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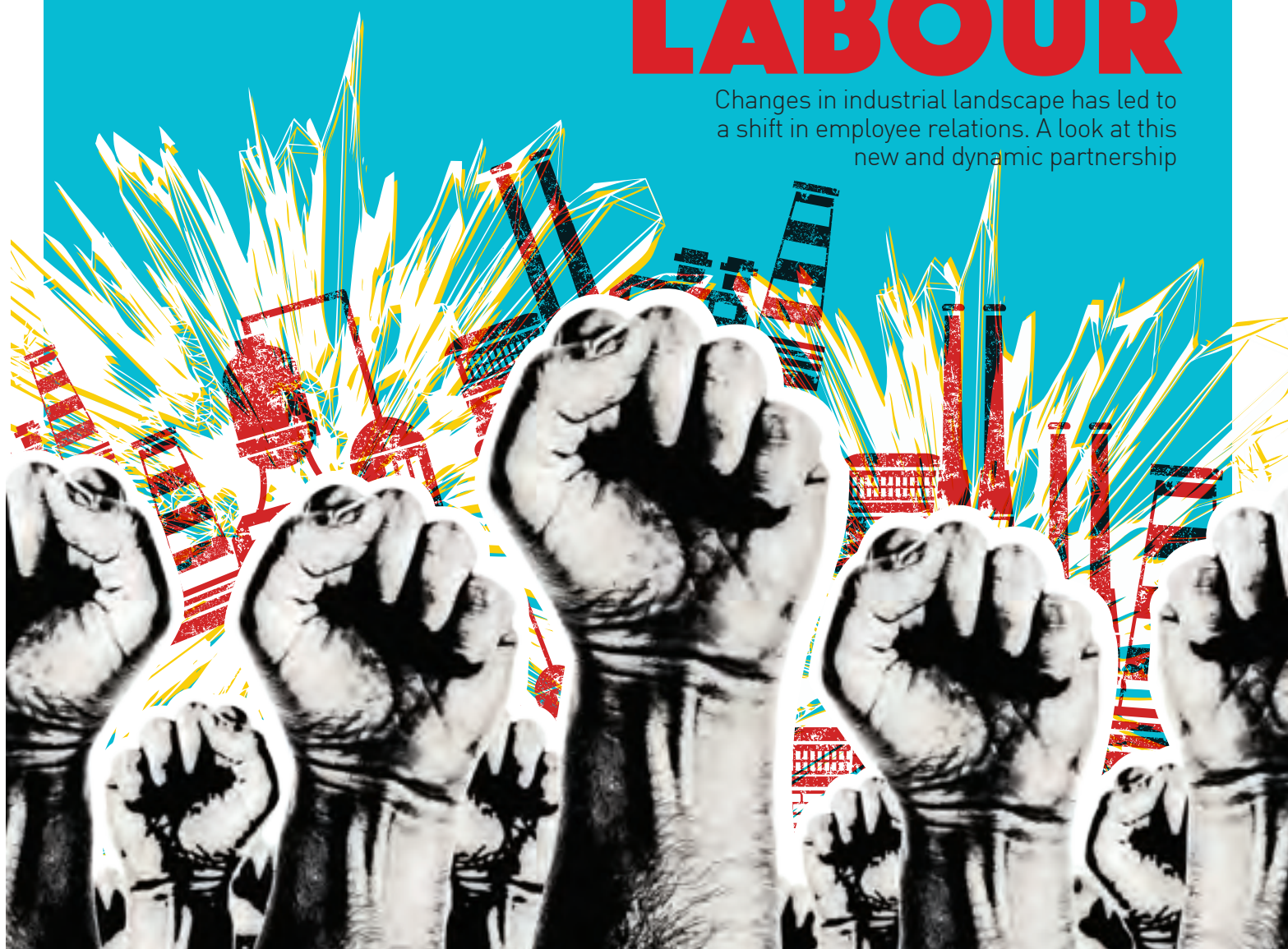
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VOL VI / ISSUE 7 / JULY 2015

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## NATION IN LABOUR

Changes in industrial landscape has led to a shift in employee relations. A look at this new and dynamic partnership



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**SUPPLEMENT**  
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

So, What do you think about Scientology?

Err... I like Tom Cruise



Idle conversations are for the living room



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## The Win-Win of Labor Flexibility

Between 1983 and 2013, wages have grown at an average of just 1 per cent annually. A recent report in *Mint* analyzed this fall from a value of more than 2.5 in the late 1980s to less than 0.3 by 2013—the wage ratio is calculated by dividing wages to workers by profits. The Annual Survey of Industry data shows that the wage-profit ratio started to decline in India from the second half of the 1980s. This drop in wages has taken place despite rapid industrialization and mechanization of industries leading to higher profitability and productivity.

This data shows that over protectionism in labor laws has not benefited industrial workers leading to unrest and investment getting directed to capital-intensive industries. Add to this the ever-rising specter of inflation and you will have a potent mix that would be too difficult for any laborer to swallow.

Labor legislation is a politically sensitive issue. But at the same time, it is one of the most powerful tools to generate economic growth, to ensure better compliance, transparency and to overall create a more efficient ecosystem for businesses and employees.

Just two months ago, the Centre introduced the Labor Code on Industrial Relations Bill 2015 with the objective of consolidating

the existing central labor laws. Media reports state that the government plans to reduce 44 labor laws to just five—four laws will deal with wages, social security, industrial safety and welfare, and industrial relations and the fifth will be a law for small factories.

Experts we spoke to for our July cover story, **Nation in Labor**, share in unison that these labor reforms are the need of the hour to bring stability and growth to both employers and employees. Organizations we spoke to have been focusing on skill enhancement, engagement and communication with workman, and investing in building a managerial cadre from within – these efforts have contributed to both stability and productivity. Our cover story documents some of the best practices from five large companies—Mahindra & Mahindra, ICICI Bank, Raychem RPG, Hindustan Unilever and Hindalco from the Aditya Birla Group on finding win-win solutions for both the employee as well as the employer.

This month's Special Story 'Why Best Practices Tell a Great Story' focuses on best practices from across the workplaces in India that have kept people at the center. This is the second time in the year that People Matters has collaborated with the Great Place To Work Institute for showcasing lessons from the best people management practices.

For the Big Interview this time, we spoke to Gurnek Bains, Co-founder and Chairman of YSC who spoke about his journey at the company, how India is culturally suited for a multinational environment and what are the things that millennials need to be sensitive to. In a recent survey, it has emerged that leadership is the number one talent concern. Companies across the globe struggle with building their leadership pipeline and with multiple changes taking place at once, the need to focus on leadership development is a huge necessity. In this issue, we have covered various aspects of leadership development in the supplement like designing action learning, reinventing HR, focusing on developing millennials the right way, and why accountability of a leader is such a big deal.

Besides the bigger stories, we also have news features that focus on the most current news articles of the month such as the H1B visa issue or the lack of quality engineers. As always, we would be happy to hear your views, comments and suggestions regarding our stories.

Happy reading!

Esther Martinez Hernandez EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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### THE COVER STORY (BEHIND THE SCENE)



1 only men? try more



2 fist & fury, hmm...



3 hmm...



4 the movie 300 is it?

pheww





# Management Development Programmes

June 23 - February 27, 2016



# XLRI

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| Title of the Programme  | Programme Coordinator(s)          | Dates        | Venue     |
|---|-----------------------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Managerial Effectiveness through Self-Awareness   | E S Srinivas                      | June 23 - 25 | New Delhi |
| Business Analytics  | SK De & Girish Punj               | July 6 - 8   | New Delhi |
| Labour Laws for Corporate Managers  | P K Padhi & Tina Stephen          | July 13-15   | XLRI      |
| Basic Leadership Skills   | Fr.S George, S.J & ISF Irudayaraj | July 13-17   | XLRI      |
| Strategic Industrial Relations  | Pranabesh Ray                     | July 20 - 24 | XLRI      |
| Communication Skills for Effective Managing   | Fr. Francis Peter, S.J            | Aug. 10 - 13 | XLRI      |
| HR Business Partnering  | Gloryson R B Chalil               | Aug. 17 - 20 | XLRI      |
| Business Analytics for Managers   | P C Padhan                        | Aug. 17 - 21 | XLRI      |
| Branding through Customer Centric Management for Enhancing Growth & Profitability                               | Sanjay Patro                      | Aug. 24 - 27 | XLRI      |
| Emotional Intelligence and Interpersonal Skills   | E S Srinivas                      | Sept.1 - 3   | Bangalore |
| Business Analytics  | SK De & Girish Punj               | Sept.7 - 9   | Bangalore |
| Strategic Management for Business Leadership  | Sharad Sarin                      | Sept.7 - 9   | XLRI      |
| Assessor Certification Program on Assessment Centre Approach to Competency Mapping                              | R K Premarajan                    | Sept.7 - 11  | Mumbai    |
| Internal Marketing for Organisational Effectiveness   | Sanjay Patro                      | Sept.14 - 17 | XLRI      |
| Finance for Non-Finance Executives  | Santosh Sangem                    | Sept.14 - 18 | XLRI      |
| Managing Training: Design, Delivery and Impact Assessment   | M Srimannarayana                  | Sept.21 - 25 | XLRI      |
| Basic Leadership Skills   | Fr.S George & ISF Irudayaraj      | Sept.21 - 25 | XLRI      |
| Teamwork Competency for High Performance  | M G Jomon                         | Sept.23-26   | XLRI      |
| Come Make in India: Zero Defect & Zero Effect - The Art of Converting Sustainability into Competitive Advantage | Tata L Raghu Ram                  | Oct.12-14    | Mumbai    |
| HR Audit-Leading to Internal Auditor Certification  | M G Jomon                         | Oct.13-17    | XLRI      |
| Influencing Through the Power of Communication  | Sunil Sarangi                     | Oct.26-27    | XLRI      |
| Demand & Business Forecasting   | PAS Vijayaraghavan & P C Padhan   | Oct.26-28    | XLRI      |
| Professional Sales Management   | Pingali Venugopal                 | Oct.26 - 30  | XLRI      |
| Interpersonal Effectiveness through Communication Skills  | Manish Singhal                    | Nov.2 - 5    | XLRI      |
| Data Analysis Using Excel   | Pitabas Mohanty                   | Nov.4 - 6    | Mumbai    |
| Leadership Competency for Star Performance  | M G Jomon                         | Nov.4 - 7    | XLRI      |
| Ethics for Corporate Advantage  | Fr.Oswald Mascarenhas SJ          | Nov.12- 14   | XLRI      |
| HR Analytics  | Gloryson R B Chalil               | Nov.16-18    | XLRI      |
| Basic Leadership Skills   | Fr.S George S.J & ISF Irudayaraj  | Nov.16- 20   | XLRI      |
| Human Resource Development  | M Srimannarayana & ISF Irudayaraj | Nov.16 -20   | XLRI      |

| Title of the Programme   | Programme Coordinator(s)         | Dates         | Venue     |
|--|----------------------------------|---------------|-----------|
| Project Management   | Rajiv Misra                      | Nov.23- 27    | XLRI      |
| Blue Ocean Strategy  | Apalak Khatua                    | Nov.27 - 28   | XLRI      |
| Financial Inclusion, Social Banking & Micro Finance                                | Prabal K Sen                     | Dec.2 - 5     | XLRI      |
| Team Building and Conflict Management  | ISF Irudayaraj                   | Dec.7 - 11    | XLRI      |
| Strategic Cost Management  | Sabyasachi Sengupta              | Dec.7-11      | XLRI      |
| Corporate Ethical Decision-Making  | Fr. Oswald Mascarenhas SJ        | Dec.9-11      | XLRI      |
| Competency Based Recruitment and Selection   | R K Premarajan                   | Dec.9-11      | Bangalore |
| Managing Diversity in Workplace  | Anita Sarkar                     | Dec.14-17     | XLRI      |
| Mentoring, Coaching & Counselling for Personal and Managerial Effectiveness        | ISF Irudayaraj                   | Dec.14-17     | XLRI      |
| Strategic Human Resource Management  | L Gurunathan                     | Jan.'16.11-13 | Bangalore |
| Financial Statement Analysis   | A Kanagaraj                      | Jan.11 -13    | Mumbai    |
| Empowerment & Leadership for Women Executives                                      | Anita Sarkar                     | Jan.11- 15    | XLRI      |
| Managing Strategic Change  | Indrajit Mukherjee               | Jan.13-16     | XLRI      |
| The Art and Science of Structured Interviewing                                     | R K Premarajan                   | Jan.18-19     | Mumbai    |
| Beyond Coping: thriving under stress in the workplace                              | Manish Singhal                   | Jan.18-20     | XLRI      |
| Creativity, Problem Solving & Decision Making                                      | Tamonas Gangopadhyay             | Jan.18-22     | XLRI      |
| Design Thinking for High Business Performance                                      | Soumendra Bagchi & Rajeev Sharma | Jan.21 - 23   | Pune      |
| Strategic Leadership for Global Markets  | Apalak Khatua                    | Jan.21 - 23   | XLRI      |
| Metrics for Marketing Performance Assessment                                       | Basant Purohit & N Rajkumar      | Jan.21 - 23   | XLRI      |
| Advanced Corporate Finance   | A Kanagaraj                      | Feb.1 - 3     | Mumbai    |
| Strategic Marketing Management   | Sharad Sarin                     | Feb.2 - 5     | XLRI      |
| Effective Performance Management   | Pranabesh Ray                    | Feb.2 - 6     | XLRI      |
| A Strategic Decision Making Framework for Playing Business Games                   | Sumit Sarkar                     | Feb.4 - 5     | Bangalore |
| Basic Leadership Skills  | Fr.S George S.J & ISF Irudayaraj | Feb.8 -12     | XLRI      |
| HRM for Line Managers  | M Srimannarayana                 | Feb.8 -12     | XLRI      |
| Supply Chain Analytics   | T A S Vijayaraghavan             | Feb.15 - 18   | XLRI      |
| Leading Teams for Synergy  | Manish Singhal                   | Feb.15 - 18   | XLRI      |
| Assessor Certification Program on Assessment Centre Approach to Competency Mapping | R K Premarajan                   | Feb.15- 19    | New Delhi |
| Finance for Non-Finance Executives   | Santosh Sangem                   | Feb.22 - 26   | XLRI      |
| Decision Making in Teams   | L Gurunathan                     | Feb.25 - 27   | XLRI      |

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## NATION IN LABOUR

Changes in industrial landscape has led to a shift in employee relations. A look at this new and dynamic partnership

By Anu Babu Kurian & Ankita Sharma Sukhwani



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### Highly successful people possess a distinctive spike

**Gurnek Bains**, *Co-founder and Chairman of Young Samuel Chambers*

By Pallavi Sharma

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### We encourage people to experiment & fail fast

**Sandeep Aggarwal**, *Founder of ShopClues.com and CEO of Droom*

By Anu Babu Kurian

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# Letters of the month



JUNE 2015 ISSUE

## Cover Story: State of the CHRO

The cover story was an amazing insight into the conflict between businesses and HR. Business heads have justified reasons behind their demand of business expertise from CHROs. It is imperative for CHROs to understand the complexities of businesses to deliver to them. It is intriguing to know that 64% agree that leading a non-HR role is a necessary part of their progression while ironically 60% haven't worked outside HR.

- SACHIN

## Big Interview: OP Bhatt

Reading OP Bhatt's story was inspirational. His dedication, hard work, loyalty, and innovation are reflected well in the interview. Going out of the way in a Public Sector Bank, changing the way it operates and taking it to amazing heights was a big ask – and OP Bhatt made that possible.

- VAIBHAVI

## Branding the right image

It is a great suggestion for CEOs to engage in conversations with employees over social media. Not only are the CEOs and HRs acting as brand ambassadors, employees also feel connected to their organisation and it's head now. The focus must be on building a healthy eco-system and pass the baton to employees to do branding. It's now so easy because social media is a magic multiplier!

- AAKASH

## How much is enough?

A standardised system for executive compensation is impractical – simply because there is diversity in the types of roles and responsibilities across companies, and also there is a desire to retain high and hyper performers, and the cap of retention is variable. The author's argument that the answer to “how much is enough” changes everyday and isn't really spot on.

- RITIKA

## The good, bad and the ugly

I really enjoyed reading this feature in the May issue. It's been a year since the Modi government has taken over and it was a good idea to take a reality check of things. And while there are plenty of things to cheer about, there is always scope for improvement.

- ABHISHEKH



**Why James Bond can't be M**  
A perfect blend of reel life and real life, I enjoyed reading this article. Just a thought - how does one handle those “bonds” who just love their current job and don't aspire to become M? For them, the adrenaline comes from being on the field - all the time. I am sure we all know a few such people. Other than the ravages of time, do we foresee any other challenge for them?

- PINAKESH MUKHERJEE

PEOPLE MATTERS VALUES YOUR FEEDBACK. WE WANT TO KNOW WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT THE MAGAZINE AND HOW CAN WE MAKE IT A BETTER READ. WRITE TO US AT EDITORIAL@PEOPLEMATTERS.IN

twitter

**Michelle Prue @michelleRPO**

1st Annual Study on State of the #CHRO -The #CEO's Perspective <http://bit.ly/110FHv7> via @PeopleMatters2

**Sameer Patel @SameerPatel**

@GautamGhosh you crushed it but thats not surprising in the least bit:) See you in August. Excited to keynote#TechHR15! @PeopleMatters2

**Ian Gee @IanRGee**

Ian Gee retweeted People Matters I think they should explore our Ethical Drivers work don't you @ruthsteinholtz <http://bit.ly/110Mu8d>

**louisetriance @louisetriance**

Are you branding to attract the right candidates? ← great article from @PeopleMatters2 in #ukrecnews <http://bit.ly/1Fm6YAn>

**HCM Info Systems @hcmprocesses**

Where does the CHRO stand today? @PeopleMatters2 #HR #HCM #StartegicHR <http://bit.ly/1J4iPe0>

**Vivek Paranjpe @vivekparanjpe**

1st Annual Study on State of the CHRO in India <http://bit.ly/1fgzKgV> via @PeopleMatters2

**Nishant Bhardwaj @vijeta\_11**

@PeopleMatters2 Highlighting corporates in your blog on #Yoga is quite motivational. Thanks @npsinh

**Tanvi Bhatt @Tanvi\_Bhatt**

'Employer #Branding is about branding the right image of the company' says @GautamGhosh <http://bit.ly/1d0rNuy> via @PeopleMatters2

**Anand Pillai @Anand\_Pillai**

The most awaited event at the cutting edge of Technology & HR is here <http://ln.is/techhrconference.com/MvG1Q> ... #TechHR 2015 @PeopleMatters2

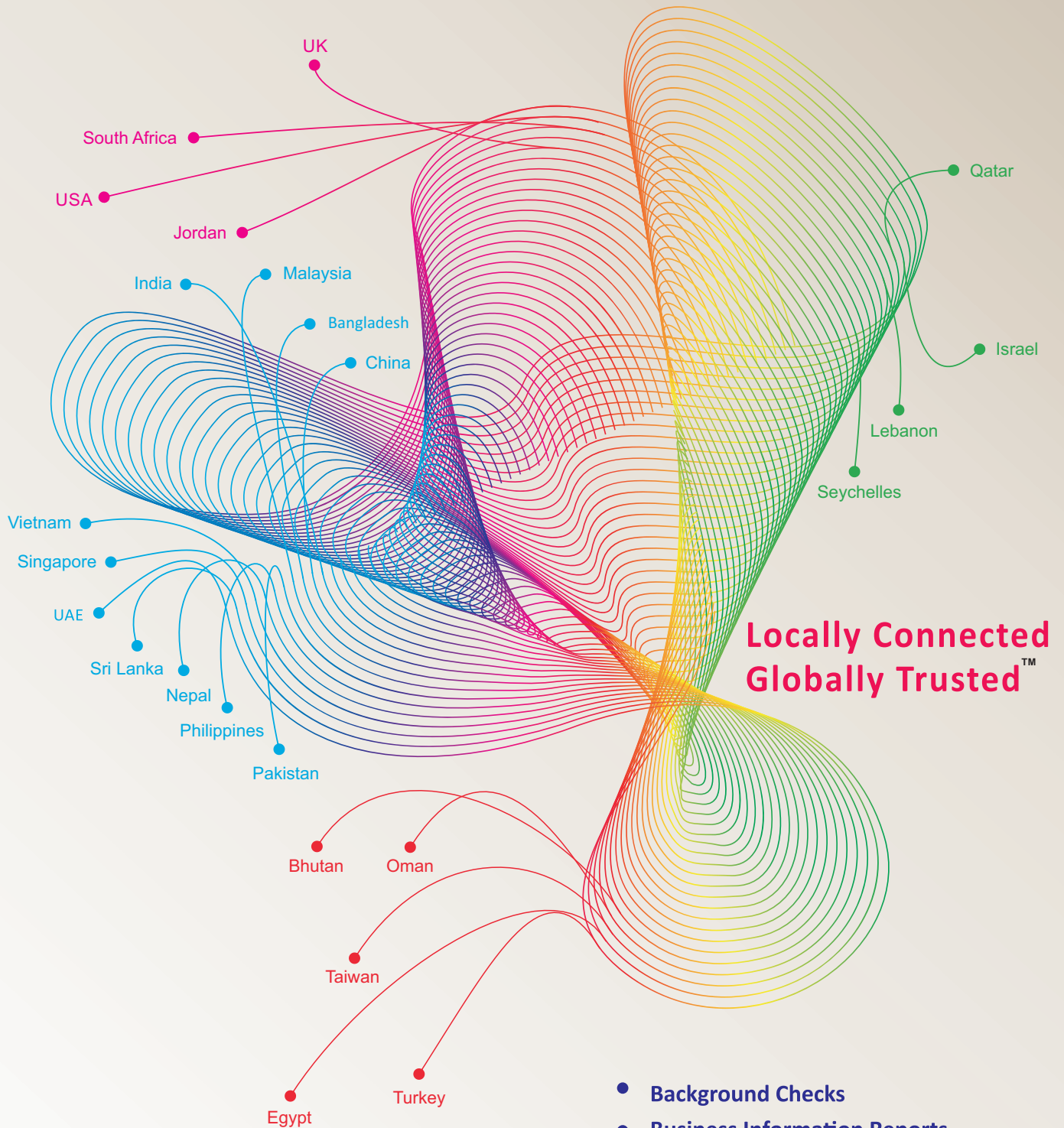
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## BRAND RECALL

# Maggi Ban hits 1,500 employees, top executives grapple with crisis



For the past two months, Nestle has been fighting the Maggi battle on all fronts. The company has halted the production of Maggi since June 5 when the multinational withdrew the product from the market as concerns over safety standards rose when food inspectors found the presence of lead and flavor enhancer MSG in the noodles.

The ban on Maggi has affected close to 1,500 employees of the company. Nestle is relocating many of the employees to their other factories that are producing dairy products, ketchup etc. Recently, Nestle had to destroy Maggi worth crores in order to comply with the law of the land.

In an interview with Economic Times, Satish Srinivasan, factory manager at Nestle's largest manufacturing factory at

Moga said, "We haven't asked any of these employees to leave. We are continuing to pay them salaries and trying to keep them involved." Even the plant that used to supply spices used in Maggi has been affected. The management of Moga-based Paras Spices has asked close to 200 of its workers to either "not report to work or work only for two-three days a week".

As the multinational grapples with this unprecedented crisis, it pressed its entire team into firefighting. It has flown in global chief executive Paul Bulcke and executives from across the world, including Shivani Hegde from Sri Lanka, to manage the crisis. Hegde, who is the Nestle Head of Sri Lanka, was the reason why Maggi became a household name since its launch in the early 1980s.

In India, it cancelled the leaves of all employees and they have been putting in almost 20-hour work days. Nestle employees have been told not to talk to anyone — not even to trade partners — unless approved by the legal team. Those working in plants have been told not to go on leave as every product is being tested and re-tested several times, people involved with the company said.

## PUSH FOR CHANGES

# RIL revamps incentive scheme, Infy mulls over it

The energy-to-retail conglomerate Reliance Industries is revamping its performance-based incentive scheme completely. The HR initiative, termed "Objective Key Result", is being implemented by an executive committee headed by Mukesh Ambani. A spokesperson for Reliance confirmed the development. "As part of our continuing evolution of people systems, OKRs as a concept has been introduced for senior leaders," the spokesperson said in an email reply to ET. "RIL has been working on a major human resources transformation agenda for the last 20 months. A complete revamp of our performance management philosophy and systems is one key



pillar to enable our future readiness." The spokesperson added, "The idea is to improve alignment of the individual and teams to the larger strategic purpose and priorities. We believe the approach will enhance collaboration and co-ownership of key outcomes while sharpening ownership and accountability."

Infosys is also mulling a revamp of the appraisal process. CEO Vishal Sikka wants to do away with the bell curve and reward rainmakers and align bonus payouts to customer delights that they execute. This change will gain traction once the IT giant appoints an HR Head. The earlier HR Head, Srikantan Moorthy, moved to a delivery role earlier this year.

## MARCHING ORDERS

# Sun Pharma asks 18 Ranbaxy executives to leave

Sun Pharma has asked 18 top executives of Ranbaxy Labs to leave the firm in one of the biggest culls of senior management professionals in recent times, the Economic Times reported. The order comes a year after the Dilip Shanghvi-led firm acquired Ranbaxy in an all-stock deal and a few weeks after Q4 profits shrank 44 per cent due to costs incurred in assimilating the buyout and regulatory issues. Those

who have been asked to leave are Indrajit Banerjee, President and CFO; Yugal Sikri, country head (India) Ranbaxy; Maninder Singh, V-P marketing; Govind Jaju, global head, sourcing; Ratul Bahaduri, director-finance; among others, people close to the development said. Most senior management who have been asked to leave were brought in after Japanese giant Daiichi bought Ranbaxy from the Singh brothers in 2008.

## Goldman Sachs asks interns not to stay in office overnight



Goldman Sachs Group Inc has told its summer investment banking interns not to stay in the office overnight in a bid to improve working conditions for its junior staff, according to a Reuters report. The move illustrates how Wall Street banks are seeking to

curb excessive hours worked by young employees who see internships and entry-level jobs as a chance for a lucrative investment banking career. Goldman has told its new crop of summer banking interns they should be out of the office between the hours of midnight and 7 a.m. during the week. The moves came after the death of a Bank of America Corp intern in London in 2013 fueled concerns over working excessive hours. It was later revealed the intern died of natural causes.

## Don't drink and drive, RIL tells employees

Industrial giant Reliance Industries sent out a circular to all of its 25,000 employees on the perils of drunk driving and other inappropriate behavior. A mail was sent on June 12 after Chairman Mukesh Ambani addressed the company's shareholders. RIL advised its employees not to drink and drive. This comes in the wake of high profile car crash in which a senior executive of RIL was involved. Janhavi Gadkar, who works in the company's legal unit, rammed her Audi SUV into a taxi on Mumbai's freeway, resulting in the death of two people on the night of June 8. Gadkar had been drinking that night. Chief Financial Officer Alok Agarwal has also been summoned in the case as it was established that Gadkar had been drinking with him. Warning against conduct that is socially unacceptable, the advisory asked employees to be a "cultured, mature and socially responsible adult". "A large proportion of all drunk driving crashes occur within three miles of the start of the journey," the mail said.

## Coal India for new promotion policy

Coal India, the country's third largest employer with 3.4 lakh employees, has decided to follow a private sector-like approach to its promotion policy, placing emphasis on a performance-based approach rather than a seniority-based one, a move the state-run organization believes will help it retain talent. It is planning to implement the system in Coal India and its subsidiaries by December this year because the company feels that when the sector is opened up in the near future, it would be difficult to hold back talent if merit is not rewarded, which in turn, will affect its production target.

