new office modelled after Manhattan Street. The idea behind the office is to promote engagement of employees with the company's business as well as provide them a working space worthy of pride. Bansal believes that the new office will give employees the inspiration and thought to create a workplace that speaks of Myntra's vision loud and clear. The new space is also a move to hire and retain the best talent. After all, who would not want to work in an office where every nook and corner inspires focus and helps improve the way of work?

The office is full with inspiration from a scene from an actual fashion street, samples of fashion-related accessories and equipment, and some of the best quotes and sayings on the topic of high fashion. All these are aimed to serve as inspiration for every employee to feel proud about what they do and not lose their vision.

APPOINTMENTS

**VIVEK SOOD APPOINTED AS UNINOR CEO**

Uninor appointed Vivek Sood as the new CEO on 21 November 2014 after their erstwhile CEO, Karlsen Sorby stepped down. Sood was earlier CEO of Uninor's Bangladesh subsidiary, Grameenphone.

**RITU MALLYA IS MCF DIRECTOR**

Days after Vijay Mallya resigned from the board of Mangalore Chemicals & Fertilisers (MCF), his stepmother, Ritu Mallya has been appointed as a director of the company. MCF informed the stock exchanges of the appointment.

**ANU ZACHARIAH IS THE NEW MD AT DDI**

The global talent management consulting firm DDI announced the appointment of Ms. Anu Zachariah as managing director, DDI India. Her focus will be to strengthen DDI's overall strategic position and build the company's competitive advantage in India. She had stints in various HR roles in leading FMCG, Banking and Engineering environments with global and Indian organizations.

**SUKARAN SINGH APPOINTED AS CEO AT TATA ADVANCED SYSTEMS**

Tata Advanced Systems, the defense and aerospace company, appointed Sukaran Singh as the new MD and CEO. He was earlier a Director in the company and joined the Tata Group in 2003. Singh will be in charge of business development opportunities including new industries and new geographies.

**MANISH MAHESHWARI APPOINTED AS CEO OF ESSAR OIL LTD.**

Essar Oil Ltd announced the appointment of Manish Maheshwari as Chief Executive Officer of its oil and gas Exploration and Production (E&P) business. He would be responsible for Essar's entire E&P business.

**GREGORY HAYES IS NEW CEO AT UNITED TECHNOLOGY**

Gregory Hayes president and chief executive officer, will succeed Louis Chenevert, as the CEO at United Technology. Hayes, who was previously the Hartford, Connecticut-based company's chief financial officer, will also become a director.

**HAVELLS INDIA NAMES ANIL GUPTA AS CMD**

Anil Gupta has been appointed as the Chairman and Managing Director of the electrical equipment maker, Havells India. He replaces the earlier Chairman and CMD, Qimat Rai Gupta after his demise last week.

**SANJAY BAWEJA APPOINTED CFO OF FLIPKART**

Flipkart announced appointment of Sanjay Baweja as its Chief Financial Officer (CFO). He will be part of the leadership team at Flipkart - contributing to the overall organizational development along with defining the strategic roadmap.

**CHILDRENS PLACE INC ANNOUNCES ANURUP PURUTHI AS NEW CFO**

The Children's Place Inc has now roped in former Reliance Retail executive Anurup Pruthi as CFO with a million-dollar pay packet. He was with Future Group and has also worked with Burberry PLC & Mexx Europe Holding in the past.

**SUNAM SARKAR IS NEW CHIEF BUSINESS OFFICER OF APOLLO TYRES**

Apollo Tyres appointed Sunam Sarkar as the President and Chief Business Officer. He will oversee corporate strategy, integrated supply chain, raw material sourcing, production planning and logistics among other things.

**GABRIELE SONS APPOINTED AS THYSSEN KRUPP CHRO**

Gabriele Sons was appointed as the CHRO and Labour Director of ThyssenKrupp Elevator Technology AG. In addition, Mr. Premal Desai will be appointed as a new member of the management board of the company with effect from January 1st 2015.

**SANJAY JOG APPOINTED AS CHRO RJIL**

Sanjay Jog was appointed as the new HR Head at Reliance Jio Infocomm Limited (RJIL). Jog has earlier worked for the HR department at Pantaloon Retailers.

**HARSH CHITALE QUILTS HCL INFOSYSTEMS**

Harshavardhan Madhav Chitale has resigned as the MD & CEO and as Director of HCL Infosystems with effect from close of business hours of December 31, 2014. The Board of the company approved his resignation on December 8. Premkumar Sheshadri, Director and Executive Vice-Chairman, has been appointed as the MD with effect from January 1, 2015.

**GAUTAM GHOSH JOINS FLIPKART AS DIRECTOR-TALENT BRANDING**

Gautam Ghosh has joined Flipkart as Director of Talent Branding where he will be responsible for the employer brand across various talent segments leveraging social media and mass media. He was earlier working with Philips as GM- HR Strategy and Projects.

Blogosphere » GAURI PALEKAR

The workplace mirrors Hunger Games, where employees are expected to be high performers to survive

The Hunger Games Guide to HR

The movie Hunger Games is about teenagers who are fighting to survive in an environment full of challenges and obstacles. The one who survives is declared as the winner. (*The Hunger Games universe is a dystopia set in "Panem", a country consisting of the wealthy Capitol and twelve districts in varying states of poverty. Every year, children are chosen to participate in a compulsory annual televised death match called The Hunger Games.*)

Our workplace today is a clear example of Hunger Games environment where employees are expected to be high performers to survive in the work place. There are different ways in which they are challenged and evaluated: Non-performers are asked to leave and it's the survival of the fittest.

So how does HR help in an environment like this?

We need to take cues from the strategies of Hunger Games to create a winning culture, where there are high performers who feel such a strong connect with the company that they strive to accomplish the company goal.

Hunger Games inspired HR guerrilla ideas are:

Sharing Personal Stories

Entrepreneurs /managers should use their personal stories to inspire and motivate their employees. People are not moved and motivated by numbers or logic, but by empathy. "If you really want to stay alive, you get people to like you," says their drunken, traumatized mentor, Haymitch. It's the first advice he gives to the heroes and a surprising amount of the film's action revolves around their efforts to win people's sympathy, which results in sponsorships that helps them in their most desperate moments. In a company, this sympathy helps in establishing that con-



Managers should use their personal stories to inspire and motivate their employees

nect and motivates the employee to achieve the company goal.

Involve employee's family


Hunger Games is screened across the districts and the families are kept aware of what is happening on the show. Similarly, family members of employees should be involved and made aware of the company updates, employee work etc. Power and respect comes from an emotional connect. Engaging family engages the needs and interests of the employee, which is the fastest way to establish an emotional connect. This way of acquiring and exercising power is far more effective than by force,

fear or deception. Involving family helps the family in understanding the work culture and the importance of work. This in turn inspires the employee to perform better.

Celebrations

When Peeta & Katniss win the Hunger Games, there is a big celebration. They are given social recognition and are treated as celebrities. Similarly, in the workplace, The company should celebrate every time it accomplishes a goal. Best performers should be given social recognition and they should be appreciated regularly.

Using employees as brand ambassadors

In the end, Peeta and Katniss are taken around districts to talk about the show and select new players. Similarly, companies should make employees their brand ambassador. They should be made part of the recruitment process. Candidates immediately connect with a company when their team members talk about the work life rather than the management or owners. So, go ahead and implement these strategies as this "Game will change everyone". Keep ideating. 



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