## IndiGo, Gulf carriers step up hiring



Aggressive hiring of pilots by Gulf-based airlines and local carrier IndiGo, as they expand their fleets to meet rising demand, has left several Indian carriers struggling with staff shortages that may stymie their growth plans, Mint reported. While Gulf

airlines are allegedly leading in poaching Indian pilots, some local airlines have complained to the industry regulator that an Indian low-cost carrier is also engaging in the practice. Last week, some Indian airlines filed a joint complaint against IndiGo, which is run by InterGlobe Aviation Ltd, India's largest airline by passengers carried, to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), alleging that the airline was poaching pilots.

## NSDC to implement Rs 1,500-crore skilling project

The National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) has begun implementing Rs 1,500-crore Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojna (PMKVY) to provide skills training to 24 lakh people, including youth, MD and CEO Dilip Chenoy told PTI. "This is the flagship scheme for skill training of youth to be implemented by the new Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship through the NSDC. Skill training would be done based on the National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF) and industry-led standards. Under the scheme, a monetary reward is given to trainees on assessment and certification by third party assessment bodies.

## TRIVIAM

### DRESS CODE

## How did Casual Dressing Originate?

At the beginning of June, Infosys decided to go casual. Employees can now dress casually on all working days. Infosys is not the first company to do so and in fact is following in the footsteps of Google, Zappos, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn where they have a casual culture to go with the casual look. It was mentioned that the formal dress code gives an impression that the company is not liberal and operates in an old-fashioned way. Not only does it serve employee's rights, but it also shows how the attitude of the management is changing towards the employees. Besides that, it is also an equalizer of sorts. It lends one to think about how it originated in the first place.

Like most things, this too began as a marketing ploy. In the 1960s, the Hawaiian garment industry was trying to sell more shirts and hence they came up with the concept of "Aloha Fridays". The idea was to encourage Hawaiian businesses to let their

employees wear Hawaiian shirts to the office once a week. What began as a gimmick soon strayed to the mainland US in the form of Casual Fridays. Implementing a casual dress code in office became an inexpensive way to boost employee morale.

Another major brand that had a major role in upping the ante on Casual Fridays was Levi's by the 1990s. When employees were asked to wear casuals to work, many didn't know what to wear. So Levi's decided to step in to try and upsell Dockers, a brand it had just bought, by sending an eight-page brochure called "A Guide to Casual Businesswear" and sent it to 25,000 human resources managers across the country. That proved to be a blessing. The HR managers would then hand out those brochures to employees telling them what was appropriate and what was not. What also helped was the boom of dotcom companies in the 90s. The unconventional industry set the pace for the rest to follow.

(Source: marketplace.org)





## PRIVACY &amp; YOU

# Five behaviour patterns that show you lack privacy at work

When people say they need some privacy, it can mean very different things. By diving deeper into the people's experiences, Jason Heredia, VP Marketing, Steelcase Asia Pacific, lists five key pointers that indicate privacy needs have been derived. Basic understanding of these privacy situations improves employee productivity. This eventually leads to better execution of organizational commitments. They are:

1



## Strategic anonymity: Being unknown/"invisible"

The ability to make yourself anonymous is a key aspect of privacy, as it frees you from the restraints incurred through normal social surveillance. Being unknown allows people to avoid interruptions, as well as express and experience new behaviours. The key is that it's strategic—individuals choosing when and why to make themselves anonymous.

**Examples:** Going to work at a café or other place where you're unknown, engaging in online discussions using an avatar or handle.



2

## Selective exposure: Choosing what others see

Our most personal information and our own quirky behaviours can only be revealed if we choose to do so. People share some information with certain people, while revealing different information to others. Identity construction is a well-established concept in the social sciences and portrayed 'Self-image' may differ from actual 'Self-image'. Today, as personal information is being shared across new channels, people are raising questions about what's "safe" to divulge. Culture, gender and personality influence the choice through implied permissions as well as personal comfort. Behaviours that are permitted in one culture may be frowned upon in other parts of the world.

**Examples:** Opting for a telephone call instead of a video conference, choosing which personal items to display in a workstation.

## Entrusted confidence: Confidential sharing

Privacy isn't just about being alone but also about privacy with selected others. When we choose to share personal information with someone else, there is a measure of trust involved—which understands that the shared information isn't for general public consumption. There are many instances in daily work when small groups want to confer. But in today's mostly open-plan workplaces, it's difficult to find places where such conversations can occur without being scheduled.

**Examples:** Discussing a personal situation with a colleague, being in a performance review with your manager.

3



4

## Intentional shielding: Self-protection

Personal safety is not just about protection from physical harm. There is a strong psychological component, as well. The feeling of personal invasion that people report after a home break-in leads to taking active measures to protect ourselves from such intrusions. Self-protection may also involve developing a point of view without the distracting influence of groupthink so that, when the group comes together to collaborate, individuals can bring stronger, more compelling insights to the challenges at hand.

**Examples:** Wearing headphones to block out audio distractions or sitting with your back against a wall hiding your computer screen.



5



## Purposeful solitude: Separating yourself

Isolation is a state of mind as it is possible to feel isolated from a group even when it surrounds you. But solitude is physical: intentionally separating from a group to concentrate, recharge, express emotions or engage in personal activities. People in individualistic cultures, may take times of solitude almost for granted, but even within a collectivist culture, being alone sometimes is a fundamental need.

**Examples:** Finding an enclave, going outside, sitting in the farthest empty corner of a large room.



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NEWSMAKER OF THE MONTH

## Dick Costolo – Funny man turned CEO steps down



On June 11, Twitter announced that Costolo would be stepping down as CEO. It would mark the end of an eventful five years since he took over the reins in 2010. At that time, he was the third CEO in four years since its founding, an unusual turnover in Silicon Valley.

While the search for his successor started last year, Costolo is now being replaced by Jack Dorsey, a Twitter Co-Founder and CEO of payments company Square, on July 1. He is hardly leaving on a high note—He failed to convince Wall Street that he had a plan and missed the first quarter earnings. Twitter's user base was growing too slowly and while revenues have been growing Twitter still hasn't become profitable. What has been even more worrisome under his guard was that it was unable to consistently develop new products that expand use and engagement. But then, there were many positives too. Costolo took Twitter public, which saw the company's valuation rise from \$3 billion to \$23 billion. The number of employees zoomed from 300 to 3,900.

But, then he wasn't always the businessman. He was a computer science major who dabbled in standup and improvisational comedy at the University of Michigan. He performed stand-up and many shows around town and was instrumental in establishing three tech start-ups during the first Internet boom. He sold one of the start-ups to Google for a cool \$100 million and then works as a Chicago-based Google employee. On his pal's invitation, he moves to San Francisco to become the COO of Twitter. The rest as they say is history.

According to his longtime friend and colleague Eric Lunt, a former partner (one of three) in the Google-acquired FeedBurner, Costolo is low-key when it comes to money. "He's never been one for outward shows of wealth or status," said Lunt, and described Costolo as "completely straightforward, genuine, authentic."

He will continue to serve on Twitter's Board for now. On his future plans, Costolo said, "I really honestly have no plans, and I always advise people who are going through these kinds of transitions to take some time off. So I'm going to try to do as I say."

On whether he would return to stand-up comedy, Costolo said, "I don't think it would be a smart move for me to return to stand-up comedy. Look, I get heckled for free now. Why go travel to Des Moines, and go to the Laugh Track, and get heckled by people there? The beauty of the platform is I don't have to go do that to get heckled anymore. I can be heckled in real time anywhere around the world."

*(Sources: Bloomberg, Chicago Sun-Times, VentureBeat.com)*



### HANDING OVER

## Change of guard at Microsoft, 20th Century Fox



Stephen Elop, the former top boss at phone-maker Nokia, is one of four high-level executives leaving Microsoft Corp as the company hones its focus on software services and the cloud, Chief Executive Satya Nadella announced, Reuters said. The departure of Elop, whose Devices group will be rolled into Microsoft's Windows unit, signals a shift of emphasis away from hardware and back to Microsoft's core business.

Twenty-First Century Fox Inc said Rupert Murdoch will hand over the chief executive reins at the entertainment conglomerate to his 42-year-old son James.

Rupert Murdoch, 84, will become executive co-chairman alongside his elder son Lachlan. James is currently the co-chief operating officer of the company. The company said the new changes are effective July 1.

### PASSED AWAY

## Two high profile executives at JPMorgan, Amex die

JPMorgan Chase and Co. vice chairman James B. "Jimmy" Lee died unexpectedly, the bank said in a statement from chief executive officer Jamie Dimon. Lee, 62, felt shortness of breath while exercising at his home in Darien, Connecticut, and was taken to the hospital, where he died.

Ed Gilligan, the American Express Co. president viewed as a possible successor to Chief Executive Officer Kenneth I. Chenault, died Friday after becoming ill on an overseas flight to New York. He was 55.



## APPOINTMENTS



### **BL MUNJAL STEPS DOWN AS HERO MOTOCORP CHAIRMAN, SON TAKES OVER**

Hero MotoCorp Ltd founder and executive chairman Brijmohan Lall Munjal has relinquished his duties and his son Pawan Munjal has been appointed chairman, managing director and chief executive, the two-wheeler company said.



### **SUNIL LALVANI RESIGNS AS BLACKBERRY INDIA HEAD**

Sunil Lalvani has resigned as the India head of BlackBerry Ltd, two years after he took charge of the eponymous smartphone maker. Lalvani, whose further career plans are not known yet, is currently serving his notice period. Matthew Tonkin, vice-president, carrier sales and distribution, APAC, will lead operations in India in the interim.



### **ANSHU JAIN RESIGNS, DEUTSCHE BANK NAMES JOHN CRYAN AS CEO**

Deutsche Bank AG named John Cryan as chief executive officer in a surprise revamp. Cryan, the former chief financial officer at UBS Group AG, will run the firm alongside Fitschen, after Jain leaves on 30 June. The 54-year-old, a member of Deutsche Bank's supervisory board, will be sole CEO after Fitschen departs next May.



### **VINAYAK BAHUGUNA TAKES CHARGE AS ARCIL'S NEW CEO & MD**

Arcil, India's first asset reconstruction company announced the appointment of Vinayak Bahuguna as its Chief Executive Officer & Managing Director, post the necessary approval from RBI. Bahuguna is a seasoned professional with over two and a half decades of experience across Corporate Banking, Distress Debt Investment and Asset Management functions, with reputed global banks.



### **SHANTANU KHOSLA STEPS DOWN AS MD OF P&G INDIA**

Procter and Gamble Hygiene and Health Care Ltd (PGHH) and Gillette India said Shantanu Khosla, MD, Procter and Gamble (P&G), India, shall cease to be the MD and Director of the company from 30 June. No successor was mentioned. The two listed arms of P&G informed BSE that Pramod Agarwal has been appointed as an additional director (non-executive director) of the firm with effect from 8 May.



### **ANGEL BROKING APPOINTS SANTANU SYAM AS COO**

Angel Broking recently announced the elevation of Santanu Syam to Chief Operating Officer for the group businesses. Seven years with the organization, Syam was Executive Director (Operations) at Angel Broking & was heading operations, compliance, customer service & legal departments.



### **CS VERMA STEPS DOWN AS SAIL CHIEF; STEEL SECRETARY TAKES CHARGE**

CS Verma has relinquished the charge as chairman and managing director on completion of his tenure at SAIL and Steel Secretary Rakesh Singh has assumed the charge till a regular incumbent is appointed. Verma was appointed CMD of the country's largest steel producer for a 5-year term in June 2010 by the previous UPA government, and was eligible for an extension till he attained the superannuation age of 60 years in September 2019.



### **SNAPDEAL NAMES EX-BHARTI AIRTEL EXECUTIVE CHIEF PRODUCT OFFICER**

Snapdeal named Anand Chandrasekaran as its chief product officer, strengthening its leadership team. A former Bharti Airtel executive, Chandrasekaran comes with 15 years of experience at companies such as online technology firm Yahoo, software innovator Openwave and mobile service management firm Aeroprise Inc.



### **SANGEETA MALHOTRA JOINS RANSDTAD AS RPO HEAD**

Sangeeta Malhotra, who was Vice President – Recruitment Process Outsourcing at Gi Group, joined Randstad India as Head-RPO India.



### **TATA CAPITAL'S AMAR SINHJI JOINS KHAITAN & CO**

Amar Sinhji, who was previously Group Head of Human Resources (and Member of the Management Committee) at Tata Capital, has joined Khaitan & Co as an Executive Director, Human Resources. He has spent 15 years with the Tata Group in various group companies, prior to which he has also worked with the Essar Group and Bharat Petroleum.



### **LENOVO APPOINTS ROHIT SANDAL AS NEW INDIA HR HEAD**

Lenovo, the world's largest PC maker and an emerging PC+ leader, announced the appointment of Rohit Sandal as the company's India HR head. Subhankar Roy Chowdhury, the erstwhile India HR head, will take on a larger mandate as the Global Head HR Strategy, M&A and Analytics.



### **RAJENDER SUD IS NEW SECRETARY OF NHRDN-DELHI & NCR CHAPTER**

The Executive Team of the NHRDN-Delhi & NCR Chapter unanimously appointed Rajender Sud (Director & Head - New Initiatives, Max Life Insurance Co. Ltd.) as a new Secretary of the Chapter.

# The H-1B debate: Where to draw the line?

H-1Bs have gained more political attention in America in view of the tech companies vehemently vouching for increasing the cap on H-1B visas

By Suparna Chawla Bhasin

Outsourcing today is treated like just another way of recruitment and is an accepted form of doing business for American companies.

However, of late, H-1Bs have gained more political attention in America in view of the tech companies vehemently vouching for increasing the cap on H-1B visas and influence the federal government (visa lobbying). So where did it all start? It was the Walt Disney layoff shocker in the US that triggered the entire H-1B visa play – the American employees being laid off and asked to train their foreign replacements (the much envied H-1B visa holders).

It is not a secret that the tech companies in America actually influence the way the federal government looks at granting visas and green cards to immigrants. Green cards and immigrant visas are seen as economic engines of the country. Even Facebook, Microsoft and other technology giants have validated the need for increase in H-1B visas and also assert that “there are not enough Americans with the skills they need.” So it is basically both – a tightrope on which the US is walking on – lack of skills on the one hand and a cost arbitrage on the other.

However, it is imperative to probe and delve into the environment that is built around the whole H-1B visa chronicles and answer questions that instigate responses to, “are tech companies drawing from the H-1B talent pool as the last resort for filling in the skill gap?” or if the “H-1B visa holders are actually being hired as a cost saving measure?”

## Demographic transition

Asia in particular assimilates a good share of young and working-age population, also the most mobile, which results in immigration flow to other countries. India’s investment in education transgresses other counterparts in domains like technology skilling, which has given rise to skilled professionals who are seeking higher purchasing powers, better social statuses



The US economy has consistently shown signs that the STEM jobs are gradually increasing but the shortage of highly skilled people is making sustenance difficult

and opportunities of self-expression, better enterprising prospects and dynamic avenues for professional growth.

The Indian immigrant population in the United States is estimated to be the second largest, the first being Mexico. Apart from India being the second-largest country (first being China) to send students for higher education to the US, Indian citizens are considered to be the topmost recipients of the ‘high-skilled’ H-1B visas. It is estimated that in 2014, Indian citizens accounted for 70% of the three lac H-1B visa petitions for initial and continuing employment by the US Citizenship and Immigration Services.

## US job-skill mismatch

Given the demands of the expanding job market and the specialized skill-sets required for it, skilling has become a major issue for the US. There is an unequivocal gap in the skill-sets that employers want and the actual skills of the workers in the US labor market. Shortage of workers with such skill-sets has been sabotaging U.S. competitiveness and causing firms to employ trained and skilled workers from other countries since the recession.

According to the Manufacturing Institute and Deloitte Skills Gap study, there are two major contributing factors to the widening gap – baby boomer retirements and economic expansion. An estimated 2.7 million jobs are likely to be needed as a result of retirements of the existing workforce, while 7,00,000 jobs are likely to be created due to natural business growth. In addition to retirements and economic expansion, other factors contribute to the shortage of skilled workforce, including loss of embedded knowledge due to movement of experienced workers, a negative image of the manufacturing industry among younger generations, lack of STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) skills among workers, and a gradual decline of technical education programs in public high schools.

The Deloitte Study also states that nearly half of the US manufacturing companies surveyed would consider reshoring at least part of their operations by 2020. Reasons for considering reshoring include favorable local logistics and supply chains, diminishing cost structure differential, and increase in domestic demand.

The US economy has consistently shown signs that the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) jobs are gradually increasing but the shortage of highly skilled people is making sustenance difficult. “The US needs to move on to the business of fixing its highly skilled immigration system before it loses most of the top foreign professional and job creators that make America’s fastest

growing industries competitive” according to Compete America, a business backed organization. According to the Citizenship and Immigration Services, companies are looking to employ foreign workers in highly specialized positions as they mostly cannot be filled by Americans.

Asserting the need for the middle-level skill proficiency, even the US Vice President Joe Biden in an event at the National Press Club stated that “The best re-employment strategy is to help train workers to make them as skilled as possible.” “Six out of 10 jobs by the end of the decade are going to require an education beyond high school. It might be a two- or four-year degree, or a 12- or 18-week certificate, but there are millions of good-paying jobs out there in health care, advanced manufacturing, IT, clean energy.”

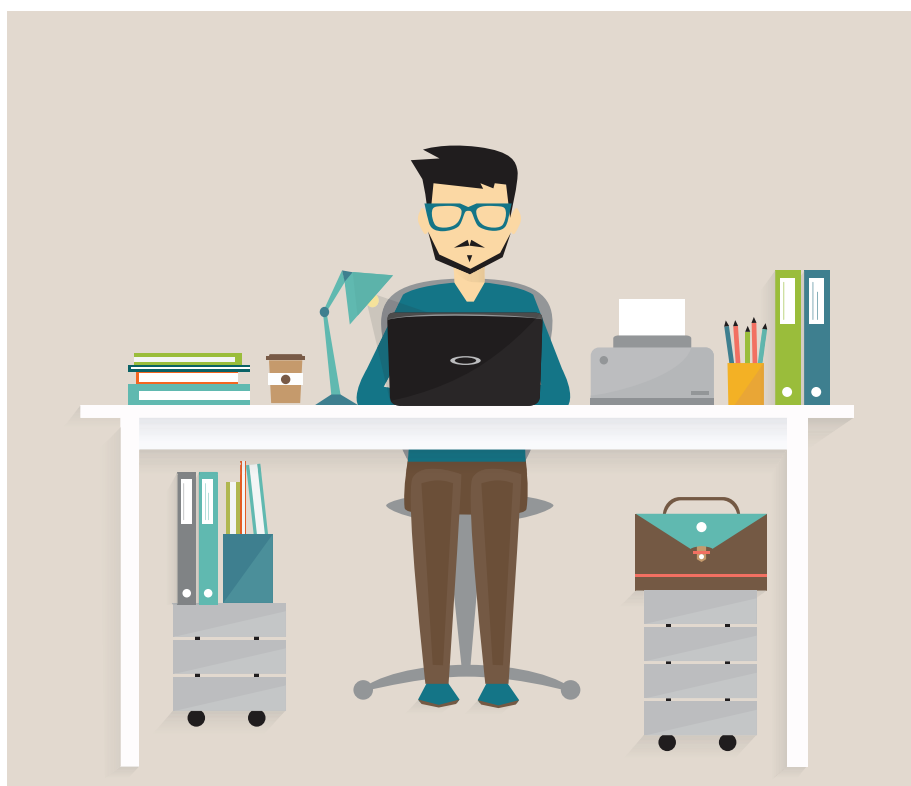
### The Real Picture

H-1B visa program is used by businesses to provide employment to foreign workers in occupations that require enhanced knowledge or specialty but is not limited to positions related to information technology, scientists, engineers, or computer programmers.

However, the H-1B visa program has been criticized for being used for bringing in immigrants to do the work of Americans for less money, with laid-off American workers having to train their replacements, according to the New York Times. Overall, it is estimated that more than five lac jobs remain vacant in the US and the American IT industry is in favor of raising the cap on H-1B visas so that skilled people can work for top organizations in America and that the economic engine can be fuelled by the brightest minds from all over the world.

H-1B program is also notorious for stagnancy. Although a fair market wage is to be paid to the H-1B visa holders also known as the “prevailing wage,” this is not consistently followed, according to San Francisco attorney Daniel Hutchinson. Hutchinson states that, “We’re seeing companies that say that they’re paying someone \$50,000 or whatever, but they’re actually making the employees pay for themselves to come to the U.S., travel expenses, living expenses.” The fact is corroborated by Ronil Hira, a professor of public policy at Howard University who studies visa programs and has testified before Congress about H-1B visas, by saying that “H-1B visa programs have created a highly lucrative business model of bringing in cheaper H-1B workers to substitute for Americans.” American companies are known for bringing in immigrants for positions requiring specialized skills to cut costs.

Intertwined to this is the question of wage. The employer that sponsors H-1B visa holder has to file a petition, known as



## The best re-employment strategy is to help train workers to make them as skilled as possible

a Labor Condition Application (LCA) on behalf of the foreign national. A primary component of this is to ensure that the foreign national receives a ‘prevailing wage’, which is the income that is guaranteed to either meet or exceed the same dollar amount paid to an American worker. However, according to the Economic Policy Institute, almost 80% of the H-1B visa holders are paid less than the average American worker.

### What’s at play?

The US Congress has set a cap on the H-1B visa category which is estimated to be 65,000 each fiscal year. The H-1B program was established to permit companies to fill gaps in their workforce with specialized employees they cannot find in the United States. However, the law presents ambiguity and there is a clear exploitation of the workers by the outsourcing firms. From contracting-out or body shopping workers on H-1B visas, back-door immigration, offshoring, lack of employer monitoring and depress wages, there are other abuses of the H-1B visa program. It is not surprising that companies like Infosys and TCS are being probed for visa violations.

The latest edit in the picture is that with American employees hooting over the issue, Disney lay-offs have been reversed. But coming back to the same question — what is it really? Filling the skill gap and cost arbitrage? One cannot deny the fact that for fulfilling one’s own needs, one either builds one’s ability or finds someone else with that ability to work. It is about the results. And the US is simply doing that.

However still, taking the Indian perspective, what’s in for the Indian immigrant—employment opportunities or low wages (if compared to the American co-worker)?

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# Engineering the workforce – What it takes

Companies will not only need to look at increasing skill-based training but also relook at their hiring policies to mirror changing business dynamics

By Anu Babu Kurian

*“Don’t blame India for your failure to hire great engineers. They join for culture and challenge.”*

**T**his tweet from Sachin Bansal, Flipkart Co-founder and Chief Executive sent the business world into a tizzy. He was reacting to Sachin Bansal’s comment that they were not “quality engineers in India”. Snapdeal had been looking for programmers with a decade or more experience dealing with Big Data and Cloud Computing and was finding it difficult to find talent within the country and went scouting abroad.

The comment put the focus back on an issue that had been simmering in the Indian industrial space for long—the quality of engineering talent in the country.

Every year, India produces some 1.5 million engineers from its 3,345 colleges, 30 per cent of whom run the risk of not getting a job. With the advent of new industries like e-commerce, there is a massive need for a whole new level of skillsets. We caught up with a few headhunters to get the big picture and to find out how deep the problem really is.

Employability of talent is a burning issue in India. Lack of education and inadequate exposure to industry are the major reasons why the workforce is found lacking with the required level of competence and expertise and this is present across all levels. According to Udit Mittal, MD, Unison International, only 2 per cent of the Indian workforce can be considered skilled compared to 95-98 per cent in countries such as Japan.

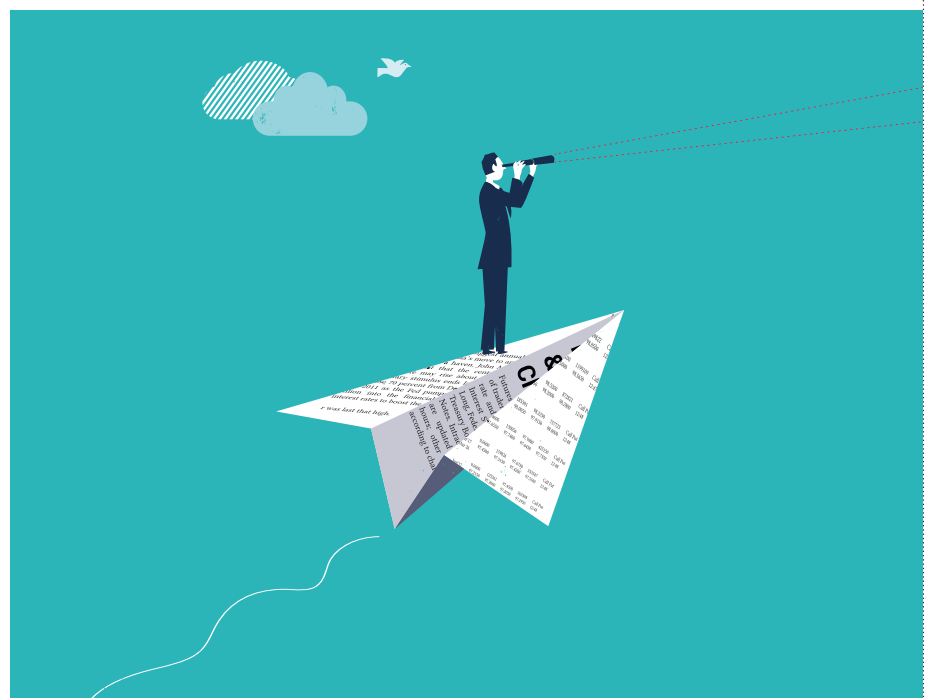
On whether the talent in India is found wanting, Kamal Karanth, Managing Director, Kelly Services, said, “India has a talent friction than dearth of talent, which means talent is available in certain pockets, but the need is elsewhere or the talent available is not ready enough.” While there is no lack of talent from a numbers standpoint, companies today are looking at hiring “ready-made” talent

that requires minimum training and are productive from day one. Only a handful of established companies have structured training programs to fine tune candidates as per their specific requirements, Karanth said.

According to Ashish Tulsian, Co-Founder & CEO, POSist Technologies, India has exceptional talent, but not in critical mass. “The dearth of talent is not really specific to certain sectors but areas like technology or R&D where the approach has to be “I Practise & I Learn” rather than “I have to practice to get work”. We need more self-taught people in technology and research, which India lacks but is now catching up fast.

Reiterating his point, Karanth said, “The talent crisis as we see is specific to certain industries. The urban infrastructure sector in India has a dearth of competent Civil and Structural engineers. The specialty chemicals sector has a dearth of talent in the ethylene, polypropylene, aromatics, process, structural, catalysis space. In the IT/technology space, we see a dearth of competent product, R&D talent and data scientists. In the Polymer industry, there is a dearth of good talent in Bio-Polymer Material, Healthcare and Pharma applications space. In the clinical trial industry, there is dearth of talent with international exposure in the CRA, Project Management, Clinical Data Management, Biostatisticians & Regulatory affairs.

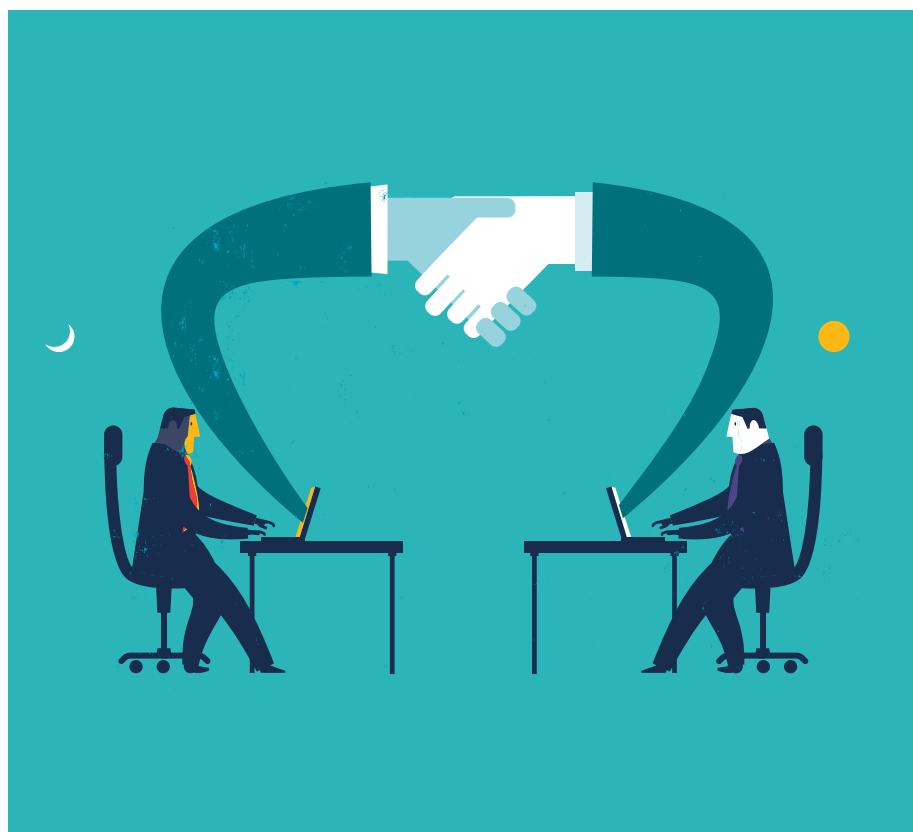
**India has a talent friction than dearth of talent; talent is available in certain pockets, but the need is elsewhere**



By and large, most companies that hire fresh talent are aware of the talent's capabilities and what is expected of them. The entire hiring process is also customized with the role that the candidate is being hired for and if they can deliver as per expectations. The problem arises when the hired talent does not match the expectations and stalls the ambitions plans of the company. Companies tackle this by providing a certain grace period for the talent to deliver and established organizations also assign mentors to bring the new talent to speed. Companies like Snapdeal and Flipkart have been hunting abroad for talent. POSist Technologies' Tulsian feels that is because those kinds of business models have existed for a decade or more abroad. "While senior level talent in India is still ramping up, people from similar successful companies abroad can come and deliver immediately," he added. Vidur Gupta, Director, Spectrum Talent Management, too echoed similar views.

"Global employees have wide exposure to international market. They offer a globalized standard of operation and maintenance of the company. They are better contenders from the standpoint of competency and ability. Education in developed countries such as Europe and US is the driving factor behind this," Gupta said. Jivan Pant, Director & Principal Consultant, Career Shapers, said that leveraging international senior-level employees provides a world-class standard to a company. Professionals who are based abroad are superior thanks to their advanced education that proffers industry standard knowledge. "A major drawback in Indian education is its incapability to keep up pace with global industrial development. On the other hand, countries such as US and Europe being capitals of innovation and technology always have an updated education curriculum providing hands-on experience and knowledge in any industry domain," Pant said.

As business paradigms change, it is not fair to blame the workforce. India is experiencing hyper growth and seeing the advent of new businesses for which people have to be ready for roles they never heard of or saw. All the service providers we talked to said that India is definitely facing a skill problem. Unison's Mittal said that shortage of training is the primary reason for this. But, it is not just the training bit that needs to be fixed. Pant believes that there is a lapse in the hiring process and methodology as well. HR should focus on hiring the right talent for the right job roles. Changing industries and workforce dynamics should prompt companies to



## Professionals who are based abroad are superior thanks to their advanced education and global exposure


focus on new methods of hiring. And the companies have responded by going social with their hiring. Unison's Mittal said the emergence of staffing companies in the country can be considered as a leading indicator of economic growth. With vast resources at their disposal, staffing companies help companies in choosing the right talent for the role. Gupta concurs with Pant. "The lack of skill and glitches in hiring are emerging as problems within the industry. The lack of efficient hiring methodologies is magnifying the employability issue," he said.

In conclusion, poor quality engineers are a symptom of a bigger underlying problem: Lack of skill development. Between 2011 and 2013, the workforce increased from 393.1 million to 397.4 million in India, where there was a 7.2 million increase in the formal sector workforce. But, the workforce addition has not kept pace with skill development.

While the government agencies are pulling out all stops for the same, the corporate sector needs to pitch in. While

companies are aware of the issue—

according to Kelly Hiring Process Report 2015, more than 66 per cent identify skill shortages as a major obstacle in the hiring process—the issue is not being tackled on an industry level and hence the corporates miss out on the big picture.

Secondly, another major problem is that companies need to recognize that the youth are not being trained for jobs that exist in the industry today. The e-commerce industry is an excellent example of this. The curriculum in universities and colleges has to change and mirror the changes in the industrial sector. If not, the quality of talent will never improve. Lastly, companies have to find innovative ways of hiring and that is what will differentiate them from the rest of the pack. Karanth feels that technology can bring the employer and the candidate closer. 

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# Highly successful people possess a distinctive spike

**Gurnek Bains**, Co-founder and Chairman of Young Samuel Chambers, on his YSC journey why cultural DNA is important and what millennials need to be sensitive to

By Pallavi Sharma

**Q You've spent so much time studying culture, psychology and people after you moved from Punjab to London. What led you to establish YSC?**

**A** Early on, I received a lot of help from the people around. Teachers took me under their wings and helped realize my potential, get into Oxford and do my Ph.D. without having my parents spend a penny. So, I have seen how help from the right people can release someone's potential. I politically believe in enabling people and society to flourish. I am highly passionate about growth in people so I established YSC for this very purpose. When we were setting up YSC, I wondered how it would turn up since I am an Indian brought up in London. But it turned out to be great, we built authentic relationships and now we have established offices across different continents. When I reflect, I see that YSC cultural DNA is a mix of Indian and British. We created an entrepreneurial, rigorous, achievement-oriented and relational culture. So for the first 15 years of our journey, we didn't lose any client when competitors were fractionating. We went from working with one company to working with top 100 companies.

**Q In your book, Cultural DNA: The Psychology of Globalization, you say that there is no such thing as a multi-national company. What does this mean for Indian companies that are looking to go global? How can they leverage the Indian cultural DNA to succeed on a global platform?**

**A** Every company's strengths, development requirements and culture are rooted in the country of origin. Sometimes companies miss that and believe that because they are present in more than 100 countries they are truly global. Even when they hire people from a particular environment, they socialize them into the dominant mode of a functional culture that is grounded in the country of origin. Indian companies will also reflect that

and put out the strengths and weaknesses rooted in their cultural DNA. However, one of the great strengths rooted in Indian DNA is their ability to tolerate and work with diversity, which is one of the most important requirements while building a multinational outlook. Intellectual flexibility that Indian leaders show has enormous value that adds to strategy and execution. The third thing, which is intangible and I see Indian leaders possess, is a great sense of heart and humanness. These are the three most important things that Indian leaders can take to the global stage.

**Q You have talked about paradox of differences and similarities. Can you share an example where you have seen leaders tune into differences and similarities?**

**A** There are always certain similarities and certain differences and tuning in to either of them is a judgement call that leaders need to take. I will give you an example. We were running an advanced leadership program that involved a lot of reflection, feedback, case studies, etc. in one of the European companies and it was working really well for them. So the leader of the African region of that company heard about it and wanted to run the same program in Africa. All people in the leadership argued that getting the program to

**The best leaders possess something that gives them an edge. This is what helps them leverage their weaknesses**





Africa was a stupid idea, which was likely to backfire. According to them, it was a program suited only for Europe or the USA. But we still took it there and we were completely surprised with how well the African leaders took to it. This is where we saw the similarity piece coming in. It became a very powerful program and I realized that we really should have ignored the differences; we were surprised that the program there ran for a longer period than in Europe.

However, in the same program we also noticed some differences. We had asked the African leaders to take a personality test. They only took 20 minutes to finish the test and later an anxious administrator came to us saying that the leaders were very troubled with the questions. We later found out that the leaders thought that we were trying to catch them and were bewildered by the entire process. So, for feedback, we had to visit them after the program and we saw a sudden transformation. They were out of their shell and portrayed a larger-than-life big man syndrome and that's

## One of the great strengths rooted in Indian DNA is their ability to tolerate and work with diversity, an important attribute while building a multinational outlook

also how people wanted them to behave. Later we realized that these differences weren't trivial, but emanated from a deep cultural DNA. In Africa, one cultural DNA is that trust is built in tiny groups and we were outsiders so there was distrust. This is the paradox of differences: At one level, we had to work through similarities and at another we had to be sensitive to the differences and it actually turned out to be a roaring success.

**Q You say that we need to explore others' culture from inside-out and your own culture outside-in. Can you give an example of how this can be done?**

**A** We are used to seeing our culture often being the right way, but you have to be able to pick yourself up and see how does an outsider see your culture; thinking how does America see us as Indians for instance. There could be a lot of things that could be frustrating to an outsider but you won't know that if you always look at your culture as being right. On the other hand, when Americans

look at India, they need to look at it inside-out so as to be empathetic and respectful because all cultures have come to being because of very profound historical and environmental factors.

**Q At YSC you coach many leaders; what do you think are the differentiators of leaders who are successful and those who are not so much?**

**A** Leaders can succeed in different ways, not everybody has to meet the exact same criteria. But what is common among highly successful people is that each has a distinctive spike; it could be the ability to mobilize or connect to people or excellent thinking skills. The best leaders possess something that gives the edge and they are aware what that is and they leverage that spike and balance off their weaknesses.

**Q Many millennials are taking to the leadership positions today. Do you see the cultural DNA of these leaders to be broader than Gen X leaders?**

The world is becoming flat and people have more exposure today and therefore are much more aware. But, parachuting in a global context requires certain relationship building skills and patience and Gen Y can be a little impatient; they are focused on their own goals. These are some of things that millennials need to be sensitive to. If you hit the ball too fast, it goes too far as opposed to hitting it with a more relaxed swing and young people need to hear that.

**Q What advice would you give Indian leaders who are looking to take on to the global stage?**

**A** I would say, engage in the journey, recognize and be receptive to support and feedback. Also, think about your culture from the outside-in, understand how it will land in a different environment and build a muscle to lead inclusively as against wearing the hat of authority. Don't be too anxious to prove yourself; you have to stay resilient. Lastly, learn from and response to difficulties.

**Q What's next for Gurnek Bains?**

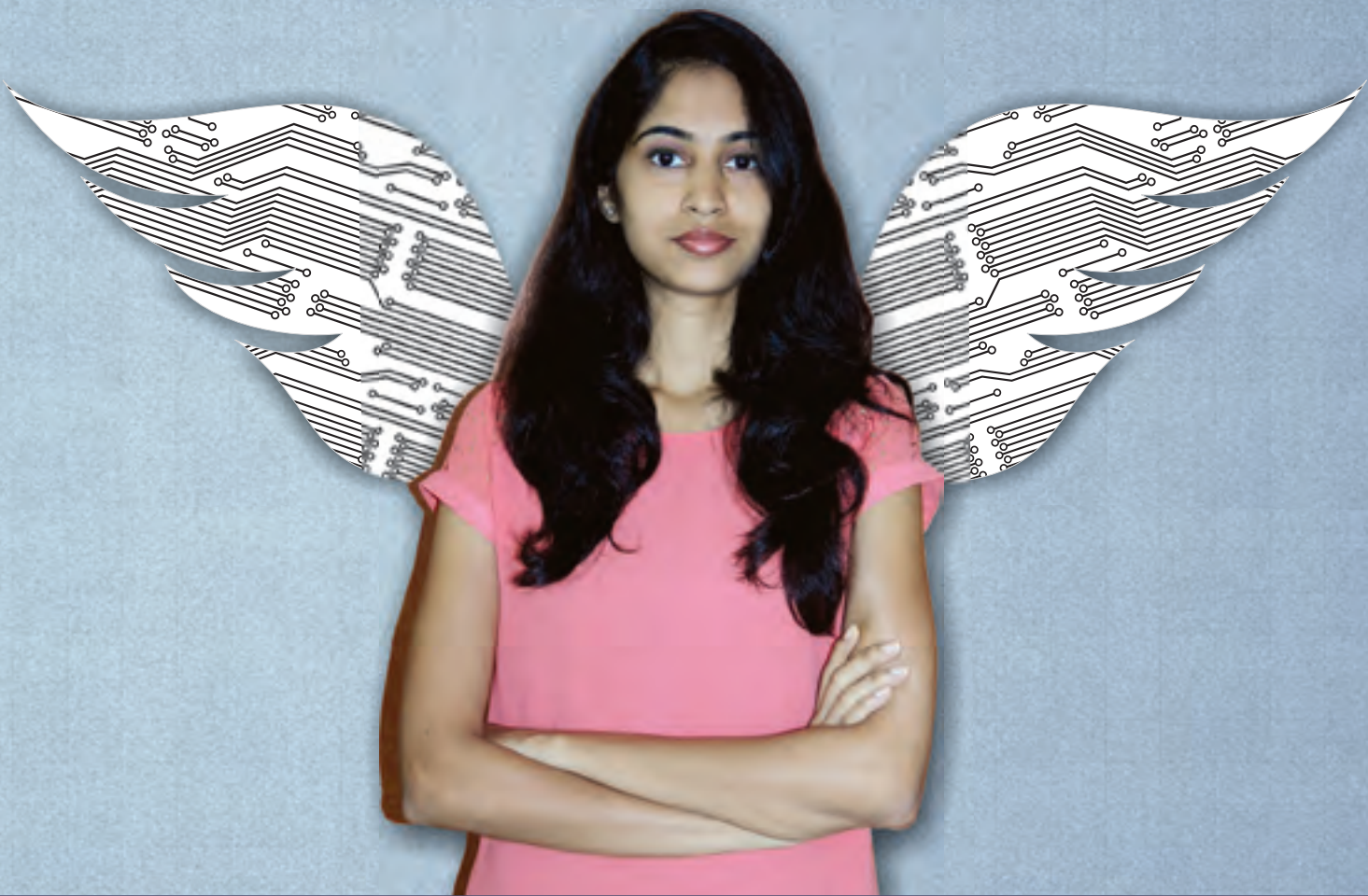
**A** I am now a chairman at YSC, which gives me more time. Being the CEO of a global company takes a lot out of you. So now I'm looking at other things. Currently, I am also the chairman of a dance group called Akram Khan Dance Company. They have danced at the London Olympics; they have danced all over the world and are quite well known. I do pro bono work in politics because I'm interested in political difference that one can make. On this, I want to set up a website and a think tank because I truly believe that unless we get a cultural understanding and empathy, the world is going to be a rocky difficult place. With so many powers coming up, people need a mirror into their culture which reflects their strengths and weaknesses and by creating a platform through the website and the think tank I believe I can make that difference. 

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## ***Leading Experts need 'Expert Leadership'***

In today's economy, competitive advantage is no longer secured purely through access to capital or information, but by having employees come up with creative and novel ways of problem solving. To achieve this, organizations are increasingly dependent on the passion, creativity and engagement of its employees and in particular expert employees in fields such as finance, engineering, research, design and technology. These smart and independent – minded employees largely form the Gen Y cohort too. BlessingWhite's research for over two decades show that they have unique workplace needs like **achievement, autonomy, professional identification, participation in mission and goals, collegial support and sharing, and keeping current**. When these needs are consistently met by leaders, employees are more satisfied and contribute at high levels.

Therefore, leadership training needs to ensure that these technical, Gen Y experts thrive in their new leadership role and provide maximum value – to their teams, organization and customers. **Leading Today's Professional** is a workshop designed for leaders of today's expert professionals. It is based on BlessingWhite's decades of research and helps new Leaders to lead through influence and inspiration rather than authority. It teaches leaders how to balance their team's coaching needs with their own work responsibilities, how to delegate and optimize performance.

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Q &amp; A

# We encourage people to experiment & fail fast

**Sandeep Aggarwal**, Founder of ShopClues.com and CEO of Droom, on what makes ShopClues tick, how they attract talent and more

By Anu Babu Kurian

**S**andeep Aggarwal is the co-founder of online marketplace ShopClues.com and the CEO of Droom, an online-based marketplace for used automobiles. A former equity research analyst for a San Francisco-based financial services firm, he set up ShopClues in 2011. In this interview, he talks about why candidates should join start-ups like ShopClues, the initiatives they undertook for employees and the e-commerce industry in general.

**Q You have raised about \$100 million from Tiger Global. Please take us through your journey of how you started ShopClues and how you managed to get funding for the company.**

**A** We started ShopClues in 2011 at a time when the eco-system was not fully developed and at an early stage. Earlier, businessmen were looked down upon and the country was not very friendly with start-ups in general. I started ShopClues at my home in California. For the first six months, I was working

on my own. Soon, I teamed up with Sanjay Sethi and Radhika Aggarwal and some others who are not part of ShopClues any more. Initially, I funded the company with my savings. In August 2011, we raised close to \$2 million from some of our friends. But, we had faced a lot of problems as well. A very famous venture capital fund approached us to raise \$5 million from them. So, we said no to our earlier investors and decided to work with this VC fund. However, that deal did not go through. There was a lot of resilience in what we were doing and so things kept chugging along.

The entire team was uprooted from the Silicon Valley to Gurgaon. Though we were Indians, we did not spend 15-20 years of our prime life in this country. So when we came here, we were just like any other foreigner. We started out with a staff of five. No one knew about us and there were times when we would second guess ourselves as we hadn't even launched and there were already national level e-commerce companies like Yebhi, Flipkart and Fashionandyou. But, we had an innovative and disruptive model. We turned out to be India's first marketplace and unlike our competitors who spend a lot of wasteful expenditure on marketing and cash on delivery. Cash on delivery has a 35 per cent return rate. E-commerce is not an industry where you have an 80 per cent gross margin. In fact, no company, including Amazon, actually makes money. We developed a culture of not throwing money at the problem.

In January 2012, we raised our next round of funding and this was close to a \$5 million. In January 2013, we raised \$15-20 million and then the latest was from Tiger Global. We have had our ups and downs. When we started, we were in the Top 30 companies and now we are the fourth largest e-commerce company.

**Q Have you found it difficult to get talent?**

**A** In 2011-12, it was difficult to get talent as they didn't want to work with a start-up in its early stages. Right now, e-commerce may be a very attractive industry, but when the industry first came into being, people were very wary of e-commerce in general and didn't even want to consider it as a career option. Now, that situation has been turned on its head. With money flowing into e-commerce startups, now we are facing a scarcity of talent.

**Q You identify yourself as an SME marketplace. Is there any particular reason why you do that?**

**A** India has 27 million SMEs. China, India and the US have a lot of small and medium enterprises. It is very easy to cater to the

large businesses as they have the money, resources and have their own organized retail. There are millions of people who sell something for a living but do not have the capital or the sophistication or the technology & knowledge that will help them succeed. So, we wanted to create a platform for them. Our partnership with SME sellers is complementary and we help them to participate in the organized retail rather than being on the sidelines.

**Q When I spoke to your team members, they talked about having to handle multiple roles and responsibilities. How easy is it for talented people from MBA schools to work here at ShopClues?**

**A** I'm not underestimating anything that we do for a living, but it's not rocket science. The rocket science is not marketing, finance or produce management but the start-up attitude. If someone brings in a lot of energy, passion, with a sense of ownership and responsibility, sees the glass as half full rather than half empty, not taking no for an answer, someone who can deal with

our true potential. We make sure there is no politics in our environment, no bureaucracy, no biases. They feel like they are in the best jobs of their life.

We believe in adaptations, prototyping and fast iterations. We encourage people to do experiments, fail and fail fast and in turn learn from mistakes. Not everyone gets the same thing right the first time, but with the power of iterations, our people are empowered and they are able to achieve a product that is very good for the user. If you have an open and transparent culture, an open door policy, you encourage ideas, experiments and failures. The current millennial generation is very technologically savvy, have a lot of capacity and stamina. If you give them the right opportunity, they blossom.

**Q Why should a candidate consider a start-up as a career option?**

**A** I think one should consider a start-up as a career option because this is where you are not driven by whom do you know. So favoritism does not work here. What works

## If you have an open and transparent culture, an open door policy, you encourage ideas, experiments and failures and thus innovation


ambiguity—now those are the kind of people that we are looking for. These soft skills are in scarcity in many candidates today.

**Q I agree with you on that, but how scalable is this model?**

**A** It is very scalable. Whether it is Flipkart, Snapdeal, ShopClues or Droom, we are technology companies in retail rather than retail companies using technology. We invest a lot in technology so that certain tasks can be automated for accuracy and speed of completion. If you are investing the right technology for the right problem, then I think it is very scalable. A lot of organized retail companies have been operating for 12-15 years, but they have not achieved gross revenue as each of the top e-commerce companies have achieved in just the last three to four years. The e-commerce industry has a huge potential and is very scalable.

**Q People are your biggest asset. What initiatives do you do for them?**

**A** We focus on helping each other unleash

here is your energy, passion and your merit. These companies are not driven by your age, gender, region, beliefs etc. If you can do bigger and better than what you are doing, then you are a superhero. Everyone in his environment has the equal opportunity to be a superhero. In a start-up environment, you can push your limits, learn, get exposure and work very closely with the CEO. There would be no hierarchies as these are typically flat organizations. Even monetarily, it can be very rewarding with ESOPs. The downside of the start-up would be will it run out of money, whether the company is viable or will it get acquired. But, there is no job security even in a big company. More than the downside, there is a huge upside: You will make more money and have a better career than your peer group. 

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DAVE ULRICH



# HR at a crossroads – Value to outcomes

In Part II of the series HR at a Crossroads, we take a look at what unique value does the HR contribute to business results

**W**ith an outside in perspective, HR professionals offer unique information, insights, and recommendations to deliver competitive advantage. In formal and informal business discussions, each staff group brings unique insights to drive business results: Finance talks about economic performance with information about revenues, costs, and financial returns; marketing discusses customers with recommendations on targeting key customers, customer response (e.g., net promoter score), and customer connection; operations makes recommendations and systems, quality, and supply chain. When HR partners in these strategy discussions, we propose that they provide insight, information, and recommendations on talent (people, workforce, human capital), capability (culture, processes, key success factors, systems), and leadership.

## Talent

At the risk of grossly oversimplifying, let me suggest that there is actually a deceptively simple formula for talent that makes people more productive: Talent = Competence + Commitment + Contribution. All three elements of this equation need to be considered and integrated to fully manage talent.

Competence means that individuals have the knowledge, skills and values required for today's and tomorrow's jobs. One company clarified competence as *right skills, right place, right job, right time*. For example, an emerging trend in the workforce planning domain of competence improvement is to identify key positions and match people to positions. Competence should start outside in by turning customer expectations into the talent requirements for the future.

Committed or engaged employees work hard and do what they are asked to do, but may be doing the wrong things. With



**In today's business, HR professionals need to establish organizations that leverage individual talent through collective actions**

an outside in focus, committed employees focus attention on work and activities that will deliver value to customers, investors, and communities. Committed employees have an employee value proposition that balances what employees give to the firm with what they get back. Dozens of engagement studies have shown that more committed employees are more productive.

Contribution refers less about behavioral engagement and more about emotional connection to the organization. When employees find meaning (sometimes called

well being or growth mindset), they become personally connected to the values of the organization. Their engagement comes from within and ensures over time. In our book *Why of Work*, we identified seven factors that help employees find meaning from work.<sup>1</sup>

1. What am I known for? Discover one's signature strengths and weaknesses that shape an identity.
2. Where am I going? Determine what matters most to an employee and what gives them a sense of purpose.



3. Whom do I travel with? Learn to build positive teams and relationships.
4. How do I build a positive work environment? Create a positive work setting and culture.
5. What challenges interest me? Help people solve problems that matter to them.
6. How do I respond to disposability and change? Allow employees to learn and growth from their work. This area has been expanded with recent work on growth mindset, resilience, and learning agility.
7. What delights me? Help people find joy and fun from work tasks.

With these ideas in mind, HR professionals focused on talent outcomes can raise questions such as:

To what extent do our employees have the knowledge and skills required to deliver on our expectations for customers, investors, and communities?

To what extent do we have an employee value proposition that increases commitment and engagement of our employees to the right goals?

To what extent do our employees find meaning and purpose from their work so that they are self-motivated to accomplish work?

### Capability

In the last 15 to 20 years, the HR profession has been shaped by remarkable work captured in the 'war for talent.'<sup>ii</sup> To win the war for talent, many have built systems for bringing people into the organization (sourcing, having a value proposition), moving them through the organization (development, performance management, engagement), and removing them from the organization (outsourcing).<sup>iii</sup>

But, in today's business, HR professionals need to establish organizations that leverage individual talent through collective actions. Talent is not enough. The whole

organization should be greater than the separate parts. Teams outperform individuals. Individuals are champions, but teams win championships. Some simple statistics show the importance of teamwork over talent:

In hockey, the leading scorer is on the team that wins the Stanley cup 22 per cent of the time

In soccer, the winner of the Golden Boot (leading scorer) is on the team that wins with World Cup 20 per cent of the time

In basketball, the player who scores the most points is on the team that wins the NBA finals 15 per cent of the time.

In movies, Best Movie of the year also has the leading actor (25 per cent) and actress (15 per cent) of the time.

Talent matters, but in many cases, organization matters more.

Let me propose a three step process (summarized in Table) for HR professionals to bring discipline to moving from

## Three Dimensions of Competitive Organization: Capability, Culture, Management Action

| Summary logic                            | Key question & focus  | Previous research  | Audits that can be done   | Analogue with individual   |
|--|---|--|---|--|
| Capability                               | What is the organization good at doing and what should it be known for?<br>Competitive differentiators.                 | Resources and Strategic capabilities<br>Core competencies                            | Capability audit: What do we have to be known for and good at to win? This should be tightly linked to strategy.<br>Measure the extent to which priorities are shared about capabilities required to win. | What is my personality?<br>We each have a personality that can be dissected into five core personality traits based on what comes naturally to us. |
| Culture                                  | How do we shape the right patterns that will enable us to win?<br>How the organization works: Event, pattern, identity. | Competing values<br>Organization types<br>Organization health                        | Cultural audit:<br>Do we have the right patterns for thinking and behaving?<br>Measure the clarity and accuracy of the culture.   | What habits that my lifestyle and identity?<br>We each have habits or routines that determine who we are.  |
| Management action 1: Intellectual agenda | Create a clear message about the desired culture to share inside and outside.   | Shared mindset<br>Values   | Unity audit:<br>Do we have a shared culture?<br>Do we make recognize implicit our assumptions?<br>Measure unity of culture and clarity of assumptions.  | What are my thought patterns (schema)?   |
| Management action 2: Behavioral agenda   | Turn culture identity into employee actions.  | Climate  | Behavioral audit:<br>Do employee behaviors link to the culture?<br>Measure behavior alignment and change.   | What are my daily actions?<br>(calendar test)  |
| Management action 3: Process agenda      | Create, shape, and reinforce culture through management practices.  | Systems<br>• 7s<br>• STAR<br>• High-performing work system<br>Organization Processes | Process or system audit:<br>Do we have processes that reinforce and embed the culture?<br>Measure process alignment and change.   | How do my emotions shape my experience and sustain my desired routines?  |

war for talent to creating victory through organization.<sup>iv</sup>

In Step 1, organization capabilities represent what the organization is known for, what it is good at doing, and how it allocates resources to win in its market. Organizations should be defined less by their structure and more by their ability to establish the capabilities required to win—that is, to serve customers in ways that competitors can not readily copy. Organization capabilities might include ability to respond to or serve customers, drive efficiency, manage change, collaborate both inside and outside, innovate on products and business model, access information, and establish the right culture. HR professionals can facilitate capability audits to determine if the organization has prioritized the right capabilities to win.<sup>v</sup>

In Step 2, the culture becomes a key capability. Using the outside in perspective, an organization's culture is less about events (rituals, symbols, or artifacts) or patterns (values, norms, expectations) and more about an identity (reputation of the firm in the mind of key external stakeholders made real to employees). The right culture takes what the key customers know about the organization and uses this external identity to shape internal thought and action. This template for culture change suggests that a firm's culture changes when its customer promises change, that culture should vary across businesses to the extent that customer promises vary and that culture ultimately creates value through increased customer share. HR professionals can audit the extent to which an organization has the right culture.

In Step 3, management actions can be identified and implemented to create and sustain the desired culture. My colleagues and I have classified these actions into intellectual, behavioral, and process agendas. Intellectual agendas ensure that managers create a shared culture inside and outside the organization; behavioral agendas show the extent to which all employees behave consistently with the desired culture; and process agendas institutionalize the culture through management practices.

In business dialogues, HR professionals can be the architects (defining the logic and blueprint) and anthropologists (interpreting the right pattern) of capability by raising the following questions:

To what extent have we defined our culture from the outside in, making sure that our external firm brand becomes the basis for our internal ways of thinking and acting?

To what extent have we created a discipl-



## Organizations should be defined less by their structure and more by their ability to establish the capabilities required to win—that is, to serve customers in ways that competitors can not readily copy

lined process of evaluating and transforming our culture?

To what extent do our management actions (intellectual, behavioral, and process agenda) reflect our desired culture?

### Leadership

Ultimately, leaders bring together both individuals and organizations to solve customer problems. But, there is a difference between leaders and leadership. The term “leaders” refers to individuals who have unique abilities to guide the behavior of others. Leadership refers to an organization's capacity to build future leaders. An individual leader matters, but an organization's collective leadership matters more over time. Looking forward, HR professionals will need to not only help individual leaders be more effective through coaching, 360 feedback, and individual development plans, but build leadership depth.

The outcome of effective leadership is not only employee engagement and organization goal achievement, but shareholder

(debt or equity) confidence. In recent work, I proposed a leadership capital ratings index (like the Moody's credit worthiness index) that could be used to define effective leadership.<sup>vi</sup> This index would have two dimensions, or domains: Individual and organizational. Individual refers to the personal qualities (competencies, traits, characteristics) of the key leaders in the organization. Organization refers to the systems (often called human capital) these leaders create to manage leadership throughout the organization and the application of organization systems to specific business conditions. Using these two domains, previous leadership and human capital work may be synthesized into a leadership capital index that investors and others can use to inform their valuation decisions and HR professionals to enhance their impact. By using a leadership capital index, the requirements of effective leaders could be defined and clarified from the outside/in.

In business settings, HR professionals may prod a discussion of the right leadership with questions such as:

*To what extent do we recognize the importance of collective leadership in reaching our goal?*

*To what extent do we create a leadership brand that defines how leaders inside our company better serve external stakeholders?*

*To what extent do we regularly assess our leadership capability to discover areas of strengths and weakness?*

*To what extent do we seriously invest in developing future leaders who will respond to future business requirements?* 🗣️

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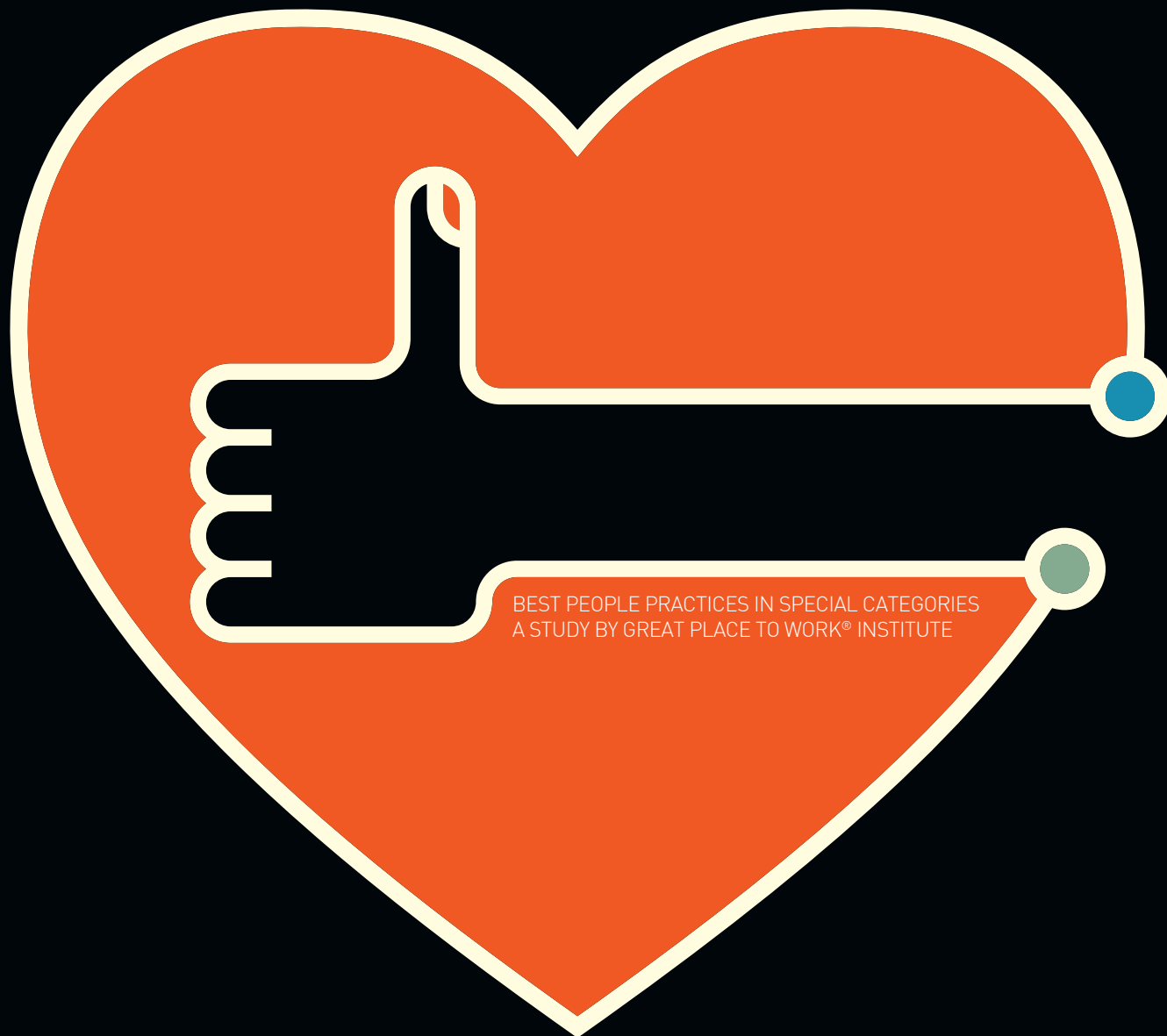
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BEST PEOPLE PRACTICES IN SPECIAL CATEGORIES  
A STUDY BY GREAT PLACE TO WORK® INSTITUTE

# WHY BEST PRACTICES TELL A GREAT STORY



People Matters and Great Place To Work® Institute partner again for spreading lessons from the best people management practices in special areas at some of the best workplaces in India. In this story, we take a look at some of the unique best practices across workplaces in India that have kept people at the center

Globally, organizations are trying various ways and methods to cut costs, improve the attrition rate, reduce wasteful expenditure etc. When organizations make business decisions that don't follow best practices, then they are shooting themselves in the foot. They can't just work on a trial and error basis. They will need a set of procedures or a documented path that will ultimately take them to success. And that is where best practices come in.

In May 2015, we had carried Asia's Best Workplaces 2015, where we featured 35 companies and their best practices in partnership with Great Place To Work® Institute, a global management research and consulting firm dedicated towards enabling organizations achieve business objectives by building better workplaces. It works with over 7000 organizations globally every year to help them

assess and improve their work cultures. They also identify and recognize great workplaces across the globe through our best workplaces lists.

This time, we cover the best people management practices in some of the special areas again in partnership with the Great Place To Work® Institute. The research on best people practices in specific areas is an initiative to identify and recognize the unique practices across workplaces in India. They are:

- Hiring and Welcoming
- Developing People Managers
- Employee Participation and Involvement
- Employer Branding Initiatives
- Fairness in Performance Management
- Supporting Women to remain at work
- Unique initiatives to create a great workplace.

GLOBALLY, ORGANIZATIONS ARE TRYING VARIOUS WAYS AND METHODS TO CUT COSTS, IMPROVE THE ATTRITION RATE, REDUCE EXPENDITURE ETC. WHEN ORGANIZATIONS MAKE BUSINESS DECISIONS THAT DON'T FOLLOW BEST PEOPLE PRACTICES, THEN THEY ARE SHOOTING THEMSELVES IN THE FOOT

# HIRING AND WELCOMING



**E**stablishing the right recruitment strategy is essential in order to create a defined customer experience and positive internal culture. Today, organizations are more inclined towards attitude than skill sets; while the latter can still be developed later, the former is ingrained in each one of us. In this category, we set to find out what companies are doing to ensure that new people settle well in the company while also looking at the various methods and approaches used by the company for hiring. The

TODAY, ORGANIZATIONS ARE MORE INCLINED TOWARDS ATTITUDE THAN SKILL SETS; WHILE THE LATTER CAN STILL BE DEVELOPED LATER, THE FORMER IS INGRAINED IN EACH ONE OF US

featured organizations in this category are: American Express India, Radio City 91.1 FM and Federal Express Corporation.

In the case of these companies, manpower planning is done in advance with the positions being requisitioned first with the approval of senior management. Once approvals are taken, the openings are posted on the job board. Background verification checks are another healthy practice among these companies. These organizations understand that the employee can play an important role in the recruitment process as they have a good understanding of the company, its values, culture and dynamic environment.

In American Express, every employee is aware about the posting and can apply either before or

concurrently with external candidates. Direct sourcing and employee referrals contribute 75 per cent of the total hires. One of the initiatives that was launched this year was the use of predictive analytics to identify a 'Profile For Success'. Through this, they were able to score a candidate's resume by writing an algorithm. They were able to assess candidates instantly, without "tests". Since 40 per cent of the hires were from direct sourcing channels, the company decided to set up a direct sourcing centre in Delhi, offering reach and accessibility to potential candidates. They are also the first financial services company to set up a Big Data Labs in Bangalore, where they hire potential candidates through talent mapping the talent pool. They follow a competency-based interviewing technique, where the questions may be drawn from experiences and behaviors. In American Express, the integration of the new hire is spaced over the period of a year with a series of interventions and development initiatives.

They have a variety of online, face-to-face and self-paced orientation and integration experience. From pre-hire orientation where the candidate is made to feel welcome before joining, to all the activities in the first month of their joining, there is a management trainee program called the Genesis where the MTs are inducted into the system and are helped in their transition through the year.

In FedEx too, positions are first posted internally on CareerHub, where employees are given the first opportunity to apply. Then, the hiring manager refers to external candidates. In case candidates are unhappy with the selection process, they can appeal to against the recruitment decision. Apart from referrals, hiring former FedEx staff and relatives of employees is also undertaken. At FedEx, standard and consistent recruitment steps are followed across functions for internal and external hiring. Only if the posting is not fulfilled by the internal applicants, the external hiring process is initiated. Sometimes a consultant is assigned to help with sourcing external candidates.

However, in FedEx, more than 50 per cent of the hiring is through referrals. In its bid to give back to the society, the company has teamed up with several NGOs to provide employment to underprivileged youth. The new hire is made to feel welcome through welcome email, Day 1 Week 1 programs, buddy programs, lunch with team etc.

In Radio City, the shortlisted candidates undergo a psychometric test before they attend the final interview with the CPO and the functional head. The recruiters then assess candidates through a competency-based behavioral event interview on parameters like customer service, achievement orientation, process orientation, planning and organizing, commitment and developing others. As an HR strategy, they work on building the external database for critical set of employees. Every critical employee has a backup of at least two external people matching their skillset and profile. In order to make them feel at home, a one-day induction program called 'Tune In' is organized every month. For MTs, it is a 45-day induction program helps them to transit from campus to corporate. 🎧

# DEVELOPING PEOPLE MANAGERS



This is the era of people managers, who not only essentially manage work, but also facilitate the growth and development of their team members. In this category, we set to assess the practices that are aimed at facilitating of the development people managers, in turn empowering them to create stronger teams. Creating strong people managers not only enables the idea of an open environment, but also enhances output. There is a clear and direct correlation between the development of people managers and business results. The featured organizations in this category are: DHL Express (India) Pvt. Ltd, Federal Express Corporation and American Express India.

American Express has a well-established Leadership Competency framework, which highlights typical behaviors that every People Leader at American Express is required to exhibit. Every employee gets an “L” rating and a “G” rating. “L” rating highlights the potential of an employee to move vertically and take up people leadership roles. Additionally, above a certain Band, Potential assessment is done through specific scientific tools. The G rating is goal based. Subsequently, each employee is plotted on a 9-Box Grid (Performance v/s Potential), which forms the basis for all Career Progression related decisions.

Every employee is expected to improve his/her performance and capability year on year and hence development plans are created to help employees achieve their business and personal goals. Besides the segmented approach to development, they also have a tiered approach towards providing targeted and sequenced learning based on the career stage of the individual, which includes aspects from aspiring leaders, first level leaders and leaders of

leaders. They also have a Global Rotation Program that provides on-the-job experience for Bands 35 and 40 high potential employees to develop their global mindset in a new line of business or location.

DHL’s idea is to groom and develop employees from within the organization and transition them into leadership roles. Every employee fills a career aspiration form, where he/she details the functions/roles that the employee aspires to work in. There is a formal process of identification of high potential employees and roles that are critical for business success called ‘Talent Panel’.


The idea behind the initiative is to identify individuals who can respond to diverse kinds of assignments and conditions. The Panel provides feedback to the employee while chalking out his Individual Development Plan (IDP) and ensures that the employee is working towards his next goal. Career paths are defined for each individual and it gives visibility to an employee where in the organization do they stand.

They also get the required skills and competencies required for each role. Managers are encouraged to have career conversations with each employee and play a supportive role in developing the employee for the new role.

DHL Express takes leadership development very seriously. The Certified International Management program is the flagship program for developing people managers. They developed managers according to a well-defined framework 70-20-10, which states that 10 per cent of our people development comes through formal training; 20 per cent through line manager coaching and feedback and 70 per cent through challenging assignments back at work. The CIM program is delivered through the senior management team. In fact, 45 per cent of the learning & development budget is allotted to developing people managers.

## THIS IS THE ERA OF PEOPLE MANAGERS, WHO NOT ONLY MANAGE WORK, BUT ALSO FACILITATE THE GROWTH OF THE TEAM

At FedEx, they have instituted a special workshop called ‘Is Management for Me?’ for employees to help decide if a career in FedEx management is a desirable and realistic option for them. Through the workshop, team members who are interested in management roles build awareness on what is expected of them to transition from a non-management role to a management role.

Post the workshop, the candidates must go through a comprehensive management development program called i-LEAD followed by a panel evaluation for management candidature readiness. This program is mandatory if internal employees are applying for a managerial post. Coaches are also an integral part of the i-LEAD program. There is also equal emphasis on subject matter experts as well. 



# EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION AND INVOLVEMENT



Often, it is said that an open and transparent environment aids in the development of innovative ideas. Innovation stems from the freedom that an employee gets at the workplace. Organizations that have participative culture encourage employees to use their expertise and knowledge to suggest methods for improvements in their work areas. In this category, we assess how employees are encouraged to contribute or participate in an organization. The featured organizations in the category are: Kanan

## INNOVATION STEMS FROM THE FREEDOM THAT AN EMPLOYEE GETS AT THE WORKPLACE

Devan Hills Plantations Company Pvt. Ltd., InterGlobe Enterprises, Radio City 91.1 FM, SAP Labs India and Federal Express Corporation.

Participative culture is the hallmark of the winning companies. At InterGlobe, the employee practices are aligned with values. Employees participate in open forums, group discussions and one-on-one discussions creating a culture of collaboration. This year, InterGlobe's technology business revamped its Travel Certification Program (TCP), re-launched it as "Travel School", which was aimed at building the organizational capability of sustaining a pool of ready resources to be absorbed into business, making us scalable as well

as financially viable on-demand. As part of Leadership Hiring at InterGlobe, Hogan Assessment has become essential before finalizing a candidate to assess cultural alignment. The framework below will be helpful to understand the Hogan scales and integration with values. The leadership development program at IndiGo is called IndiGold. In partnership with Harvard Business Publishing, 43 senior managers went through a systematic 9 months holistic leadership development program, which includes Pre-Work, People Leadership, Executive Leadership and Innovation Leadership.

At FedEx, team members are involved in key forums through the employee engagement programs. The Survey Feedback Action (SFA), which is still being implemented for nearly 40 years, serves a crucial role in tapping into areas that are important to the workforce. It provides an opportunity for employees to voice their opinions with the goal to provide employees an opportunity to give feedback on how they managed and how to improve their job and working environment.

On the other hand, Kanan Devan Hills Plantation Company has a bottom-to-top management approach as 69 per cent of the shares of the company are owned by the employees. The best worker and the best staff get nominated into Director Board every year gives the company a truly participative nature. The first of its kind in the tea industry, the structure aims at involving a large number of employees to discuss and suggest improvements for the betterment of the organization in a healthy, innovative and a democratic participatory work environment. The majority of the employees have little or no education. The company strives to inspire them to achieve leadership roles of importance through the participatory management structure.

Talks with Station HR buddies, zonal visits by the CPO, an online platform to address and resolve employee queries are some of the measures that Radio City undertook. Many learning & development programs such as Giftworks Training, induction program, reverse mentoring, cross functional team achievers, Live chat with CEO, Zonal Olympics, Fun Thursdays are some of the other programs that have created a huge impact within the company.

At SAP Labs, the top leadership regularly reaches out to the employees through face-to-face interactions in order to generate ideas and gather suggestions. We have also created many online and off-line platforms such as SAP Blue, Idea Management Tool and Go-Gemba, which helps in understanding the employee pulse and improving employee participation. The SAP Blueproject connects the project sponsors who want people to contribute to their project and project contributors who are looking for interesting projects to work on. The Idea Management Tool, like the name suggests, is a platform where ideas for improvement are shared. They even created 'AppHaus', a radical rethinking of the typical office space. The essence of the new centre is to provide an open flexible environment for working – so no cabins, corner offices or ceiling. 

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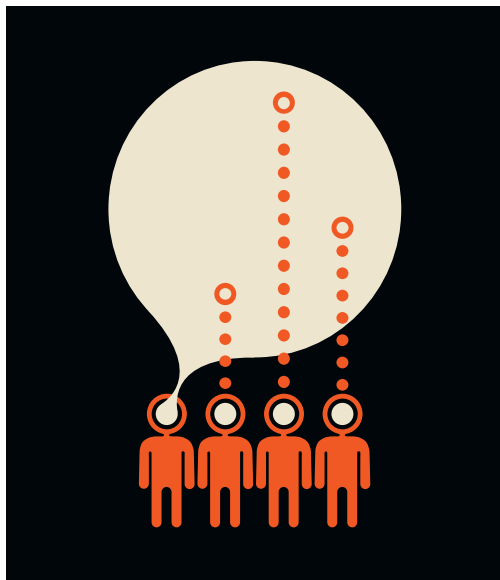
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# EMPLOYER BRANDING INITIATIVES



**T**he war for talent continues unabated and hence the need to attract and retain talent is a key business imperative. The employer brand will help organizations to distinguish themselves, promote their strengths and values, making them an employer of choice in times of recession and boom. Effective employer branding can bring tangible benefits to the organization, including an increase in the pool of potential workers, greater commitment among employees and a decrease in payroll costs.

In this category, we assess employer brand strategies, roles of leaders in reinforcing employer brand and how employees experience employer brand throughout their life cycle. The sole featured organization in this category is Mahindra & Mahindra Automotive & Farm Equipment Sectors.

## MAHINDRA ALSO STARTED A UNIQUE CHALLENGE CALLED FARMKSHETRA FOR B.TECH STUDENTS WHO ARE EXPECTED TO COME UP WITH INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR FARM MECHANIZATION


If there was an employer brand story, then it would have to be that of Mahindra. Though Mahindra was a well-known brand in India, people still associated it with the core activity of manufacturing. The Group had diversified into finance, retail, information technology etc and there were challenges in making people see the brand in a new

light. When the Group conducted a field research, it found out that most of its target customers had a strong desire to “shape their own destinies”. Since most of the businesses, through their products and services, empower people and help them to succeed, the idea suited the big brand. They seemed to prefer companies that “empowered them to help themselves”. ‘Rise then’ became the creative expression of this big idea.

The company then turned its attention to create the Employee Value Proposition. For Mahindra AFS, it was a relation built on two questions: How can people contribute to create the brand experience? and How organization can contribute to provide brand experiences to people? The EVP statement stands as ‘Challenge Conventions, Bringing Alternative Thinking at Workplace, and Drive Positive Change in the lives of our Customers, Recognition for Outperformance, Empowering Environment and Abundant Learning Opportunities’. Before communicating to the employee, an independent audit was conducted to understand the current state and gaps in employee offerings and touch-points. Once the EVP was created and its message sent out internally, the second step was to provide a “WOW experience” for the candidate. To provide consistent recruitment experience across Mahindra AFS, managers were trained on competency based interviewing (CBI) approach.

In order to establish Mahindra AFS as a preferred employer of choice, a look-in and look-out approach was undertaken. In the look out approach, Mahindra is launched as an employer brand, social media is leveraged extensively to anchor the brand in chosen campuses and participating in a T-school ranking with an analytical based approach. They started an innovative program called ‘Mahindra Igniters Day’ where its entry-level engineering trainee scheme is positioned itself as a brand. In the look-in approach, the existing processes are examined and corrective actions are envisaged.

Mahindra also started a unique challenge called Farmkshetra for B.Tech students who are expected to come up with innovative solutions for farm mechanization. Farmkshetra is a design challenge of making Farm Equipment’s with unique technologies and specifications. Through Farmkshetra, agri-enthusiasts get a chance to display their unique skills in farm mechanization phase and at the same time help Mahindra to identify the right talent who can fit their requirement and hence can be offered a chance to make a career with the company. Most of the bright students are offered an internship with the company as well.

Another brand initiative that Mahindra undertook was to begin Mahindra Auto Quotient. Auto Quotient (AQ), India’s first auto-centric quiz, aimed at creating a strong auto-passionate community among engineering and B-school students and position Mahindra as an employer of choice for auto-enthusiasts. The winners of regional finals are offered placement offer. The winners and runners-up teams win Mahindra Reva e20 and Centuro respectively. 



# FAIRNESS IN PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT



Performance appraisals have for the longest time been the main bone of contention between managers and employees. It was always deemed to be unfair. There is a well-validated relationship between fairness and individual commitment to the role and organization. Most often, employees see the appraisal as a tick-in-the-box exercise, which is open to manipulation and unfairness. In this category, the objectives of the study was to identify the barriers to effective performance, the fairness of PMS and measuring its effectiveness. The featured organizations in this category are: Radio City 91.1 FM, InterContinental Hotels Group, Godrej Agrovet Ltd and B. Braun Medical (India) Pvt. Ltd.


B. Braun follows a top-down approach for goal setting, which is done one-and-a-half months before the calendar year end. It is followed by the Business Unit (BU) meeting where the goals for each sub-department, zone, location, manager is set and then cascaded to the individual. Performance reviews take place in July and January and the goal sheet is communicated to the employee within a month of joining. The one good part about the review process is that there is a minimum tenure to be eligible for performance review and pay incentive.

Each Business Unit (BU) is evaluated based on their performance and BU wise different bell curve is made which will decide % of 'A', 'B' and so on in a department. The increment matrix is made level wise & rating wise which is uniformly applicable to all BUs. This removes reporting manager's bias, prejudice, favouritism, rating bias, skewed score (as ranking principle is followed). This process is centrally executed by HR. At Godrej Agrovet,

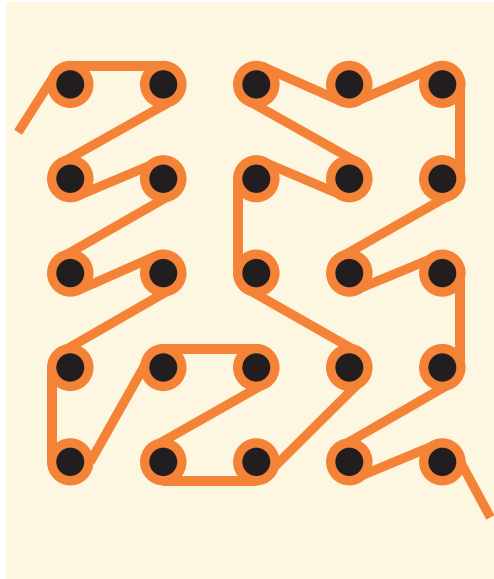
all businesses work out Annual Operating Plans (AOPs - for the next year) and Long Range Plans (LRP - for next 3 years) in December every year. Then business unit along with HR work out which all functions are required to contribute to the listed initiatives and cascade it down to the respective teams. The goal setting process is first done with the HOD, who shares his goals and objectives given by the Board of Directors/Shareholders or stakeholders with the top management team who in turn percolate it down the line. With this, the employee starts his/her goal setting process considering the HOD's goals and objectives. The employee is measured on a 5 point rating scale. In case the goals of the employee are modified, the supervisor takes the employee into confidence. Besides regular meetings and informal monthly meetings, Godrej Agrovet also puts importance on coaching and L&D for enabling performance. The goal setting for the new employee is done three months after he joins the company as it will give him enough time to settle down. The performance appraisal not only looks at what the employee has achieved, but also how they have achieved it.

At InterContinental Hotels, the individuals set it for themselves based on their job descriptions linking it with their manager's goals and business priorities and it will detail the individual contribution to the company. Since it is set by the individuals themselves, it is a fair goal setting to start with and also gives them a fair chance to decide their development plan. Then, it is sent to the manager for approval. Once approved, team members submit a personal development plan. Subsequently, during the mid-year and the annual review, performance is assessed. IHG has a Global Recognition Program called Bravo for all its employees to increase engagement and celebrate success.

## MOST OFTEN, EMPLOYEES SEE THE APPRAISAL AS A TICK-IN-THE-BOX EXERCISE, WHICH IS OPEN TO MANIPULATION AND UNFAIRNESS

At Radio City, the goal setting exercise is a participative process where the CEO and the Senior Leadership team involve the frontline, middle and senior management through a series of workshops. This process starts two months before the next financial year ie February so that the Strategy and Functional goals are set before the beginning of the year. All employees take part in drafting the strategy with the middle management and the senior leadership team. The CEO conducts a town hall and takes the entire organization through last year's achievements and areas where they have not done well. The current financial year's strategy is then shown, which is subsequently cascaded down to teams. In the case of new joiners, KRAs are communicated within seven days of joining. 

# SUPPORTING WOMEN TO REMAIN AT WORK



**L**et's face it: Women are still present in abysmally low numbers in an organization due to a variety of reasons. Currently there are 4.4 lakh women who 'opted out' but are willing to return after a hiatus. These women can help foster greater loyalty, better ability to deal with risk, address concerns of customers, employees, shareholders and local community

## WOMEN EMPLOYEES ARE ENCOURAGED TO APPLY FOR CROSS-FUNCTIONAL ROLES & LEADERSHIP POSITIONS AT INTERGLOBE

while focusing on long term priorities. In this category, the companies were assessed on how they facilitated the entry and re-entry of women, how they ensured smooth continuity and transitioning from career breaks etc. The featured organizations in this category are: SAP Labs India, American Express India, Intuit Technology Services Pvt. Ltd, Pitney Bowes Software India, and InterGlobe Enterprises.

At American Express, the hiring practices are geared towards building a workforce from different backgrounds and perspectives and gender diversity plays a huge role in that. There is a Diversity Council that monitors the performance of the teams on various parameters of diversity and inclusion and this includes participation of women in the workforce. They have a Summer Flexi Policy,


where women employees have the flexibility to schedule their work day during children's summer vacation months. They also have a Women's Interest Network that helps women to connect, collaborate and access resources to enable them to advance their careers. Besides on-location medical facilities, they have transport facilities that ensure their safe return home.

At InterGlobe, the focus has been on identifying enablers to support hiring of women in the workforce and jobs with less or no women and also shift the accountability of balanced workforce to the managerial population. In the distribution business, the company offered a higher amount for referring women. Women employees are encouraged to apply for cross-functional roles and also leadership positions. In the aviation business, women are not just part of the support and house-keeping staff, but also engineers and drivers as well. In the case of marriage, a crew member will be transferred to the base of her choice immediately or the first of next month post the leave taken for marriage.

At Intuit, the mission of Women's Network is to inspire and support women to become compassionate leaders and make a difference to the company and their communities. D&I is part of the culture and the Exclusive Women Hiring Employee Referral Event was established with the intent of hiring more women engineers. The interview panel has also has a woman so that the candidates get a first hand view of the company's work culture and environment. The other activities include hiring fresh women graduate engineers through external events like Grace Hopper Conference, engagement activities such as coding contests, hackathons for women engineers in college campuses. They also have a maternity leave of 84 calendar days. They also get a maternity cover of Rs 50,000 under the health insurance plan.

At Pitney Bowes, managers are given a diversity slate that shows the number of male and female employees. The same is presented to the senior management as well as incentivizing search agencies and referrals for hiring women. Besides female walk-in interviews and employee referral drives, the company partners with local universities to strengthen the local talent pool.

Women who take career breaks are encouraged to constantly upgrade their skills through the Udeemy platform. Global Early in Career Program is an 18-month program that helps accelerate the development of women into future leaders. The CEO, Marc Lautenbach, is the global sponsor for the program. Another program that was started this year is We-Glow, a 12 month long learning journey for future women leaders in India, building their capability to think, act, relate & help others.

At SAP, diversity is looked at an holistic angle. Besides gender, they bring on board employees with physical disabilities and Autism Spectrum Disorder. Besides women-focused recruitment drive, flexi work and part-time employment, women employees are given strategic projects and assignments in one of the global locations too. 



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# UNIQUE INITIATIVES TO CREATE A GREAT WORKPLACE



**T**his category just focused on any other initiatives that the companies might have created. The featured organizations in this category are: American Express India, Lemon Tree Hotels Ltd., Wockhardt Group, Pitney Bowes Software India and Aegis Ltd.

At Aegis Limited, the Six-Dimensional Diversity Framework identifies diversity across six unique facets such as people with disabilities, gender inclusivity, socially & economically disadvantaged people, culturally and linguistically diverse people, mature age people and inclusion of indigenous people.

While many factors act as hindrance to diversity, Aegis has put in place many enablers to build a diverse and inclusive workplace. Ranging from policy commitment to top leadership commitment, fine-tuning HR philosophy to sensitization workshops, Aegis took many steps to ensure that diversity was approached in a 360 degree way rather than focusing on gender or disability. It follows a target-based commitment towards each of the six streams of diversity. With diversity clearly on the strategic agenda, Aegis has institutionalized specific engagement initiatives for each facet of diversity.

On the other hand, American Express launched 'Reach Out, a first of its kind program that seeks to build collaboration in the industry by creating a supportive ecosystem beyond the organization for our senior diverse talent. The Program was piloted in India in April '14 in partnership with four other like-minded organizations – Tata Sons, Pricewa-

terhouse Coopers Private Limited (PwC), PepsiCo India Limited and Microsoft India, with a collective vision to 'provide a development platform for senior women leaders to share, network and learn by connecting with leaders and peers across a group of like minded organizations to enable greater career success.'

The pilot batch comprising of 30 high potential women leaders who operate in multiple backgrounds, lead large teams and handle significant revenue portfolios. The nine-month program comprised of many interventions such as Group Workshops, Peer Learning Circles, Online Community and Leadership Dialogue. What made this program cost effective and sustainable in the long term was that it operated on a unique cost sharing model where each participating organization pools in an agreed amount of funds at the onset and maintains a clear expense sharing philosophy for common spend (Launch, Graduation events etc) and separates out individual participants cost (T&E, per participant session cost).

At Lemon Tree, as part of the workplace inclusion strategy, the company started inducting employees with disabilities, including many who were speech & hearing impaired. They had developed a structured process to induct people with disabilities at all hotels across India, including remote places like Muhamma in Kerala.

Many of the co-workers underwent Indian Sign Language training conducted by experts, but they wanted to broad base it across the organization and thus emerged 'Expressions – Indian Sign Language'. The unique model covers all the basics of ISL as well as hotel specific phrases that are used every day. All hotel employees were mandated to attend the training. From kitchen stewarding to housekeeping, the initiative was extended to guest contact areas such as the restaurant.

Pitney Bowes too launched a unique diversity initiative called 'Project Dhaarna: Intent to Action'. Project Dhaarna, not only focuses on women, but also involves and holds their male employees accountable in gender conversations. The project is hinged on four pillars: Gender sensitization, engaging men in gender conversation, Eco-system connect - partnering with local universities to strengthen the pipeline and focused development planning for women leaders.

The company has rolled out mandatory sexual harassment compliance online training modules for all employees. Men are involved in gender conversations in order to avoid adverse discrimination. New joiners have to take the training within a week of their joining. The company instituted an Internal Complaints Committee to address grievance resolution related to sexual harassment. Women talent are nurtured and empowered by providing them with adequate opportunities and support they need to grow as individuals. 🌟



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# The Intangibles of “Make in India”

To make India a world leader in manufacturing requires effective use of resources and building the right perception



There was a time when anyone who traveled outside India, especially to US, would get flooded by requests to bring back goodies. Friends, relatives and colleagues would all hand over their shopping lists. These included requests for clothes, cosmetics and electronics primarily. The traveler would come back to a small crowd of friends and relatives who would eagerly gather to see what gifts the traveler had come back with. After displaying all the gifts, the crowd would settle down to lament the lack of quality products that were made in India. This was the scenario till mid-nineties in India.

This scene continued to be replayed till the mid-nineties. Then one day the traveler came back with a suitcase full of gifts. His cousin, a young man in his twenties had asked for a branded shirt to be brought back.

“Thanks. This is the brand I have always wanted to own. You should not have spent so much for me.” There was a silence and then the disappointed man spoke out, “This is made in India.”

Those who knew better explained that several top notch brands source their products from India. That it should be a matter of pride. The young man's disappointment was visible. A shirt that had the “made in India” label did not have the same meaning as one that had been “made in USA”.

## The Task

The “Make in India” campaign aims to make India a leader in manufacturing by 2020 by creating exports worth \$990 billion. To achieve this, we have to grow manufacturing by almost 10% per annum while for the last three years, manufacturing has actually grown at only 3% in a year. The National Manufacturing Policy of 2012 set out plans for the

sector to reach 25 percent of GDP and create 100 million additional jobs by 2022, the sector's contribution to GDP has fallen from 16 to 15 percent, with fewer than five million incremental jobs having been added to the economy over the past five years.

### Benchmarking China

As China faces rising costs of production and rising wage bills, more and more manufacturers may turn to India that has managed to steadily hold wages and costs. Russia is battling geo-political turbulence. In this scenario it is actually US and Mexico that is growing its clout in the global manufacturing scene.

India's share of global manufacturing has moved from 1.9% to 2% over the last ten years. In comparison, China now owns 24% of the global manufacturing kitty as compared to 17% in 1995 and contributed 8.5% of the global GDP. India now contributes 2.5% of the global GDP. I am quoting these figures to simply establish that "make in India" is truly an audacious goal for India. Audacious goals often galvanize nations to reinvent themselves. India has a massive base of domestic demand and a growing pool of entrepreneurs who are making things happen.

Innovation drives growth. India has one-fifth the number of researchers per million as compared to China and even lesser proportion as compared to even the SMEs in Germany. Almost 50% of the 4m SMEs in Germany hold patents. One the other hand, less than 10% of 48 million SMEs in India hold a patent.

### Challenges and Opportunities

The task ahead is formidable. India's infrastructure has to be brought up to match global standards. The roads, ports and airports have to be built. Uninterrupted power supply has to be made available. Only 16% of our workforce is regularized. The rest of the workforce is made up of temporary workers and contract labor. The employers need to be able to work with a flexible workforce to match fluctuating demands. The workforce on the other hand needs to be highly skilled. The government has to create a social security system that acts as a safety net when people are in between jobs. The employers have to create opportunities for people to continuously reskill when they are unemployed.

### Build the 'Made in India' Brand

"Made in China" has a distinctly different connotation to a buyer than a label that says, "made in Switzerland" especially if the product in question is cheese. A luxury car made in a state of the art plant in a very poor country lacks credibility.

Is Apple an example of an American brand or is it a Chinese brand? Apple's manufacturing partner Foxconn, which makes the iPhone, iPad and several other Apple products in factories in China is in talks to open factories in India to make iPhones. Does it matter to the consumer where the iPhone is made? In a blind test would a consumer be willing to pay the same price for an iPhone that was made in India as compared to some other country?

### Shaping Perceptions

"Brand Breakout – How Emerging Market Brands Will Go Global" by Nirmalya Kumar has recommendations on how an emerging market like India can go global. The country of origin automatically has connotations of six dimensions: quality, innovativeness, aesthetics, prestige, price value and social responsibility. Nirmalaya says, "Branding is not only about differentiating products; it is also about striking an emotional chord with consumers. It is about cultivating identity, attachment, and trust to inspire customer loyalty."

As choice increases consumers choose products based on intangible elements such as their perceptions and emotional connect with a brand and go beyond cost and quality.

While there is a plan to address issues of infrastructure, raise FDI, craft labor reforms and increase the "ease of doing business" where *India ranks at 142* according to the World Bank, someone has to sit back and think about addressing the brand perception of the country. This is exactly the problem that Chinese companies are facing.

**The "Make in India" campaign aims to make India a leader in manufacturing by 2020 by creating exports worth \$990 billion. To achieve this, we have to grow manufacturing by almost 10% per annum while for the last three years, manufacturing has actually grown at only 3% in a year**

While the American consumer is surrounded by products manufactured in China, the US & UK consumers on the other hand rated Chinese companies near the bottom in consumer perceptions of quality, ethical behavior, and environmental consciousness. (According to a study by J Walter Thompson)

A brand is not about creating a clever advertising campaign and flooding it in the media. A brand is the reality that we live every day. The brand is a verb that is made up of our daily actions and choices. Until there is consistency of demonstrated behavior on all the six parameters of quality, innovativeness, aesthetics, prestige, price value and social responsibility by a billion Indians, the other six billion people across the world will not rethink "made in India" as a global benchmark.

Maybe it is time to run a campaign like "Incredible India" once again. You may think I am being irrational. But that's the power of the brand. Human beings are not as rational as we think they are. 🇮🇳

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# The Job Catalysts of India

There will be more job creation in the formal sector than in the informal sector and flexi staffing will be one of the catalysts



**F**lexi-Staffing is an engine for job creation. Over the last decade, the organized flexi staffing industry represented by the Indian Staffing Federation has managed to provide employment to over five million youth. In a country where for the next 20 years a million youth will be added to the workforce, a flexi-job is better than no job. Charlie Chaplin once said, *"You will never find a rainbow if you are looking down."* The country is witnessing an era where talks about labour reforms are moving away from coffee table discussions to actual execution.

Those who have been pitching their own self-interest as national interest while opposing labour reforms have painted a sordid story of how all employers are here to exploit, how employees have no voice, how all employers are big companies, how shareholders pay wages and not customers missed the five painful defects in India's labour market:

- 12 per cent manufacturing employment as our nemesis
- 50 per cent agricultural employment of low productivity where 240 million Indians produced less food grains than 4 million Americans
- 50 per cent self-employment (the poor cannot afford to be unemployed so they are subsistence self-employed)
- 94 per cent informal employment (100 per cent of net job creation since 1991 has happened informally)
- India has 3 lakh apprentices as against Germany's 4 million, Japan's 11 million and China's 20 million out of an overall capacity of 4 lakh apprentices.

The recent amendments proposed by the Labour Ministry are remarkable while they may not still be complete and comprehensive. Their acknowledgement that MSMEs, which could propel future growth of the country, are at the receiving end of Licence and Inspector Raj, needs a distinct treatment (single labour law for MSME),



## The share of contract staffing shall reduce from 29 per cent to an estimated 15 per cent of the formal workforce

their acknowledgement that its important to enable companies to set shop in India (Amendments to the Factories Act), their acknowledgement that we need more apprentices at work place (Amendments to the Apprentice Act), their acknowledgement that we need more women in the formal workforce (Changes in the Factories Act provision) – spreads ample optimism.


In addition, Arun Jaitley's bold declaration of providing youth of the country three salary choices (a petition promoted by TeamLease and actively supported by Indian Staffing Federation) is a shot in the arm for the 94 per cent of our youth who on account of our 44 central labour laws and over 100 state specific labour laws have been by designed to languish in informal employment. The three choices that employees would have a choice of are:

- Opting out or in from paying their own contribution of PF to the EPFO

- Option to pay employer's contribution of PF to the EPFO or to NPS
- Opting to pay their current ESIC contribution to ESIC or to any other IRDA regulated insurance scheme.

In addition, our labour ministry in its new avatar deserves a pat on their back for fixing basic plumbing issues by allowing for single online filing of most compliance challans.

As a consequence of these and more, we can anticipate more job creation in the formal sector than the informal. The share of contract staffing shall reduce from 29 per cent to an estimated 15 per cent of the formal workforce. Over a period of time, wages too will improve as was seen in China where wages rose to 20 per cent of US wages as against 5 per cent a decade ago.

In this backdrop, the formal flexi-staffing industry shall manifest its existence beyond the perception of providing labour law arbitrage (a bizarre myth). On the one hand, it will enable organizations to manage their peaks, their seasonal requirements, providing a sophisticated matching platform to find talent across the country and providing an eco-system to experiment with new ideas and new jobs which otherwise would have been throttled in the womb. On the other hand, it will provide our youth a stepping stone to create an opening balance in their career, providing them access to formal skill adoption, by providing them with wage and health security besides access to all statutory benefits, by providing them with social recognition. Its heartening that there seems to be a growing acceptance of our role as catalysts to job creation, yet there is a long road ahead. 

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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# NATION IN LABOUR

Changes in industrial landscape has led to a shift in employee relations. A look at this new and dynamic partnership

By Anu Babu Kurian & Ankita Sharma Sukhwani

**W**hen the Modi government took over the reins last year, it began what was a much-needed push to labor reforms. While some laws sought to ease apprenticeship rules for employers, or reduce the sheer number of laws that small manufacturing units have to comply with, or imposing a complete ban on child labor up to 14 years of age, there were others where companies struggled with the multiplicity of labor laws or rigid contract labor laws. Others found it difficult to align their growing strategies with decades-old laws governing workplace disputes, pay scales, social security, maternity benefits and contracting labor.

In this story, we take a look at how the employee relations and industrial relations will change in this dynamic landscape, what challenges the companies and labor force face in this regard and what initiatives the big companies have undertaken to address the same. We talked to several industry leaders and five large compa-

nies—Mahindra & Mahindra, ICICI Bank, Raychem RPG, Hindustan Unilever and Hindalco from the Aditya Birla Group—to find out how they engaged with their workforce and found win-win solutions for both the employer and the employee.

## Mood is upbeat

Most industry leaders we spoke to sought for more flexibility in contract labour management. They want to be able to control how to manage the human resources as business needs wax and wane. They want the Contract Labor Act to be more of an enabler than a restriction and also want more clarity on the same.

Currently, there are 44 labor laws under the purview of the Central government and more than 100 under the various state governments. There is a huge necessity to reduce the number of labor laws and standardize them as well.

“No company wants to hire and fire. They want to have a stable workforce that they can train, groom and invest in. The problem is that the worldwide scenario is so volatile that businesses have to face many uncertainties that may lead to financial crunch. That is where the flexibility with the labor force would help,” said Ratish Jha of Raychem RPG.





There are growing concerns on social security for workers as well. Companies realize that if they focus on the well-being of the workers, not only does it translate immediately in terms of high productivity but also helps in keeping good employee relations. Also, the government on its part needs to have a social security umbrella in place for contract workers and also needs to give companies or manufacturers guidelines on how to manage people who have been laid off. Maybe the government can bring in a law, which states that the company has to pay a worker a specific amount of compensation for a specified period (say Rs 50,000/month for every six months). That would not only take care of the worker in the time that he/she is unemployed, but also give companies an idea of how much amount they need to keep handy in case they want to do layoffs.

## If the Make In India dream has to become a reality, then India will need to harness the combined strength of the employers along with the labor force

The five companies that we talked to for the cover story laid special emphasis on the following:

**Skill development and multi-skilling of employees:** Regular technical and soft skills training was provided to employees to ensure the versatility of workmen and also to ensure the development of a conducive work culture. That helped the company to move the workforce around according to their needs and gaps. They have also instituted recognition and benefits to motivate employees towards multi-skilling. This is a win-win for both the employers and the workmen.

Managers are given special training, especially in the areas of dealing with the workmen, handling of grievances and engagement of the workers. Workmen teams can best handle the workplace issues. At Hindalco, they have state and national level skill and quality contests.

In Hindustan Unilever, the ER team pioneered an innovative training and performance management system called 'SPARKLE'. It was a revolutionary approach to skilling the shop-floor employees and was undertaken to standardize the capability management process of the shop-floor employee and office staff. It standardized the performance appraisal and rating process across all the 30 locations for shop-floor employees covering about 10,000 employees with the intention of identifying HiPos. SPARKLE has now become a global IT tool to manage capability and talent for blue collar employees across Unilever. It was also executed in North Africa and the Middle East.

At Raychem RPG, they introduced the concept of SMTs (Self Managed Teams) with no supervisors. The team is responsible for planning, monitoring and reporting everything they do on the shop floor. Post their selection through a very rigorous recruitment process, the shop-floor workers undergo


on-the-job training for a year. The company works towards giving them a diploma in engineering and the workers have full-day classes on Saturdays and Sundays. At the end of the program, the workers get work experience as well as an engineering diploma.

**Communication:** The management takes extra effort to connect with workers at the factory level. Companies have monthly and quarterly meetings with the employees, where the performance of the factory and the company are shared with the workers. The continuous transfer of information helps the managers and workers to be updated about the goings on in the company and hence promotes an open understanding between the two. For example, in ICICI Bank, a personal message from MD & CEO Chanda Kochhar is recorded and shared with the employees. Employee Relations managers and the bank's senior management visit all the bank's branches and offices covering about 70,000 employees. Employees can freely raise and discuss issues with their superiors or ER managers. They developed an internet-based video conferencing application called "i-Studio Live" through which senior management can conduct virtual visits and engagement with employees.

Raychem RPG engages with its workers in a very different way. They have a communication forum with the parents every six months.

**Involving workmen in decision-making:** Companies need to consider involving their workmen in decision-making as it ensures the longevity of the company without loss of productivity. Mahindra & Mahindra has a Rise i4 ideation program where teams and workmen are encouraged to give ideas on improvement under the parameters of Productivity, Quality, Delivery, Safety and Moral. Every week two hours are allotted for ideation to all teams and they are encouraged to come up with ideas to increase productivity and reduce costs. There is a competition for the best idea given.

**Developing shop-floor employees into leaders:** One of the major programs that was launched in HUL was SiO (Stepping into One). This pioneer program was launched to help motivate and prepare HiPo shop-floor employees and staff for the Officer Cadre. Not only did it ensure retention of talent, but also helped in building the talent pipeline. There is a program for officers too, which follows a three-pronged approach to building leadership capabilities.

The above-mentioned initiatives drive home the truth that companies are already looking at several changes like including workmen in decision-making, enhancing their skills and ensuring the top management is in constant touch with ground reality. The companies understand that good employee relations will make or break the business. If the Make In India dream has to become a reality, then India will need to continuously harness the combined strength of the employers along with the labor force that will propel the nation to greater heights. The government should focus on developing a consensus on national policy framework aligning with existing changing environment on labor issues. 

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# TRUST AND SUPPORT

**ICICI BANK**

The bank manages its integration process in such a way that its employees feel appreciated and looked after

**T**he year 2002 was an important year for the Indian Banking industry as well as for ICICI Bank. This was the year when India got one of its first “universal banks” on account of ICICI Bank’s reverse merger with its parent organisation, ICICI Ltd. Over the last decade and a half, three large organisations were amalgamated with ICICI Bank. Each of these three amalgamations viz., Bank of Madura, Sangli Bank and Bank of Rajasthan were critical, especially with respect to integrating the employees of the various entities. These entailed the challenges of managing various stakeholders like industry level employee unions which had reservations against merging with private sector banks and an employee base which was anxious about the impact of the merger. The following 3Cs helped the Bank achieve these integrations:

## Communication


This was the mainstay of the Bank’s integration process. Chanda Kochhar, MD & CEO of the Bank was at the forefront of the communication initia-

on a predetermined theme / agenda and the same is telecasted live to all employees. The Bank has recently developed, a web-browser based, video conferencing application called “i-Studio Live” through which the senior management conducts virtual visits and engages with the employees at regular intervals.

## Credibility

The Bank’s management believes that it can win the trust of its employees by honouring its commitments made to them. Wherever possible, the Bank encouraged the employees from the earlier merged entities to share their experiences. Office bearers of employee unions from the previously merged entities were encouraged to meet employees of the newly merged entities and share their experiences. This built an enormous amount of trust between the employee and the management, so much so that they subsequently started inviting the senior management from the Bank to anchor their general body meetings and discuss employee issues. Usually, employees from the merging entities have concerns about unfair treatment being meted out to them by the organization into which they are going to merge. However in the Bank’s case, the management was clear that the employees from the merged entities will be treated with respect and dignity right from day one. All employees, including the subordinate staff were re-trained by the Bank to equip them with skills and knowledge to take up higher level responsibilities.

## Concern for Employees

While the integration exercise was underway, the Bank went out of the way to ensure that interest of the employees of merging entities was protected. The Bank supported these employees by offering them a period of two years to get adjusted to the Bank’s performance management processes and people management practices. Employees with limited exposure to working in a computerized environment were provided extensive training. Since all the employees from the merging entity were treated with respect and dignity, the Bank was able to earn their trust and affection. In addition, the Bank made its employee grievance redressal system easily accessible to all employees through the use of technology. The Bank has created an on-line employee grievance redressal portal called I-Care. This portal ensures that all employee queries are handled in an organized and time bound manner and the quality of resolution is tracked. 

**The bank’s senior management conducts virtual visits and engages with the employees in the branches and offices at regular intervals through “i-Studio Live”**

tives. A personal message from her was recorded and shared with employees from the merging entities. Field teams, comprising senior business and HR colleagues were constituted to visit all the branches and engage with employees of the merging entities. The objective of all these engagements was to build rapport with them and address their concerns, thereby helping them to easily integrate with the Bank.

Given that the Bank has a culture where employees can freely raise issues and discuss their concerns with their superiors or Employee Relations (ER) managers, the same cultural ethos was encouraged in the employees of the merging entities. As a practice every year, the Banks’ senior managers and the ER team visit all the branches and offices to meet all the 70,000 employees of the Bank. During these visits, the concerns and issues of employees are discussed and taken up for resolution. Not only this, the Bank ensures that even the junior most employee in the Bank has a direct connect with the senior management. The Bank regularly conducts “Engage your leader” sessions where senior leaders engage with employees

AS TOLD BY **TK SRIRANG**  
HEAD, HUMAN RESOURCES, ICICI BANK

# EASY COMMUNICATION

## HINDALCO

A holistic approach at the workplace is what keeps this company ticking

**T**he Aditya Birla Group has always adopted a holistic approach when it comes to its employees. As a group, we conduct a number of initiatives to bring about inclusion and develop leadership in our employees. Over the years, there have been a few areas that have helped us develop and maintain healthy employee relations. Some of the initiatives at Hindalco are :

### Skilling

We focus a lot on skill development and multi-skilling of employees to ensure that workmen and employees get regular training to perform better. This also helps in making people versatile and flexible in moving and changing roles to other functions and jobs. Even our factories have Recognition and benefits which motivate people shift towards multi-skilling. We believe that in order to build a strong industry base, employees who can perform in more than one job, make for a win-win situation for both the employees and the company. The older rigid practice of having an inflexible workforce does not help either the company nor the employee. Our Long Term Settlements with Unions are examples of multi-skilling and flexibility in operations.

### Quality Circles

To promote quality consciousness, bring about customer orientation, we encourage Training and dialogues that leads to excellence in quality. We focus on better learning and training programs on Safety, Good Work Practices, and doing the right thing the first time around. It is only with consistent focus on these things that a company can continuously benchmark with its peers globally. However, one cannot stop at only a good recruitment practice without the daily working practices being efficient as well. Quality and Cost Effectiveness is the key to sustenance in our industry.

### Management training & grievance redressal

We give special attention to the training of our Managers, especially in the areas of dealing with workmen, handling of grievances and bringing about engagement activities of the workforce. While it is good to have work groups for giving directions for work, most of the issues and workplace problems can be best handled with people themselves. We encourage people to form teams, analyse the situations and provide suitable solutions to the problems at hand. This practice of forming teams for productive discussions has helped our workmen to hone their skills in problem solving as well. We also have a number of workmen teams participate at the State level and National level skill and quality contests.

We also do a number of programs for workmen on both Technical and Soft Skills apart from management programs for Managers. While Technical Skilling is necessary for continuous up-gradation, Soft Skills are even more important as they develop a conducive work culture. Soft skills define how workmen get along, how they work with teams, take care of their health, family budgeting and all other aspects of Personality and Individual Development. Training our workmen on such issues has had a positive and a favourable effect on just on the individuals, but also on the organization as well.

In most of our plants, we are specifically conducting programs for Union leaders as well. Often, the workers who are elected by the workers and become representatives are ill-equipped to handle the role with maturity due to their inexperience at times. To help them, we employ external training institutes and expert trainers to brief them about labour relations and train them in understanding labour and economic issues of the workers. There is great focus on developing leadership abilities and assessing situations. Communication is also an

**We focus a lot on multi-skilling and skill development of employees to ensure that workmen and employees get regular training to perform better**

area of focus as they act as a link with the management. These trainings also makes them aware of their rights and responsibilities and help them take the workmen together for their common goals.

### Communication

Focus on communication on an everyday basis is a great need. While workmen have leaders to talk to them, there also needs to be a forum in place where the workmen can find out about the developments of the company and their respective division. We therefore have monthly and quarterly meetings, where the overall performance of the factory and the company is shared with employees. This continuous dialogue helps develop a healthy understanding not just with the managers but also with the employees. It also gives the workmen a wider view of the company they are associated with. We also do a number of engagement activities with the employees and also with their families. 🌟

AS TOLD BY VINEET KAUL  
CPO, HINDALCO



# BRINGING IN THE BEST

HUL

New and improved strategy and employee benefits is what keeps this company in top form

**A**t Hindustan Unilever, (HUL), the ER strategy wheel (which looks at both Tactical and Strategic elements) has been a guiding principle in providing us with a clear vision of our short and long term strategy to be a pioneer in the field of Employee Relations. This year, we have set ourselves an audacious task to develop ER capabilities of the future and be recognized as a thought leader in the area of Employee Relations. Continued focus over the years has helped us reduce the number of man-days we have lost. In 2014 we lost 149 man-days which was a significant improvement of 78 per cent over last year. Till date, we have lost no man days due to IR. We signed four wage settlements in 2014, three out of which were signed ahead/on time. Productivity has gone up in 2014 over the last three years by leveraging higher skill set & productivity linked pay for productivity improvement.

## Building Professional skills

Looking closely at the professional skills programs, they are built to address specific functional skill building in individuals and teams, driven by academics and functions. Some of the functions for which we have developed the capability plans are: Supply Chain Capability for shop floor employees, staff and officers/executives Human Resources Capability, Customer Development Capability, Outsourced Partner's Capability: Water, Customer Development.


development of our shop-floor employees. It was undertaken to standardize our shop-floor employee and office staff capability management process and consequently develop our workmen capabilities. It standardized the performance appraisal and the rating process across all the 30 locations for shop-floor employees covering about ~10,000 employees with the intention to identify high potential. Seeing the excellent results in Capability and Engagement that Sparkle India has driven till 2014, it has now been recognized as a Global Best Practice to be rolled out across all Supply Chain units in 2015. Sparkle has now become a global IT tool to manage Capability and Talent for Blue Collar Employees across Unilever.

Sparkle has now become a single global IT tool which will enhance uniformity and transparency across Unilever, to track capability development of shop floor employees and drive a single unified process for skill assessment. The online appraisal system that includes the new "capability card" has gained significant feedback from the employees.

## SiO (Stepping into One)

It is a pioneer programme launched to motivate and prepare the High Potential shop-floor employees and staff his next role in Officer Cadre (WL1) and also help us in retaining our key talent while strengthening diverse, talent pipeline for WL1. SiO places the responsibility for career growth of shop-floor employees and staff on the Line Manager, HRBP and the individual. Till date, 76 promoted to WL1A out of 148 talent pool.

## Skill Upgradation for Non-Technical Cadre

In our endeavour to strengthen the journey towards skills enhancement, we launched the "ATT to TT" training programme to impart technical skills to our employees so that they could operate machines, address breakdowns and achieve greater productivity. Frontline Leadership Development Program is a three-pronged approach to building leadership capabilities in officers in factories, wherein the first stage is about managing the shop-floor employees and better understanding of employee relations, followed by leadership essentials and finally, a desire to be an effective trainer respectively. Finally, the fourth is about the Job Fundamentals for a front line leader which will be launched later in 2015. The unique aspect of this programme is its structural design where after each stage, an on-the-job application of learning is implemented, with the support of a coach. 

**With the changing context of business and volatile economy, there is a need for better-equipped blue-collar workforce who are clearly aligned with business goals**

With changing context of business, volatile economy and need for optimization of cost in the FCMG industry, there is need for better equipped blue-collar workforce which has clear line of sight and alignment with business goals. For every new employee, we have a detailed induction that familiarizes them with factory infrastructure, safety, management, work philosophy, shop-floor practices, quality standards, time-attendance related matters et al.

## 'SPARKLE' for blue-collar employees

The India ER team pioneered innovation in capability in 2010 with the launch of 'SPARKLE' - a training & performance management system which is a revolutionary approach to skill

AS TOLD BY SUMIT SEN  
GENERAL MANAGER - EMPLOYEE RELATIONS, HUL

# TRAINING IN PROCESS

## Raychem RPG Ltd.

This company focuses on training its hires and hence improves the skill quotient of its employees

If I hire a permanent workman today for a shop-floor job, he will probably be working with me for several years. Every year, there will be an increase in his salary and a wage renegotiation at the end of every three years. In the next twenty years, his salary would have drastically increased, however his skills & nature of job would have remained the same.

In contrast, other younger companies will either be hiring low cost (market rate) or will be utilizing essentially contract labour in place of paying such high salaries for stagnant skill. Companies that have a huge number of people from the first go, almost end up on the verge of extinction after running for a few decades as they are unable to afford the expenses of the highly paid but poorly skilled workforce. We have also seen a number of examples like Nokia and others which have been forced towards extinction.

To break this pattern, we introduced the concept of SMTs (Self Managed Teams). These teams do not have any supervisors. They plan, monitor and report and do everything on the shop floor. We hire them with a very rigorous recruitment process. We look at their commitment level, their loyalty and their dedication. An educational criterion of 10+2 with Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics is compulsory to be part of the Self Managed Teams. After one year of on the job training, we work towards giving them a diploma in Engineering with our tie-ups with local colleges. This is a four years and six months course with full day classes on Saturdays and Sundays.

The workmen who are part of this program, work for five days a week and attend classes for the weekends. So for that, workmen, at the end of five and a half years, will have an engineering diploma as well as five years of experience. The same collage after the completion of the course does campus placement for other industries as well. This also gives the workmen a chance to go to other companies and industries and explore more options.

We as a company take complete care of our SMTs. To help them have a work-life balance, we put them up next to the plant campus and the company arranges for their fooding, lodging, laundry and other amenities to ensure that their time is optimally utilized rather than having to focus on cooking or cleaning.

We also take care of their interests. As these are a group of youngsters who are active social media users we have even provided for free internet. For example, on the shop floor and in college, the workers are not allowed to use their phones, however during their journey on the bus, to and from the shop floor, we have even provided a wi-fi

connection on the bus. This is our next generation initiative and is a highly engaging activity for our Millennials.

Naturally, at the end of every five and a half years, we have a cycle of attrition where batches of people come and go. This gives us two great advantages. First, the company's costs remain competitive as we are hiring for the same job and the same set of skills in every cycle of hiring. After five-six years that the employees stay with us, their salary has increased.

After which they go back to the industry for better jobs. And we have a new set of freshers again, who work with us and undertake the engineering diplomas as well. Second, we are helping the industry and the country in skill development. Every five years, 150 people are being trained with engineering diplomas at Raychem RPG.

**We do not have any union, any contract workmen, or any employee relations problems at the company. Our Self Managed Teams are doing well**

Out of the 150 employees every five years, we are able to absorb around 20 to 25 percent people in our company or group of companies. In our case, employment and employability go hand-in-hand. We give them a job but we also give them employability for a better and higher paying job somewhere else.

It is due to this reason that we do not have any union, any contract workmen, or any employee relations problems at the company. On the day of induction it is not only the employees, but also their parents who are inducted into the system; since their children will be studying with us for the next four and a half years. It is therefore, not a job, but a shaping of the career.

In terms of engagement, we have a very different drive. Every six months, we have a communication forum with the parents. We have an online grievance redressal system for all workmen. We treat them with respect and dignity, as qualified individuals. As they are a young force, working towards a greater aim, we do not need any supervisor. One complete plant of our company is run 100 percent by SMTs. We hand them over the complete charge and they manage well. 🙌

AS TOLD BY **RATISH JHA**  
SVP & HEAD HR, RAYCHEM RPG LTD

# GROOMING ITS EMPLOYEES

Mahindra & Mahindra

The company regularly upgrades the skill of its employees to make them stand out in the crowd

**B**usiness no longer has an infinite life. To keep large companies running, with a high numbers of employees, involvement of the employees (both blue and white collar) and their ownership is necessary. We have seen a number of examples where companies cease to exist as they are unable to take this crucial step into consideration for their growth. We need to train our employees and make sure they have the right skills for the job. Every employer needs to ensure the safety and security of their employees and does not necessarily need government or union interventions for the same. As an organization, taking into account the thoughts and ideas of employees is as important as their technical skills. We need to develop an environment where the employee not just focuses on his work but also contributes to the growth of the company and hones his/her own skills. To this end, engagement of the workforce is of prime importance and we run a number of programs to bring it to life. Few of them are enumerated hereunder:

**To keep large companies running, with a high number of employees, involvement of the workmen in decision making is necessary**

## Employee satisfaction survey

We conduct employee engagement surveys at the management level as well as the workmen level, to assess the employee morale and to bring to light any issue that he/she might be facing. For workmen the frequency of survey is once in two years. These surveys are conducted on an online system, set up by corporate team, where all levels of employees input their preferences on a 70 question long survey. The results not only helps us gauge the satisfaction level of the employees, but also work as a performance report for leadership effectiveness. Over the last few years, we have managed to get a consistent 4 star rating (on a 5 pointer scale) which translates into almost 80 percent employee satisfaction. Not only this, we wish to work on improving this number year-on-year, with an action plan being made every quarter based on the feedback received.

## Young Mahindra Program

Our workforce consists of 50 to 60 percent of Gen X and Y. Hence, keeping the Millennials engaged is of prime importance. Young Mahindra Program is the forum where youngsters participate to form a parallel governing council. Here, they debate

on company issues and come up with solutions, while also participating in cultural programs and conduct initiatives. Their recommendations are communicated through various programs that we run and are duly noted by senior management.


## Rise i4 Ideation Program

Mahindra has a Rise i4 ideation program where teams and workmen are encouraged to give ideas on improvement under the parameters of PQDSM (P-Productivity, Q-Quality, D-Delivery, S-Safety and M-Moral). Every week, two hours are especially allotted for ideation for all teams where they can brainstorm and discuss about how to bring about better productivity, reduce cost, increase safety at their stage and sustainable operations. Points are given on the basis of these parameters and there is a central competition for the best ideas given. There is a visible projection of the participants in front of the entire sector which serves as a great recognition platform. There is also an encouraging rewards and recognition program for the workmen inside Mahindra Group, where they are awarded on the basis of their ideas by Sr. Management.

## Man of the month & Man of the year

On a monthly, quarterly, 6-monthly and yearly basis, each product unit has a 'Man of the Month' which is an employee that stands out. The achievements of this individual are highlighted with the team and his/her family is invited to join in the celebration. This recognition is not just limited at plant level but also at the sector level where we ensure to felicitate his/her spouse too for their success. Hence this doubles up not only as a recognition platform but also as a family engagement opportunity for Mahindra.

## Mahindra Skill Competition

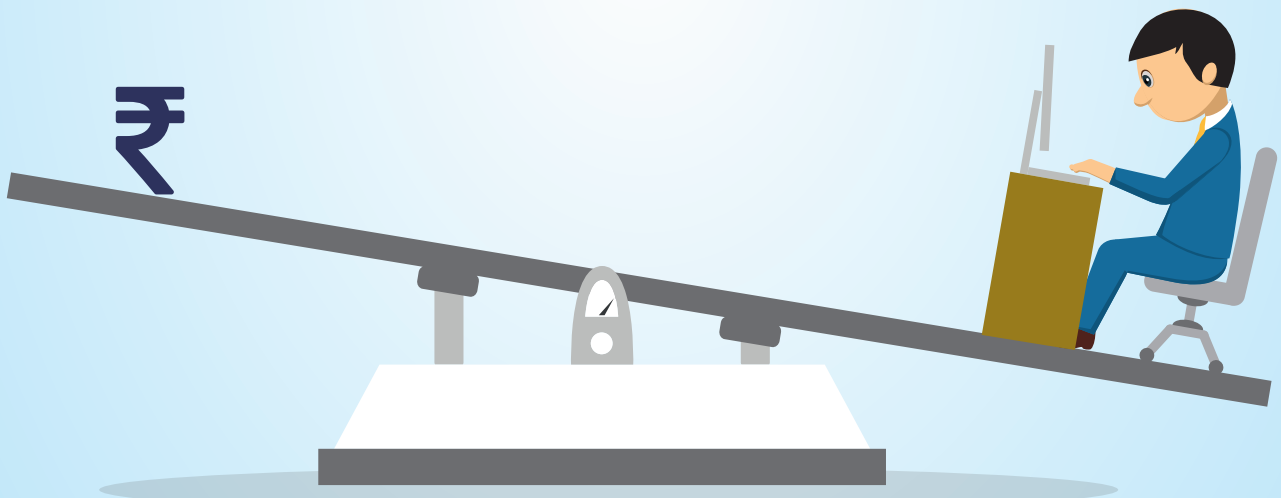
Every year, across the world there is a World Skill Competition wherein Mahindra has been participating regularly. Last year one of our employees got selected and he travelled to Germany to participate at the international level and this year too we have another who would be participating at the competition being held at Brazil. We as a company have also started the Mahindra Skill Excellence Program. We have identified the five core skills for our business and hold competitions at 2 stages every year. 

AS TOLD BY VIJAY KALRA  
SVP, MANUFACTURING OPERATIONS, AUTO DIVISION  
AND

VIJAY NAIR  
VP-ER, AUTO DIVISION & HEAD-AFS ADMINISTRATION,  
MAHINDRA & MAHINDRA

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# NEW LABOR REFORMS: HOW TO MAKE THEM BETTER

When the Modi government took over the reins last year, what began was a much needed push to labor reforms. While that has been partially achieved, industry biggies tell us how the new structural changes affect the trade


## Amendment is important



**Sharad Ganjal**  
EVP HR, Admin, IR and Member of  
Exec Council at Thermax India Ltd.

**T**he government has made a good beginning and some of the states have been proactive in bringing in administrative as well as structural changes. An effective engagement between government, employers and unions will bring in pragmatism to the entire employee relations canvas. For example, the vexed subject of contract labor cannot be wished away by any player. A dynamic economy requires a reciprocal labor market policy.

Employers cannot use contract labor for cost arbitrage only; it has to be for flexibility arbitrage as well. One has to realize that today's Gen Y blue collar employee looks more for income security rather than job security. The major issues around current labor laws are around inflexibility of engagement of labor, multiple labor laws and government intervention in schemes where it's not required.

The Contract Labor Act has to be more of an enabler for generation of employment rather than a restriction. The government also needs to amend Chapter 5B of Industrial Disputes Act to do away with prior permission for retrenchment, closure and layoff for establishments employing less than 500 employees and design the compensation in these cases that is annuity based apart from fixed compensation. The number of labor laws should also be reduced. 


## Upgradation is the key



**P Dwarkanath**  
Director - Group Human Capital at  
Max India Limited

**I**n the recent past, we have predicted global financial uproar, augmented interest and inflation rates, unpredictable oil prices, vague legislative policy, limited resources and sluggish business performance.

Below are some of the key industrial relations challenges and proposed interventions to facilitate IR in the current VUCA environment:

- The labor laws needs to be consolidated, simplified and brought in line with contemporary economic realities. Currently, there are about 44 labor laws under the purview of Centre and more than 100 under state governments, which deal with a host of labor issues.
- There is lack of clarity on outsourcing and engagement of contract labor. For the same, speedy dispute resolution needs to be in place. Also, adequate protection of welfare practices needs to be provided, along with avoidance of unfair Labor practices especially in unorganized sector which constitutes more than 90 per cent of the workforce in India.
- In terms of the Industrial Disputes Act V, Chapter B, especially in the manufacturing sector, retrenchment, closure & layoff cannot be executed even for valid reasons without the prior permission of the appropriate government, which it is essential that the IR policies should be investor friendly. 


## Let employees choose



**Suchita Dutta**  
Executive Director, Indian Staffing  
Federation

**T**he action bias demonstrated by the new regime provides promise for a better future. As per the OECD research, India is one of the most regulated labor markets and yet the least protected one. There are little or no incentives for our youth to move to the formal sector. It's now time to shift the debate to how labor reform can benefit the millions. Here's how to do it:

Let each employee decide if they want to make the 12 per cent employee PF contribution or let them decide if they want to pay their 12 per cent employer PF contribution to EPFO or NPS or if they want to pay their 6.50 per cent ESI contribution to ESI Corporation or use it to buy insurance on a health exchange plan.

The government should also consider reintroducing fixed term employment. The last NDA government has amended the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Central (Amendment) Rules in 2003 to introduce "fixed term contracts" as a separate class of employees but this was not made into law. While the amendment should state that all benefits and conditions for employees under fixed term contracts should be the same as for normal employees, it should be accompanied by amendments to the Contract Labor Act that remove the core and perennial restrictions and remove the 240 day artificial number that has bred litigation. 

## Make it simple and clutter free



**Michael Dias**  
Secretary, The Employers' Association, Delhi

**T**he major issue that employers and employees are facing with the current labor laws is the fact that there are too many laws to be referred to by both employees and the employers. Consequently, implementation becomes difficult. The government is already engaged in consolidating and codifying employment laws, thereby making it easy and convenient for all concerned to understand and implement statutory requirements. The three changes that should be made in the present laws are as under:

Our laws should not be prescriptive wherein minute details with regard to compliances are set out. As our labor laws are so prescriptive, prescribing in full details the possibility of harassment by the Inspectorate is huge, thereby leading to dishonesty and corruption on their part.

The approach of "one size fits all" should be discarded. Although the government has recommended special legislation for small and medium sized industries (employing up to 40 persons in the establishment), much more action needs to be taken in this regard. A separate labor law be provided for large establishments.

The labor administration needs thorough revamping. The labor department is of the firm belief that all employers are dishonest and only seek to exploit. In this regard, the issue relating to prosecution of employers also needs to be revisited. The current practice of prosecuting the MD or other Directors for violations committed by staff or employees who have failed to discharge their duties prima facie creates a fear psychosis in the minds of the employers. Hence, it is imperative that a new approach to the issue of employee-employer relations in India needs to be created. 📍

## Manage the workforce better



**Debi Prasad Das**  
Senior Vice President-HR, CEAT

**I**n this globally competitive scenario, organizations would need the flexibility to manage human resources legally and ethically. From managing workforce and bargaining for minimum productivity, the landscape would gravitate to involve them in the expansion and growth of the organization. There are too many laws, which may not be relevant in the changed business environment. However, organizations have to comply and get inspected by many Inspectors under the Act. More than any real benefit to employees, it is perceived as harassment by government authorities.

In the current scenario, it is extremely difficult to relocate or shut down operations. Hence, organizations have to continue with old operations with high overheads. It is also difficult to retrench employees even if one has extremely valid business reasons. The process of termination of employment, even if within legal framework is extremely long and time consuming. Organizations would be required to have flexi staffing, like allowing contract labor or apprentices to work on machines with the increase and decrease in demand.

The Industrial Dispute Act needs to change to allow organizations to hire, deploy and retrench as per their business needs. Under the current circumstances, if one has to survive & grow, one has to take a different approach. CEAT has taken steps to co-exist and co-create our workplace. In all our new plants, we have diploma holders who man our workstations.

For our old plants, we have significantly invested in employee engagement. Our happy workmen score is beyond 90 per cent. We have adopted a process of joint problem solving and workmen involvement in continuous improvement. 📍

## Laws should be re-invented



**Gayathri Vasudevan**  
Co-founder & Chief Executive Officer, LabourNet

**L**abor laws should evolve with time and the rapidly changing work environment. We see a strategic push and initiatives for reforms from the policy makers recently and foresee positive outcomes from the new amendments. Instead of a plethora of laws, the Labor ministry is planning to have four or five integrated laws. The creation of five codes—wages, safety and working conditions, social security and welfare, industrial relations and employment, training and miscellaneous issues will ease the complexity of regulatory compliances.

The current labor laws are old and obsolete. There is a wide skillgap that prevails in our country and with various immediate projects at hand; the industry needs to move fast on reforms for skill development and job creation. On the skilling front, vocational education should be compulsorily introduced at school level. We also need to create more opportunity and bring-in more sectors to 'earn while you learn' concept to motivate the workforce.

Skill upgradation has to be made mandatory for all industries. Focused involvement of corporate is utmost important towards delivering the reforms. They should work towards skill development of their employees and need to provide new suggestions to policy makers towards bringing in new and meaningful reforms.

Being thought leaders, the corporates can themselves take forward new initiatives for the betterment of work environment. Creating an employable workforce which can ideate, innovate and deliver in-line with objectives of 'Make In India' will be the key towards creating a favourable business climate. 📍

## Make laws uniform for all

**Jacob Jacob**

Chief People Officer, Apollo Hospitals

While we see the move towards creating an impact and making India a global hub, the initiatives towards labor reforms need to be comprehensive and not limited to certain specific areas. What would be more welcome is a global approach to relook at the way workforce skilling happens. One of the major issues is that there are multiple legislations towards achieving the same objective, resulting in overlapping of clauses. Some of the clauses and indices used are archaic and need to be suitably modified for the present day labor and to the current economic scale.

Combining multiple legislations serving the same objective and bringing in uniform laws relevant to the present day would be paramount. Uniform definition of terms, reducing the need for maintaining so many similar records and registers in the era of technology could be vital for businesses. Moving from the concept of minimum wages to fair wages, and at the same time providing leeway for flexibility in workforce reduction or increase for the Business would definitely prove beneficial to the workforce as well as the industry.

Apollo has been working with the industry to push through the reforms - especially those relevant to the Services industry. Being the pioneer in healthcare services in the region, Apollo has always been in the forefront when it comes to labor welfare and pushing for relevant labor reforms in healthcare - we make sure that all our employees get the best in terms of skill upgradation, salaries and labour welfare. However, the change that is expected is not industry specific but something that can impact across industries and the labor force, creating more livelihoods.

## Focus on what's beneficial

**G Raj Narayan**

Chief Mentor for Drona and Founder &amp; MD of Radel Group

The labor issue being an extremely sensitive one, governments of the past were not willing to touch them. The new government, which is fully focused on development and progress on all fronts, realizes that manufacturing growth and productivity as well as foreign investment are stifled by the present labor laws. The skilling initiative is presently targeted at low levels whereas it should holistically address the skilling of manpower for design, manufacture, maintenance etc.

Firstly, the ease of doing business should be drastically improved by bringing in transparency and eliminating bureaucratic delays, cumbersome procedures, multiple returns, reports and harassment etc. especially for MSMEs.

The present labor laws are unfair to the employer wherein it makes it very difficult for an employer to take stringent action against employees indulging in indiscipline, strikes, insubordination and go-slow tactics. This results in financial losses as well as loss of motivation among entrepreneurs, leading to the industry becoming sick. It is almost impossible for industries to close down too.

The cumbersome process of issuing show-cause notices followed by enquiries followed by court proceedings extending over many months, while forcing employers to pay such insincere employees subsistence allowance further emboldens them to raise unreasonable demands from employers. It is common for an employee to switch jobs every year. In this scenario, it is the smaller employer (MSME) who bears the brunt of attrition. Therefore, all organizations employing less than 300 workmen should be exempted from any of the labor laws.

## Upgrade employee skills

**Divakar Kaza**

President-Human Resources, Lupin Limited

There is momentum gained in terms of amendments made to the Apprentices Act, and the Uniform Labor Code. However, the rules need to be notified to the Apprentices Act so that actions can begin at the ground level, and the government is able to get through resistances at different levels.

The Industrial Disputes Act needs to be revamped not only for small and middle enterprises, but also for large industries. Similarly, the Trade Union Act needs an overhaul with respect to multiplicity of unions and memberships, external leadership etc. The Contract Labor Act needs to take into account today's organizational requirements and needs to be flexible in deployments while ensuring fair wages.

On skill development, Lupin has taken lead in trying to bridge the gap of rural, unskilled India with modern day factory requirements. We have tied up with a university to impart knowledge while providing on-the-job skills and also providing stipend and accommodations etc. during training and employment subsequently.



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AMITABH ADHIKARY



# Make In India – Contracting labor pains

Is contract labor the main bottleneck when it comes to making India a global manufacturing hub? We find out

**T**he Make in India campaign is a powerful agenda to transform India into a global manufacturing hub. However, we assume that labor issues will be the bottleneck to its success. Without making any judgment call, let me present a holistic view of the contract labor system so that we can take the good and learn from the bad.

An article in Hindustan Times in March 2014 mentioned that contract workers make up 46 per cent of workforce of India's largest industrial companies. Why do companies rely on contract labor? Businesses need flexibility in

dealing with input costs like labor to maintain operational efficiency. Hence, they would like to keep it variable to remain competitive. However, in order to understand the business need for contract labor, one must understand its legal, social and capability aspects thoroughly before coming to a conclusion. Laws relating to contract labor is codified in Contract Labour (Abolition and regulation) Act 1970 and their disputes resolution machinery is defined in Industrial Disputes Act 1947. While the Contract Labour Act does not define where they can be engaged, it defines the conditions for their abolition. It also defines conditions to regulate

their employment in an establishment. Contract labor can also raise disputes and claim to be regular workman of the Principal employer. This is a win-win mode for the contract labor system. A simple way to have an effective contract labor system is to understand the condition that lead to their abolition and ensure that we don't touch those live wires.

It is clear that abolishing the contract labor system has to be based on facts at the ground level. They include conditions of work and benefit provided to contract labor; whether the process or operation is incidental to or necessary for the industry; whether the work is of perennial nature; whether the work is done ordinarily through regular workmen; whether it is sufficient to employ considerable number of whole time workmen.

A simple way to have an effective contract labor system is to understand the condition that lead to their abolition and ensure that we don't touch those live wires



A quick analysis on the established practice and court judgments will provide framework for self-audit:

**I. Conditions of work and benefit provided:** The Principal employer should ensure compliance to all statutory requirements. They should also ensure provisions of drinking water, wash rooms, canteen, first aid.

**II. Whether the process is incidental to or necessary for industry:** Contract labor should not be engaged in core processes or operations. Many organizations engage contract labor in core processes as there is no prevailing abolition notification of that process. This is a self-defeating game because this practice can trigger assessment for abolition notification.

*The first two conditions are minimum mandate as there are neither precedents nor court cases to suggest that any subjective interpretation has been made on these.*

**III. Whether the work is of perennial nature:** In 2008 case of NTPC vrs Badri Singh Thakur, contract laborers had raised the issue that they were working as electricians for maintenance work of Korba STPS Colony. They argued that the work is of perennial nature and hence the contract should be declared as sham. The court held that master-servant relationship was not established and there was no abolition notification and hence the issue raised by labor could not prevail.

**IV. Whether the work is done ordinarily through regular workmen:** The practices lend room to engage contract labor. Most states have rules of similar pay for similar work to contract labor, if regular workmen also do similar work. This gives them scope to engage contract labor for work done by regular workmen. Courts have moved further and allowed differentiation while deciding similar work. In UP Rajya Vidyut Utpadan Board Case of 2009, the matter for discussion before the Supreme Court was whether contract labor who were operating temporary filtration plant should be paid similar wages as those of permanent workmen who operate the main filtration plant. Court held that the selection method, training, skill level of regular workmen was different from contract labor running the temporary plant and hence similar pay for similar work can't be said to follow automatically.

**V. Whether it is sufficient to employ considerable number of whole time workmen:** There seems to be no Court



## There is a need to find new ways of engaging with contract labor, without building the master-servant relationship but giving “touch and feel” of a caring organization

case or practice, which deals with this condition exclusively, other than the assessments done by State/Central Boards for abolition notification.

*The practices and Court cases suggest that the last three conditions, individually, have not led to abolition notification.*

However, contract laborers have right to raise dispute under Industrial Disputes Act for abolition of contract labor and declaring the contract sham so that they become regular workmen of the Principal employer. Although they may not want to raise dispute for abolition as SAIL judgement of 2001 has clearly mentioned abolition does not mean automatic absorption, demand for sham contract means a straight route to become regular workmen.

In ONGC Case of 2008, Supreme Court held that conduct of ONGC as well as material on record proved that contract laborers were direct workmen of ONGC. On

the contrary, in International Airport Authority Case of 2009, inspite of workers of Airfreight working directly under AAI, Court held that there was no case for declaring the workers as regular workmen of AAI.

So, what is the mantra to ring-fence against the attack of “sham contract”. The tests recommended in Gujarat Electricity Board Case are:

- who pays the salary
- who has the power to remove/dismiss from service or initiate disciplinary action
- who can tell the employee the way in which the work should be done

In short who has direction and control over the employee. If it is the Principal employer, then contract is sham and laborers will have right to absorption as direct workmen.

Rule of law will prevail in a utopian world, but this is an imperfect world. It makes sense to remember that contract labor is mostly on low skill level and their prospect of growth and development is limited. Hence, they resort to means of collective demand, which in most cases is win-lose or lose-lose. Besides, there is a social reality of income disparity between contract and regular workmen and “Equity theory of motivation” works to build perception of Principal Employer being unfair.

We need to have new ways of engaging with contract labor, without building the master-servant relationship but giving “touch and feel” of a caring organization. There are organizations that invest in upskilling of contract labor and involve them in participative systems like TPM. These initiatives improve the employability of labors and takes off pressure for collective demand upon the Principal employer.

Dave Ulrich says that HR would be the differentiator to build sustainable organizations and we are in right time and right place be script this success. 📢

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**AMITABH ADHIKARY** is the HR-Head, East Business HUB at Ruchi Soya Industries Ltd

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NISHCHAE SURI



# The beginning of Evidence-based HR

Evidence-based HR will be the bridge between your people and business delivery strategies

**T**here's never been a better time to be involved in delivering the people agenda. For the first time ever, HR has a massive opportunity to demonstrate the value it adds to the delivery of business objectives, something that HR practitioners have struggled with till date.

I'm talking about Evidence-based HR. Simply put, it is using data, analysis and research to understand the connection between people management practices and business outcomes such as profitability, customer satisfaction and quality. However, while the growth of evidence-based HR is gaining momentum, our KPMG report conducted with the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) reveals this new era of evidence-based people management is by no means guaranteed. Moreover, even while insight-based HR has been around for a considerable time, specific action points to enable research-driven decisions have proven to be largely elusive.

People-related risks that directly impact the bottom-line, which can be in fact be effectively mitigated through predictive analysis, continue to linger. But it's not just about the HR function. CEOs need to embrace and lead this change while at the same time demanding more accountability from their HR leaders on how they are integrating data into their people management strategies to avoid losing ground. Businesses must understand that this is a massive ask that requires long-term commitment and paradigm shift.

It starts with three critical success factors:

## 1) Get Comfortable with Data

This means moving beyond basic HR KPIs to data that can deliver predictive insights about the role of people in your business. To do this well, data scientists should work within the HR function. Indeed, a number of our clients are recruiting data scientists as well as working out how to make the transition from analytical insight to

Evidence-based HR can change the perception of the function's apathy towards business outcomes by demonstrating the link clearly with financial indicators

action. In India, companies are looking towards external consultants to address the capability issue as HR Analytics still remains a scare and nice skill set.

## 2) Hone Your Organizational and Industry Knowledge

You have to develop both your industry and company knowledge. HR is not a generic thing nor is it industry agnostic. You must apply what you know from an HR perspective to your industry and to the specific needs of your company. You should also know how to frame the questions that will direct your analytical efforts.

## 3) Reconfigure the HR Department

HR needs to be reconfigured so that HR and management work together within a model that promotes evidence-based people management. Such a shift will also play heavy on capabilities, cost and resources. As much thought should go into designing the components of an evidence-based operating model:

**Information flows:** Who sees what, when and where?

**Visualization:** How to portray data and insights in a way that leads to action?


**Decision-making:** Where, how frequently and under what governance are things decided collaboratively? Specifically,



decisions that are required or implied by predictive insights as opposed to "rear view mirror" insights.

**Responsibilities and critical people management roles:** Who is accountable for what?

**Capabilities:** What skills are needed to enable and implement evidence-based decision-making? How can HR evaluate the best research within the organization and combine with external management and social science thinking to determine which research is pointing to something really important?


Becoming evidence-based requires an effort of will and a sufficiently changed mental model that will surely be a challenge for many companies. What we need here is a culture and mindset change that goes beyond tracking information to actually uncovering key insights that transform and fortify organizations. 

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**NISHCHAE SURI** is Partner and Country Head People & Change at KPMG India

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# Accelerating leadership development

**EVENT:** L&D Leadership League Masterclass  
**ORGANIZED BY:** People Matters  
**EVENT THEME:** Accelerating Leadership Development: Cracking the Code

Today, organizations are accelerating the processes of developing leadership talent pool and preparing them for future business requirements and needs in a globalized work environment, which sees transformations every day. Knowing the parameters of what is changing and the questions related to how's and why's of the trends, along with understanding the ways in which leadership landscape can be handled is paramount along with how an action plan be made to accelerate leadership development.

Leadership landscape is changing predominantly on four fronts – higher interdependence and need for collaboration, need to increase digital footprint, leadership bench and its

impact on revenue and profitability and negligence towards broken succession pipelines' said Mohit Sethi, Director HR, Learning & Development, Nielsen India, who joined People Matters for the Masterclass Webinar and shared his insights on Cracking the Code on Accelerating Leadership Development. In the face of challenges to the work environment, the steps organisations can take to make the transition are described clearly: Getting high performers to work together, measuring leaders on change orientation and digital fluency, brining leaders to facilitate discussions and considering engagement, aspiration and ability as benchmarks of high potential talent.

#### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Constant transformation change leadership landscape
- Accelerating leadership development to keep up with changing times

# How to revive your recruitment function

**EVENT:** TA Leadership League Masterclass  
**ORGANIZED BY:** People Matters  
**EVENT THEME:** Reviving Your Recruitment: Little Tweaks, Big Impact

Many trends have come given shape to the HR processes and the way these processes are seen. Recruitment has been for long, compared to sales. Recruitment is viewed as a function that sells an organization's employee value proposition, careers and dreams. But if this is the case, then why is it that recruitment teams aren't actually treated like sales teams? Where are the gaps — what do recruiters miss, what are organizations unwilling to acknowledge? These are a few of the questions that were addressed in the TA Leadership League by Aarthi Sivaramakrishnan, Head HR, Beroe Inc, who joined People Matters on a Masterclass webinar on "Reviving your recruitment: Little Tweaks, Big Impacts" and shared her insights on how little tweaks in recruitment procedures can yield big results.

Although recruitment is compared to sales and their process cycles are similar, gaps and differences exist in the way they operate.

Essentially, a recruitment cycle (and also the Sales cycle) has three stages – scouting, contacting and closure. Recruitment procedures' major roadblocks are at the first two levels of scouting and contacting. However, minor changes here and there can lead to significant positive outcomes. Recruiters are aware of the roles and job descriptions of candidates; however, the limitation is their dearth of knowledge of the organizational level matrix. Enhancing recruiters' knowledge about the company can do marvels. In Aarthi's words, "Nothing is more seductive than a knowledgeable recruiter." A major conflict in recruitment is between business and HR both citing lack understanding of each other's responsibilities and constraints. HR business cases, if centred on three metrics – making money, saving money or reducing risk, are more than likely to be comprehended better by the likes of CEOs and CFOs. Reverse negotiation with hiring managers – represent alternate talent pools are good way to fill the hard to fill positions.

Recruiters need to invest in training in hospitality especially while presenting opportunities. Recruiters must realise they are selling jobs, and dreams. It's a service-oriented function.

## 1st July

**EVENT NAME:** People Matters: Talent Acquisition Conclave 2015

**ORGANIZER:** People Matters  
**VENUE:** Crowne Plaza, Gurgaon  
**WHO SHOULD ATTEND:** TA and HR professionals across industries

**EVENT THEME:** Recruitment  
**PARTNERS:** Career Builder, Pearson TalentLens, Jaipuria Institute of Management, Talview

## 23-24th July

**EVENT NAME:** Nasscom HR Summit

**ORGANIZER:** Nasscom  
**VENUE:** Chennai

**WHO SHOULD ATTEND:** CHROs, CXOs, HR Professionals

**EVENT THEME:** The Digital Highway, HR's Journey into the Future

## 6th & 7th August

**EVENT NAME:** HR CONCLAVE

**ORGANIZER:** NIPM Kerala Chapter

**VENUE:** Cochin

**WHO SHOULD ATTEND:** HR professionals

## 19th & 20th August

**EVENT NAME:** Tech HR Conference 2015

**ORGANIZER:** People Matters  
**VENUE:** Leela Ambience, Gurgaon

**WHO SHOULD ATTEND:** Business Haeds, CEOS, CIOs, CFOs, Senior HR Practitioners

**EVENT THEME:** TechHR 2015 will enable leaders and decision makers in understanding how technology and the social behavior it creates will drive the way organizations manage people and productivity.

**PARTNERS:** SumTotal, ADP, Edenred, TMP Worldwide, Video Recruit, CareerBuilder, The Marcus Buckingham Company

# You learn all through your life: Deloitte's Nathan

**EVENT:** Talking Matters: Radio Program with SV Nathan

**ORGANIZED BY:** People Matters

**C**arry your own bag' is one of the mantras to follow in life. This is what SV Nathan, Deloitte India's Senior Director & Chief Talent Officer had to share with People Matters in the fourth episode of the second season of Talking Matters. With 30 years of experience in HR management across industries, Nathan's knowledge and understanding in building and leading high performance teams has won him accolades all over.

Talking about the early influences in his life, Nathan stresses on the importance of education as of utmost significance, along with relevance of building 'self-belief' and 'self-image'. 'You learn from people' is what Nathan lives by and asserts that his life experiences taught him everything. Reflecting on the power of 'I can' and crediting 'hard

work' for his success, he states that both these attributes were the important elements of his foundation.

Reminiscing his career of over three decades and the organizational success he achieved, Nathan attributes the importance of performing quality work, viewing challenges as opportunities, proactively seeking opportunities, along with patience as principles that helped him throughout. Nathan describes that as an HR professional, the most important things which truly contributed to his life and still do are learning (from people and experiences), listening (more than one speaks – adding life to conversations and vice versa), and communicating (from the top level to the lowest level in an organization). For Nathan, his experiences in diverse industries have taught him that potential talent is like a 'nugget waiting to be picked'. It is important that talent is identified and engaged for a true transformation.

## Upcoming Online Events

### 6th to 10th July

**EVENT NAME:** HIPO Week

**ORGANIZER:** People Matters & Right Management

**VENUE:** Online

**WHO SHOULD ATTEND:** HR, OD & Learning professionals

**Sponsors:** Right Management

### 21st July

**EVENT NAME:** TA Masterclass

**ORGANIZER:** People Matters

**VENUE:** Online

**WHO SHOULD ATTEND:** TA and HR professionals across industries

**PARTNERS:** Talview and Mancer



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SANDEEP SONI

# How to welcome aboard the new hire

An effective onboarding program makes new hires feel valued and involved and is a good bet for long-term retention

**I**t is said that any new recruit, irrespective of the level, decides to stay or move on within the first seven days. I have personally experienced this several times in my professional life. The first few days are like the seasoning period when either the new joinee gets accustomed to the new environment and smoothly fits into the groove or might just reject it outright. The reasons could be many and they usually go beyond the pay and the perks.

This makes it imperative for any organization to have an impactful onboarding program in place. I am not an advocate of having something that is too methodical; instead it should focus on creativity and genuineness while giving him the relevant information. For instance, if someone comes to our home, do we always go as per the plan – 7'o clock tea, 9'o clock breakfast, 12.30 lunch and so on? No, we don't. Instead, we let our guest feel at ease and make the person comfortable. As a good host, we would try and accommodate our guest's preference. Similarly, I believe that there can't be a fixed routine to the onboarding program. Having said that it's equally important to have a plan in place so that there is no chaos and the new member feels excited to join.

It's not that only an entry-level executive would feel lost in her new job, but even senior employees could feel the same way if her onboarding is not done the right way. For instance, if a senior executive joins from a competitor, then it is likely that he would have several apprehensions. So now how do you welcome this new person? Should you start with how the competitor has had all wrong practices in place and your company has got it all right? Or should you make him feel so important on the first day that you show him how you were just waiting for him to come and change the fortune of your company? I have seen many of my industry colleagues being either very



## In any organization, the culture is built over years. So how can one expect a new employee to embrace the culture in a few weeks?

humble or too regimented and cold. In my opinion, the new person should be given some time to settle down in the organization. Meanwhile, you can also take time to evaluate him better.

Here are some of the steps that I propose for an effective onboarding program, which should be beneficial in retaining employees and achieving business goals.

### Soak in the company culture

Every company has two aspects of the culture. One is a set of rules framed

by the company that every employee is expected to follow and the other is a set of unwritten rules. It's important for the new employee to understand both and at times it may take a year to get things in place. I know of a large IT company which deputes a co-worker to take the new employee through the established guidelines and also the unwritten rules. It's like you have moved into a new city or a country and how a friend would take you through the brighter and darker sides of the city. This is a great idea for making people feel comfortable in your

organization. In such a scenario, it will be much easier for the new employee to adapt the new culture.

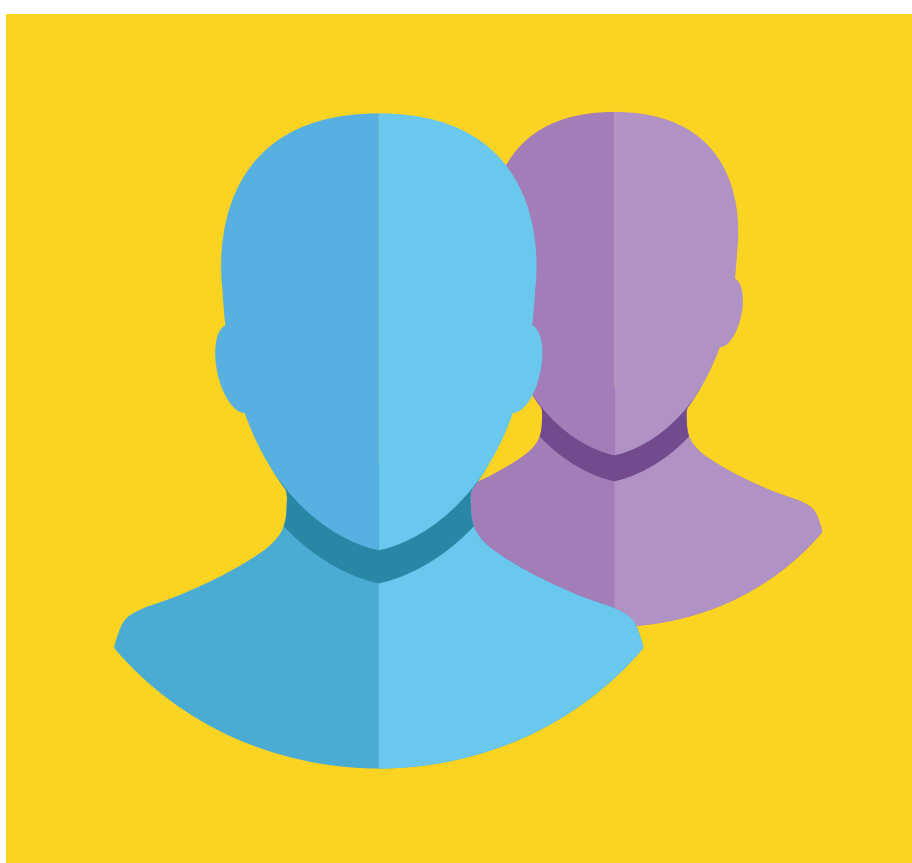
I strongly recommend fostering social relationships with co-workers in making employees feel comfortable from the initial day at work. Winning organizations consider these relationships as enriching as they make new hires feel invested in their work and the company. As part of the onboarding, companies may organize a team lunch or an evening outing on the first day, which will allow the new hire to mingle with her team, acclimatise with the company culture, work ethics and build positive working relationships. PepsiCo is one such company that I can recall that has developed an online portal called “Pre-start”. Here the new hires can find useful information on company values, culture, organizational structure etc. In addition, it has also assimilated social media to make them feel like a coherent group.

### Try gamifying the process

A new trend gaining momentum across industries is using gamification for the onboarding process as it keeps the new hires engaged through challenges, competitions and contests. The passing and sharing of knowledge between the company and the new recruit becomes much easier with this. Onboarding becomes a fun-filled activity and the experience tends to linger on. Like everyone remembers the first day at college, people also keep the memory of first day at work afresh for long. This whole engaging exercise has a positive end goal. At DBS bank, for instance, to engage the new hire’s interest level as well as create curiosity around the induction program, the organization has built Stereoscopic 3D effects on select screens along with engaging videos, personalized welcome messages from department heads help in personalizing the onboarding program as well as boost performance and retention.

### Treat it like a never-ending process

One common folly that most organizations tend to commit is that they assume that an onboarding process ends after the new hire’s first week on the job. Rather, successful onboarding programs can even span over several months to reap its benefits. The duration of onboarding programs vary in terms of the organization. While for some, it may last for a week, for others it may stretch to four months. In any organization, the culture is built over years. So how can




## Assigning a manager/mentor to track employee’s initial months on the job helps to understand their comfort level on the job

one expect a new employee to embrace the culture in a few weeks? Every person has his own traits and would need a personalized approach to this.

Assigning a manager/mentor to track employee’s initial months on the job helps to understand their comfort level on the job as well as how things are done at their workplace is also an effective way. At different stages, the assigned manager/mentor can ask the new hire about his experiences with the hiring process if the induction met his expectations or if he is facing any challenges or issues. This will help the organization in understanding the level of engagement of the new hire has developed. Every onboarding program has to be continually fine-tuned at different stages to keep enhancing its impact and benefits and most importantly, a successful onboarding process is never really over. L’Oreal is one such organization that supports an extended

onboarding program. It has a two-year, six-part integration program called “L’Oreal Fit” which builds lasting relationships as well as develops employees for bigger challenges.

There are no set onboarding designs or approaches that will work radically for any organization. However, from a business standpoint, it makes no sense to invest on hiring a talent, pay an exorbitant remuneration, lose productivity and then finally lose the employee because the relationship fails to take off on the right foot right at the beginning. To avoid such pitfalls, invest on your people who will help you reap the rewards of a stellar onboarding program. 

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**SANDEEP SONI** is the Director and CEO at Hero MindMine



# Yes, CEOs need HR but...

As the business world changes, there is an urgent call for transformational leadership in the HR function

By David Lobo and Pankaj Bansal



**D**o businesses really need HR or has this function become obsolete? This has been one of the most deliberated topics in the corporate corridors recently. While half of the corporate world predicts that 'It's time to split HR' (Ram Charan, HBR, July 2014), the other half still advocates the importance of this function, citing the journey of evolution of HR as evidence. Well, both sides have points to support their argument and at this point it seems difficult to pick sides. So what does the future hold for the HR function?

The urge to find an answer to this question took us to the Chief Executives' den, to understand their views. After all, they hold the reins of businesses in their hands. Multiple interactions with CEOs of conglomerates, FMCG giants, major infrastructure companies, large BPO outfits, electronics majors and some of India's largest PSUs turned out to be eye-opening and revealed some unexpected perceptions.

When asked to share their experiences with the HR function and how far the fun-

## CEOs want the HR function to develop courage and character if it wants to be a credible advisor

ction is from playing the role of "strategic consultant" (that it is expected to play), the CEOs surprisingly shared converging views. They shared two critical qualities that the HR function needs to develop if it wants to be a credible advisor to the CEO:

**Courage and Character.** This was the area that CEOs were most concerned about. They felt that there has been a steady erosion of employee confidence in the HR functions of their respective organizations. The unanimous cause for this erosion of confidence was cited as "a lack of courage and character".


CEOs believe that HR managers need

to have the ability to stand up for a cause versus just toeing the line. They also felt that the function needs to take more accountability for its actions and own its failures. This increasing lack of courage and character has resultantly led to a gradual diminishment in the level of innovation in the field of HR. CEOs want their HR leaders to display strength of character and be a fearless voice of reason within their companies, driving positive change in culture, talent and organizational capability. This transformation will reinstate the HR function to its rightful place and that is of a credible business partner.

CEOs believe that in order to effectively partner business, the HR function needs to have a strong business perspective. The ones we interviewed pointed out that many senior HR leaders today do not understand their businesses as well as they should. This has limited their strategic capability, a deficiency that has in turn spread more broadly through the function.

Chief executives need their HR leaders to better understand the metrics, cycles and markets of their business to be effective talent scouts and capability builders for the organization. In times of business challenge, a well-informed HR professional is able to contribute equally to a solution instead of defending transactions — a behavior that is often observed.

CEOs also want HR professionals to be employee advocates and impress upon their peers the importance of considering the human angle in business decisions. To do this in a credible way, they need to first demonstrate a holistic understanding of the entire business equation. HR leaders need to better leverage technology and shared services for transactional HR work and spend an increasing amount of time getting their hands into the 'business grease'. HR leaders have often argued that over-emphasis on business partnership has a negative impact on employee advocacy. While a lack of employee focus is certainly not being proposed here, the HR function needs to realize that credible employee advocacy comes from a deep understanding of the business.

In a business world of great change, the need for the HR function has never been greater. There is, however, an urgent call for transformational leadership in the HR function. 

### ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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# LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

HARVARD BUSINESS PUBLISHING | WILSON LEARNING | FRANKLIN COVEY | DALE CARNEGIE | VYAKTITVA

Leadership is one of the driving factors that determine organizational effectiveness and progression. In the VUCA world, the required leadership competencies have become more comprehensive than ever before. Therefore, leadership development transcends the traditional concept of development of just an individual

# MORE THAN INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT

The emergence of leadership as a perennial organizational challenge hints towards failure of companies to frame an effective and enduring leadership development plan

By Pallavi Sharma

As per the Human Capital Survey 2015 conducted by Deloitte (with participation of more than 3,300 organizations), leadership was revealed as the top most pressing concern; 86 per cent of the surveyed HR and business leaders cited it as one of the most critical organizational challenge. This is the third consecutive time that leadership has soared as number one talent concern. Most companies, as highlighted by the survey, believe that they have a very narrow leadership pipeline.

As companies continually find themselves caught in the web of complexities, leaders today find it extremely challenging to keep up with the staggering pace of changes that are taking place at an unprecedented scale. "Today's leaders have to be capable of operating in a world which is rapidly shifting, Interdependent and Non-linear or SINning. (Yes, we are all greater SINners than the generation before!). Paradigms of development that worked in a more predictable, linear stimulus-response, independent kinds of situation no longer work. Any workable Leadership Development Strategy can afford to ignore this fact only at its own peril," emphasizes Venkatesh Iyer, Senior Partner at Vyaktitva.

**For leadership development to succeed, there are some key elements that drive continued learning and sustainable development such as insight, reiterated motivation, practical learning and accountability**

According to many leadership development practitioners, the four leadership competencies that have become critical for organizational success are:

- Cognitive skills which include analytical and critical thinking, global perspective and creative capability
- Execution skills that comprise of customer focus, planning, program management, and requires leaders to be result focused
- Relationship skills that requires the ability to influence, engage and inspire, communicate collaborate, manage people and build relations
- Self-management skills which can help establish

trust, adaptability, and love for continued learning and development.

With growing recognition of the importance of all of these leadership competencies for organizational effectiveness, there's much more to leadership development than development of one individual. Today there's need for global context setting, analysis of how to leverage technology, identifying frame of reference in terms of the areas for development, etc. Therefore, the learning & development space has seen a significant proliferation of methods when it comes to leadership development. Some of the upcoming trends that can effectively accelerate leadership development and result in organizational effectiveness are:

## Action Learning

Through personal experience we know that learning is more effective when people pick actions rather than passively listening to lectures in a closed room. "Action learning defined broadly is a learning experience that includes a problem, an action, a group of peers and the crucial piece: built-in reflection," says Sumit Sahni, Director-Learning Solutions and Delivery, Asia-Pacific, Harvard Business Publishing Corporate Learning. Action learning is therefore an experiential learning process that contributes to leadership development.

For leadership development to succeed, there are some key elements that drive continued learning and sustainable development such as insight, reiterated motivation, practical learning and accountability. For all of these to come together, it's crucial to ask questions that generate insight, self-reflect and monitor, and proactively take actions. "After exposure to a new idea, leaders participate in action learning, where they act and then reflect. Then they move on to another new idea, with another action learning opportunity. This sequence gives learners a variety of ways to internalize the material" reveals Sumit Sahni.

## Vertical Development

Traditional horizontal development method that is focused simply on progression of knowledge and skills supported by refinement of those skills is now being replaced by vertical leadership development method. Through this, leaders can construct meaning out of everyday experiences in a way that enables them to apply their competencies more effectively in achieving individual and organizational goal.



Vertical development model supports a leader to shift his/her paradigm from one level to the next by providing them with challenging opportunities to get an experience-based development opportunity. Like Action Learning, vertical development also calls for consistent reflection on those experiences. Vertical leadership development completes building capacities and competencies by involving real world connect through everyday experiences; the model involves looking at development as a process and not an end. "Leadership development through this model does not hinder achievement of deliverables, but rather, like changing tires on a running car, takes place uninterrupted while meeting everyday challenges," says Venkatesh Iyer, Sr. Partner, Vyaktitva.

Vertical development is commonly perceived to appear in three stages; the first stage is when a learner is seen as a dependent conformer from which s/he moves to becoming an independent achiever and then grows to become an interdependent collaborator. This model today is emerging as a collaborative and participatory network-centric trend in leadership development and is a growing method adopted by organizations for a stage-wise development program.

### Collective Leadership

The timeless challenge of leadership is to bring together a group of diverse individuals and create an environment where they can work together effectively towards common and shared goals. It is only when such an environment is created that the third stage of becoming an interdependent collaborator in vertical development is achieved.

Collective leadership represents a shift away from an exclusive focus on individual change agents and highlights the importance of more collaborative approach. This model of development takes place through a genuine partnering of skills, competencies, knowledge and attitude. It involves collaboration of not just human, but also of cultural, and technological resources.

Unlike other models of development where sole focus is on individual development after which the leader exerts authority over those under him/her, collective leadership accounts for shared responsibility, authority and accountability. As a result, the entire process translates into a democratic model that is highly transparent. If developed well, co-leadership, as against individual leadership, can thrive on collective intelligence which embraces diversity of people and perspectives.

"Shared or collective leadership is a great way to ensure business continuity



## Focusing on development of millennials as leaders with their diverse perspectives will be integral to leadership development as a whole

and minimize the risk of unexpected leadership crises created by vacancies at the top. The success of a collective leadership structure depends on human relations. If your leadership team effectively applies these human relations principles, it will go a long way in getting results," says Pallavi Jha, Managing Director and Chairperson, Dale Carnegie Training India.

### Developing Millennial Leaders

The New Leader's Council and Virtuali recently published a report which underscores the fact that we will see a growth of 30% or more of Millennials become the majority of workers. Further, the report notes that 50% of Millennials are already in leadership positions. Yet, 64% of those surveyed felt "unprepared" when assuming their leadership roles and report difficulties managing people and resolving conflicts. Now, as large numbers of Millennials, or Gen Y, move into the workplace businesses are likely to encounter leadership development crisis. They are the first generation to have been immersed in technology for most parts of their lives, which is likely to have a significant impact on the way they communicate as leaders. As companies now look towards collective leadership development, focusing on development of Millennials as leaders with their diverse perspectives will emerge to be integral to leadership development as a whole.

"For long term sustainability of organization, top management needs to take the lead and pass on skills and knowledge and other critical leadership acumen to emerging leaders; a clear co-owned development and learning pathway has to be developed so as to outline direction towards this long-term solution to the leadership crisis which is likely to emerge," emphasizes Lavleen Raheja, CEO & Co- Chairman, Franklin Covey – India and South Asia.

### HR Needs to take the Lead

As new challenges and trends are emerging in the leadership development space, HR now needs to reinvent its role and take the lead in leadership development. It needs to keep the long-term goal in mind and work towards creating a sustainable pipeline of leaders.

"HR needs to help emerging leaders gather support for the solution within the organization, and create alignment for action by cutting through complex clutters," argues David Yesford, Sr. Vice President of Wilson Learning Worldwide. For HR to facilitate leadership development within their organizations, they need to emerge as trusted advisors who are approachable. They need to help emerging leaders make sense of complexities that arise during the development process. " 🗨️

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SUMIT SAHNI

# Designing action learning for impact

For leadership development professionals, the real impact of action learning lies in their ability to facilitate reflection

**M**ost of us have heard the famous Confucius quote, “I hear and I forget; I see and I remember; I do and I understand.” I like to extend this quote with another line: “I reflect and I learn.”

One of the key ways people learn is by being exposed to cycles of “doing and reflecting”. We call this process “action learning”. But as leadership development professionals, how do we design and implement powerful action learning experiences?

## What is Action Learning?

Action learning is not the same as action learning projects. There are many organizations that include action learning projects in their leadership development programs. That is, they assign business projects to teams of learners as a way for them to put their learning to use. While action learning projects are a good idea in theory,

**Action learning is a learning experience that includes a problem, an action, a group of peers and built-in reflection**

they can be hard to implement. They require management commitment, project sponsorship, high quality projects and strong governance and they can be derailed by a variety of organizational challenges.

Action learning is a process which involves solving real challenges. This is best done when learners work with peers to analyze the problem, develop innovative solutions, implement actions and reflect on the outcome. Defined more sharply, action learning is a learning experience that includes a problem, an action, a group of peers and the crucial piece: Built-in reflection.

## What Does Action Learning Look Like?

Action learning can include innovative methodologies beyond business projects. At Harvard Business Publishing, we have developed a range of innovative action learning assignments that are relatively easy to implement. These include well-designed assignments such as case study competitions, simulations, teaching others and peer problem solving.

Let's take the example of a case study competition. Typically, participants are divided into teams and each team is tasked with solving the same problem covered in the case study. Teams identify the actions they would take to solve this problem. Then, each team presents its “solution” to other teams and a panel. As participants listen to the presentation, they are exposed to the different ways in which a problem can be solved. If facilitated well, this assignment can be an extremely powerful experience.

Such assignments offer space for reflective learning that leads to creativity in bringing about behavioral change at the work place. These assignments also build a safe environment to explore new and unconventional ways of thinking, doing and achieving different solutions. In this process new ideas and opportunities emerge which help in shaping leaders at both personal and professional level.


## How Do You Facilitate Reflection?

The real impact of action learning lies in our ability to facilitate reflection. On its own, action may not lead to learning, but reflecting on the action does. Let's go back to our case study example. If a team has presented its case study solution and heard from the other teams, we can hope that each participant has reflected on the ideas and outcomes presented, but we can't be sure. The process should be followed by a reflection session after the presentation -- the crucial “built-in reflection” piece. Asking the right open-ended questions helps each learner in his or her personal journey and locks the learning so that the participants are better able to apply it in real world situations.

A few questions to ask:

- What was my approach to solving this problem?
- What approach did other team members use?
- What could I have done differently?
- What did I learn?

## When and Where Should We Incorporate Action Learning?

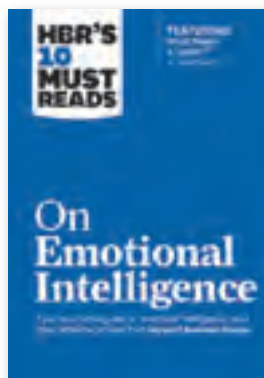
Action learning should not be treated as a separate section of a leadership program, but rather integrated with reflection opportunities at logical points in a program. A good rule of thumb is to add an action learning assignment after each conceptual learning milestone is finished and before the next conceptual learning process begins. After learners are exposed to a new idea, they then participate in action learning, where they do and then reflect. Then they move on to another new idea, with another action learning opportunity. This sequence gives learners a variety of ways to internalize the material as you expose learners to a wide range of action learning assignments in a program and also increase the number of structured reflection opportunities. 

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**SUMIT SAHNI** is Director-Learning Solutions and Delivery, Asia-Pacific at Harvard Business Publishing Corporate Learning

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DAVID YESFORD

# Reinventing HR to develop leaders

HR should help the leaders “buy” development the way they want to buy, NOT how you want to “sell”

**A**cross organizations, HR has taken a lot of hits for not being up to par. In a recent survey conducted by Deloitte, only 8 per cent of Indian CEOs rated their HR (including Leadership Development) as fully prepared to reinvent themselves and deliver the required business impact. This is slightly higher than the global average of 5 per cent, but is still low. These same CEOs rate the reinvention of HR as one of the Top 5 priorities. To us, this is a huge opportunity for HR, specifically in L&D. There is a need to come up with real strategies and approaches rather than arguing that HR & L&D have to better their actions.

The new or “reinvented” HR need to understand what the business is truly trying to accomplish and take charge of delivering real value to developing leaders who are their internal customers. While it is all well and good—even honorable really—to strive to be a trusted advisor, what does it take to earn that status with internal customers in today’s challenging environment?

The three key principles that point the way to becoming a trusted advisor to developing leaders are:

## 1. Creating the trust in TRUSTED ADVISOR

When HR professionals play the role of consultants to developing leaders, it is known that if they don’t have a strong, trusting relationship with their internal customers, they will never be seen as a trusted advisor will struggle to be successful. First and foremost, creating a trusting relationship requires both a mindset and a set of actions. An advisor must truly believe that his/her job is to help business leaders (and therefore the business) solve their problems. The HR agenda needs to be specifically and directly focused on their agenda. In addition to having the right mindset, L&D and HR leaders need to demonstrate their sincere interest in helping the customer. The discipline of relationship selling is to know how to show empathy, how to demonstrate credibility and competence, and how to anticipate concerns.

It is this mindset and set of actions that a consultant must have to approach the process with authenticity, passion and positive intent. It is about who you are and what you do and is communicated by actions focused on the customer and their needs. This leads to trust.

## 2. Facilitate business leader’s “buying” process

The best advisory process enables the business leader to buy. The antithesis of the trusted advisor is the consultant who believes that if s/he just follow these five (or seven or nine) process steps, he/she will be successful. The action of a trusted advisor is to help leaders “buy” development the way they want to buy, NOT how s/he wants to “sell”. The discipline required to facilitate the business leader’s buying process is:


- Helping them discover the urgency behind their need and defining the problem that needs to be solved.
- Helping them see which elements of a solution have value for them and which don’t.
- Helping the leader gather support for the solution within organization, creating alignment for action.
- Helping them buy cannot become successful by following a consultant-centric process; it requires a two-way conversation between the trusted advisor and customer to understand the problem and to recognize the urgency.

## 3. Making sense of complexity

The good and the bad news today is that we have almost an infinite amount of information available at our fingertips. The responsibility of a trusted advisor is to help the business leader make sense of this complexity, cutting through the clutter to find the right solution that will solve their problem. The discipline of the trusted advisor is to link their solution to the advantages and benefits for developing leaders.

## Applying the discipline

Simply put, while all HR consultants take action, many take the path of least resistance, doing what is comfortable or what they think is necessary. However, it takes discipline to become a trusted advisor, and once HR and L&D earn it, it is a coveted position that provides greater business-level value to business leaders and to the organization.

There’s a need to take ownership for creating trust. Facilitate the customer’s buying process. Make sense of complexity. These efforts will produce ongoing, long-term value based relationships that present multiple opportunities for HR to help their organization. 

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**DAVID YESFORD** is the Sr. Vice President of Wilson Learning Worldwide, has over 29 years of experience developing and implementing human performance solutions.

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LAVLEEN RAHEJA

# Shaping Millennials the right way

It is important to groom Millennials to take over responsibility in the best manner possible

A study by the Association for Talent Development found many of those born between 1980 and 2000 lacked “soft skills,” such as diplomacy and communication. As large a number of Millennials, or Gen Y, move into the workplace, it is believed that businesses will be encountering a leadership development crisis. The New Leader’s Council and Virtuali have published a report which underscores the impact that changes in the workplace with a growth of 30 per cent or more of millennials becoming the majority of workers. Further, the report notes that 50 per cent of millennials are already in leadership positions. Yet, 64 per cent of those surveyed felt “unprepared” when assuming their leadership roles and report difficulties managing people and resolving conflicts.

Millennials today tend to change jobs more frequently, as they are constantly looking for opportunities to progress in their career. Having an employer who invests in them and gives them the opportunity to develop new skills can make them more likely to stick around. When asked what makes an employer attractive Millennials have consistently rated leadership development and opportunities for training and development among the most important employer benefits.

**Leaders need to think differently and act differently, they need a new mindset and tool sets while leading**

## Existing Leadership Skill Gap

There is a significant gap in terms of the skill set that millennials possess while entering the workforce. With Laser sharp focus on growth, quarterly results and profitability, the need to have talent is becoming higher and bigger. Talent is a combination of work related skills, life/soft skills and other character traits. The current workforce coming into organizations needs inputs on all these fronts, most importantly on soft skills and that is where organizations are not prepared. Work skills and value alignment inputs prepare the young workforce well but they seem to struggle on overall effectiveness and productivity when it comes soft skills. These skills are business acumen basics, communication & presentation, writing skills,

ability to lead self effectively, manage resources efficiently, business mannerisms and etiquettes, extrapolation skills, team working skills, problem solving abilities etc. Organisations, small or big, corporates or PSUs, seem to be struggling on this. Currently, one of the biggest initiatives in the country is on the skilling front and faster this gap is filled, faster will organizations become effective, stable and aligned to principles of growth and development.

## Developing Millennial Leaders

The priority on development of millennials is at the helm of affairs. Leaders need to think differently and act differently, they need a new mindset and tool sets while leading. The overall responsibility of leading teams is a critical role and to do this based on merit is the challenge. Leadership is not only an art, but also a major science that can be learnt. So there is huge focus on developing millennial leaders on the critical skills.

FranklinCovey India has made serious investments in the same and has clearly chalked Learning & Development path for the organization’s millennial leaders. All of these are led by the Board of directors themselves. Development of millennial leaders needs to be led by the senior/top management as their focus. Creating accountability to build leaders is the key to long term organizational sustainability. A co-owned development and learning pathway needs to be drafted together with resources and investment put together for the same. Young leaders should be empowered in an environment that is open to mistakes; trust is the crucial driver when it comes to development of the millennials.

## Millennial Leadership Development

Development of millennials will require patience. With Gen Y, it’s important to keep the content short, crisp and relevant, offer regular feedback and appreciation, and throw challenging opportunities their way. Some other points to keep in mind while training millennials to emerge as effective leaders are: Co-Ownership of responsibility; trust that allows for taking risks and making mistakes; empowerment of the emerging leaders by providing them with opportunities and challenges; need to remain open to and embrace new ideas; support of individual identity and creativity; bestow freedom to take decisions and delegation of tasks is integral in the grooming process of leadership development of millennials.

Many organizations create exceptionally good products and systems, but fail due to a narrow leadership pipeline. Having a strong pipeline of leaders results in lowered vulnerability. Further, creativity & innovation become a part of natural culture; adversarial behaviours reduce and team work increases. Organizations like these truly grow with superiority and sustainability and achieve greatness. 🌟

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**LAVLEEN RAHEJA** is the Chairman & CEO of Franklin Covey India and South Asia

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PALLAVI JHA

# Leadership is all about being accountable

It is not only about sharing authority, but also accountability

**T**he prime challenge of leadership is to bring together a group of diverse individuals and create an environment where they will work effectively towards common goals. Collective leadership is more complicated than the abundant, oversimplified literature on collaboration you would have read about. Today, new paradigms of organizational hierarchies are emerging and with it, new styles of leadership are becoming more acceptable. It is up to human capital specialists to confront these new challenges with new thinking. The Dale Carnegie Complimentary Workshops across India will be addressing these dynamic leadership challenges in a result-oriented way.

Collective leadership involves not only sharing of authority, but also accountability. The latter can often be ignored when there is a crisis situation or results are not achieved. Dale Carnegie Training India recently released a comprehensive Employee Engagement report where we discovered that one of the few ways to get a group of people to take collective responsibility is to engage them in their work and in a larger purpose. A significant 61% of employees were willing to put in extra work hours to complete a task when they were engaged.

**Shared or collective leadership is a great way to ensure business continuity and minimize the risk of unexpected leadership crises created by vacancies at the top**

When we apply this knowledge to the paradigm of collective leadership, we can see remarkable results. Shared goals and synergized strategy are by products of “employee buy-in”, which in turn is the result of engaging people together. Shared or collective leadership is a great way to ensure business continuity and minimize the risk of unexpected leadership crises created by vacancies at the top. Some of the important tools to attain the same are:

- Establish clearly defined goals at the start with benchmarks for expected performance and allocated tasks among members.
- Invest in developing strong communication,

people and team engagement skills.

- Assess levels of employee engagement at regular intervals.
- Set up regular coaching and feedback mechanisms.
- Collectively celebrate success.

These steps help decision-makers stay informed, red-flag issues and tackle them at an early stage. When the senior management follows the path of collective leadership, it also benefits the entire company in achieving the shared vision. However, although collaborative approaches can help develop passion and engagement among individuals, the need for accountability and clear execution of strategy remains sacrosanct. You need to find a way to blend both so that the organization is networked and collaborative, yet remains focused on execution and accountable for delivering on strategy.

A word of caution though: It is common to see teams practice collective leadership on a high note to begin with but lose out mid-way through everyday tasks and ego-clashes. The two challenges here are inaction due to lack of direct responsibility and stagnation due to lack of consensus. A better alternative would be to start small - many firms prefer to test out collective leadership on a small scale before rolling it out globally.

In our 12 years of working with premier companies in India we have emphasized that, assessing and developing employee engagement is vital for igniting workplace enthusiasm to achieve business results.

Stakeholder collaboration defines collective leadership, but achieving this without a particular person taking charge is easier said than done. Often, when Dale Carnegie Training has partnered with companies for leadership development, we encourage them to set up a robust problem-solving process as a way to turn the challenges into opportunities. When groups of people need to work together inclusively, adopting a rotational responsibility makes employees more open to collaborate. However, the buck, which should always stop somewhere, has to stop at the top.

If an organization accepts collective leadership, it can benefit from the increased amount of employee empowerment and sustainability that come with this model. Placing trust and responsibility in the hands of employees encourages them to step up and be leaders. Flat organizational structures are the norm but distributed authority also implies greater accountability. In the end, successful collective models with engaged stakeholders at the helm have the ability to turn average managers into exceptional leaders. 🌟

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**PALLAVI JHA** is the Managing Director and Chairperson at Dale Carnegie Training India.





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VENKATESH IYER

# Vertical Leadership Development: A Road Less Traveled

With leadership models going through a transition, there is a growing need for vertical leadership forces to come into play

Going by the change in model of leadership programmes, today, factors such as technology, pervasive information availability, low information arbitrage, shortening windows of opportunity, shifting of balance of power to the customer are all serving to demand increasing adroitness and accuracy of decision making.

In our experience over the last 15 years of engaging with Leadership teams, there are four basic principles that come into play when we talk about deep development of Leadership Capacity:

- Real world connect
- Journey, not an event
- Interdependent Learning
- Changing the tire on a running car

The idea was to create a sustainable development initiative to verify, build and accelerate the true Leadership Capacities of hand-picked High Potential Leaders on the verge of their next Leadership curve at a MNC FMCG Company.

**Modifying, building and accelerating capacity of people invariably require deep examination of not only your own self but also the environment**

Here is how the initiative was designed and implemented:

**Real world connect:** Applying learning in the real world is vital to its sustainable adoption. At the FMCG Company, we helped design the Developmental Program around a high impact business problem. We built around the key elements listed below using them as tools that would help deliver the business objective.

- Analytical thinking using Interdependent Systems thinking.
- Appreciative enquiry using the tool of Meta-Questions
- Collaboration in the context of empathy and shared leadership

- Impactful Conversations
- Building Learnability

**Journey not an event:** Modifying, building and accelerating capacity of people invariably require deep examination of not only your own self but also the environment and the stakeholders. Understanding of some of these patterns, more often than not, leads to internal restructuring of belief systems and value ranking mechanisms that can push up performance.

**Interdependent Learning:** The world has gone from independent thinking, working and leadership to a model of interdependence in all three. Exploiting opportunities for learning from each other are vital parts of the design which also encourages each individual to relate to his individual capacity and use that to meet the overall group objective.

**Changing the tires on a running car:** Talent Development is akin to changing the tires of a running car. This essentially means that the design and execution of capacity development has to take place without hindrances to the achievement of normal KRAs and deliverables. When time is added to this design, the period between capacity development and its full expression comes to be known as a gestation lag. This is a period of trial and error, frustration and failures and learning to be perseverant despite odds. The trick to handle this lies in building reality into design. We tackled this by creating necessary solutions which were:

- Sponsorship at the highest level,
- Creating a pull and pressure to perform the program,
- Creating platforms at the highest levels to showcase outcomes and capacity development

However, this is not always enough. The real differentiator lies in creating Sufficient Conditions which helps journey-farers to transit from the tyranny of the Paradigm of OR(daily/monthly/quarterly fire OR Capacity Development) to the Paradigm of AND (daily/monthly/quarterly fire AND Capacity Development).

## Bringing It All Together

One of the keys to make this approach work is to bring it all together into a unified design. And this is what prompted us to create the Triple Helix Design. The four principles delineated above are woven into the three strands of Self, Group and Shared Leaderships and then implemented in a simple, absorbable manner. The Company has implemented this design successfully for the last four years now and has renewed its commitment to this initiative for the next three years. 🌱

*(With inputs from Chitra Chaturvedi, Associate Partner, Vyaktitva and Smita Bhandari Sahay - Associate Partner Vyaktitva)*

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**VENKATESH IYER** is the Senior Partner at Vyaktitva



# The Vyaktitva Coaching Model

1



2



- 1. Self Leadership** – An Inside-Out journey which allows an individual within a Leadership Team to examine deep structures and mental models
- 2. Shared Leadership** – The diversity in a team is leveraged to build the leadership team's performance, accountability and warmth towards each other by enabling non-silo'd, systemic approaches.
- 3. Group Leadership** – Connecting, inspiring, creating a collaborative and joyful community within each of their leadership pyramids focused on performance.

*These 3 strands of the **Triple Helix of Leadership™** interplay to create a sustainable and high performing Leadership Team. The process typically involves structural change that evolves the Leadership Team's ability to perform at significantly higher levels*

3

## Enabling the Leaders of the Future – Leadership Journey (12 months)



**Vyaktitva**

## Jobs of the week



**ABC Consultants Private Limited**  
Head- Industrial Relations & HR  
**Location:** Bengaluru / Bangalore  
**Job ID:** 16996429  
**Description:** Managing overall site HR, knowledge of handling industrial relations, experience of working on large manufacturing plants etc.



**Sampoorna Computer People**  
HR Manager  
**Location:** Bengaluru / Bangalore  
**Job ID:** 16704757  
**Description:** Should have managed a factory environment, Should have knowledge of statutory compliances like ESI, PF, TDS, factory act, Labour etc.



**Vitasta Consulting Private Limited**  
Assistant Manager- HR  
**Location:** Pune  
**Job ID:** 16974171  
**Description:** Responsible for the daily administration of plans and systems related to employee compensation & performance, development and administration of corporate policies, procedures and management directives.



**Cynosure Corporate Solutions**  
Manager- HR  
**Location:** Chennai  
**Job ID:** 15237393  
**Description:** Responsible for recruitment of Security personnel for entire Chennai Hub (T.N, Pondy & Kerala).



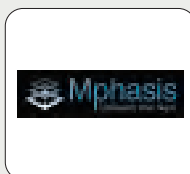
**Volantis Technologies**  
Manager-Human Resources  
**Location:** Bengaluru / Bangalore  
**Job ID:** 17026085  
**Description:** Minimum of 10 -12 yrs of progressing profile in Human Resource Management with atleast 5 years experience in Engineering Captive centre environment.



**Roland and Associates**  
HR Business Partner  
**Location:** Bengaluru / Bangalore  
**Job ID:** 16939160  
**Description:** Strong verbal and written communication skills, Must have excellent analytical and problem solving skills.



**Trinau Talent Solutions Private Limited**  
HR Manager  
**Location:** Mumbai  
**Job ID:** 16854102  
**Description:** Recruitment cycle, Induction & Orientation, Performance management, Training & development, Employee engagement etc.



**Mphasis Limited**  
Assistant Manager - HR Business Partner  
**Location:** Bengaluru / Bangalore  
**Job ID:** 16136681  
**Description:** To identify the needs of the employees & work towards making the environment conducive to work & Mphasis Values are communicated.



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## Jobs of the week



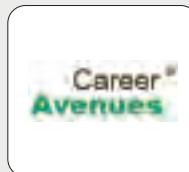
**TeamLease Services Private Limited**

HRIS Coordinator

**Location:** Bengaluru / Bangalore

**Job ID:** 16918211

**Description:** Looking for an HRIS Coordinator who is responsible for processing both hard and soft copy forms and performing data input into various HR related systems/applications.



**Career Avenues India Private Limited**

Deputy Manager HR

**Location:** Mumbai

**Job ID:** 16950181

**Description:** Responsible for Talent acquisition, Performance management, Statutory compliance, HR MIS etc.



**Qualcomm India Pvt Ltd.**

Sr. HR Representative

**Location:** Hyderabad / Secunderabad

**Job ID:** 16965950

**Description:** Candidate will provide guidance and support on various Human Resources matters to various stakeholders located at Qualcomm's Hyderabad office.



**JP Morgan Services India Pvt. Ltd**

Recruitment Coordinator

**Location:** Bengaluru / Bangalore

**Job ID:** 17023210

**Description:** Manage Recruitment Flow – including high volumes of requisition creation, proactive candidate care, complex interview coordination and contract administration for hires up to Associate level.



**Careerist Management Consultants Private Limited**

Manager HR

**Location:** Bengaluru / Bangalore

**Job ID:** 16961240

**Description:** This role will provide a full generalist HR support to its respective regional zone, HR Strategy, operations, development and implementation Processes etc.



**dEEVOiR Consulting Services Private Limited**

HR Generalist

**Location:** Mumbai

**Job ID:** 17025387

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TANVI GAUTAM

# What is wrong with you!

Can spam teach you something about employee engagement?  
Read to find out



**I**s this you sometimes? Come on. Confess. I am trying to figure out why you sometimes do what you do on LinkedIn. Recently, my friend and internationally celebrated social media expert Gautam Ghosh published a post on stopping spam on LinkedIn. Indeed, it is getting rather irritating to have to share your birth date to know your work forecast for 2015 or solve that math puzzle to show how smart you are or better still share your mobile number publicly (data privacy anyone?) for a whatsapp group on HR practices. And I agree with him completely.

What got me thinking though was why is the number of people who are engaging in the above activities in the thousands (35K in one instance)? Any brand would give their left arm to get so much engagement with such little investment. Not to mention those of us who blog or tweet always keep an eye on the number of views, shares, retweets and comments as such. I think three things could possibly explain what is going on here and the lessons maybe worth adopting in our workplaces.

What can spam teach us about employee engagement in the workplace? Read on to hear my hypothesis:

**1. We need play just as we need work:** Maybe that math puzzle is that play. Too many organizations believe that work is to be done with the feeling of drudgery and exhaustion. Most of us pretend as though we were brain surgeons in the midst of a complicated procedure. Lighten up! The world will not end if you don't sell a few computers/soap/(insert your product line) today! Not for most of us at least. I find companies such as LinkedIn do an amazing job of inserting play into the work day be that through contests, talent nights or just Food Fridays. We all crave play for we get such little of it. Maybe that explains the math puzzle.

**2. We love to know what is next:** I can't think of one logical reason why



## As people, we love to mix work with play as it helps us deal with the drudgery of work

anyone thinks that giving their date of birth (not even year) should allow someone else to forecast their career prospects this year. On the contrary, if the boss found you engaging in this behavior online, that would positively send your career spinning in another direction! That said perhaps we love to believe that forewarned is forearmed and so we are willing to put our bets on seemingly impossible and highly improbable predictions of this sort. Take that you big data analytics gurus! We don't need the rigor you are promising us at least not with our careers anyway.

**3. We crave community and we fear being left out:** What else can explain sharing your cell phone number on a public platform! Unless the people who are commenting are fake and this is only a call to action to inspire others to submit their cell number as well. I don't even have time to check messages from people I know from

whatsapp leave along random strangers accounting close to 35K or more! In our house, the phone remains the most ignored object and I tell people the fastest way to reach me is twitter - 140 characters or less!

So what is your excuse, errrr...I mean hypothesis for why people engage in the above mentioned behavior? Whatever your excuse, don't expect me to participate in any of it unless of course you could tell me which character I am in the Matrix movie trilogy just by the first 3 letters of my name! (Please say Trinity - the leading lady!). ☺

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**DR TANVI GAUTAM**

is the Managing Partner of Global People Tree

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DR. MRITYUNJAY KUMAR SRIVASTAVA

# Building a winning team

A manager can no longer assume a 'know-it-all' attitude. He needs to be flexible and disperse decision-making and information



Every year, Wipro Limited bestows the “Best People Manager” award to 60-65 managers. It is a very prestigious award given to people managers who have performed extraordinarily well on various parameters. One of the criteria for winning the award is how these managers build winning teams. We wanted to find out how they managed to keep attrition at minimal over the years and so we talked to more than 40 of these award-winning managers.

Here is the story of one of them: This manager had 50 members in his team, with six of them reporting directly to him. His team hardly witnessed any attrition—less than 5 per cent over a period of three years—despite opportunities galore. When prodded, he said he would make it a point to go to the houses of his six direct reports on their birthdays and marriage anniversaries with a bouquet of flowers, bring them to the office in his car and then would drop them back home in the evening.

These gestures not only made the direct reports feel special and wanted, but also touched the hearts of the family members. There was a time when one of the DRs wanted to resign, but he changed his mind as his spouse and parents did not want him to leave this manager.

In fact, many of the best people managers interviewed told us that they noticed even their DRs behaved sensitively with their team members. Hence, the working environment of the team was very positive and constructive despite differences of opinion amongst them and with managers. Does it mean that the way a leader interacts, relates and deals with team members impacts the morale of the team and consequently their behavior?

By spending quality time with their DRs, these people managers were able to listen to their unstated needs and this did wonders in terms of the team being highly motivated, creative and productive. But, is it necessary to spend so much time understanding your team members? In

this technology age, we are paid to deliver results, not to build relationships so why bother? The foundation of any successful team is mutual trust and relationship amongst the members, which can't be built without demonstrating the sentiments. While individual brilliance is important, results are achieved by a group of people who have distinct mindsets, emotions and attitudes. And therefore, we need to build relationships and develop trust to get the job done in the best possible manner. Obviously, at times this requires the manager to make some personal adjustments and sacrifices. For example, it was the manager who had to sacrifice a few minutes of extra sleep, take pains to make his colleagues' day memorable at the cost of him spending that time with his family.

The deeper analysis of the dialogues with the managers brought out some of the softer but important elements of building winning teams. These are:

**Be genuine:** Genuineness always touches others. Being genuine, of course,

When team members start believing that the manager is truly trying to help them, they don't mind the manager being tough with them



requires a lot of courage and effort from the managers, but it does give results that can even pleasantly surprise them. When team members start believing that the manager is truly trying to help them, they don't mind the manager being tough with them. On the contrary, when a manager tries to fake authenticity and is caught, the credibility is lost forever and that's the end of the relationship and the team camaraderie.

**Build relationships:** One can buy technology and software, hire the best resources, but can we buy relationships? Relationships are built over a period of time and require investment of time, energy and at times a little money. Once a relationship is built, people don't mind going the extra mile without hesitating for a second. They feel empowered and make sure the manager and the team is successful. It's only when the team succeeds that the manager is successful. Instead of saying "I can do things alone, I don't need anybody's help", if the manager starts spending quality time with the members without any preconceived notions and supports the team to achieve what they need, a winning team is built.

**Be tough on the issue and not on the person:** In one of the organizations, once a senior manager got angry with some of his team members and made this comment, "We need to have MBA graduates to strategize things better and execute them successfully". Obviously, the team members were not MBA graduates. How do you think the team members would have reacted? Hurt or delighted? In all probability, this kind of provocation by a manager could trigger the beginning of the end of building a winning team. Remember, when we collectively attack the issue creativity flourishes and people glue together, but when an individual is attacked, antagonism takes the front seat.

**Build an open culture:** Culture, simply put, is a way of life. Within the team, the manager influences the culture to a great extent. Actually members follow the manager closely—not just what he/she says, but also what he/she does. When the manager helps build the place where people share their thoughts with conviction and not because of convenience, the work environment reflects positive energy and joy. Work no longer remains an obligation, but an enjoyable activity and as a result achievement becomes a habit.

**Be a Listener:** Are managers good listeners? Do they listen to the feelings of the team members? Or do they simply assume what the members want and consciously or unconsciously impose things on them? One can always debate that in a fast-paced



## When managers help their people experience success, team members are really excited to go the extra mile for exceptional results

competitive environment there is little time to listen to the members. But, the fact is that when speed is the essence of the day, listening to the non-verbal cues of the members make them feel at ease and hence they trust the manager better. Consequently, they contribute more for the cause of the team.

**Create Winners:** In Transactional Analysis parlance, when the manager starts on a note "I am okay but team members are not okay", chances of creating winners in the team becomes bleak. On the contrary, when the manager thinks "I am okay and others are also okay" chances of creating winners increases multifold. It's the genuine faith of the manager in his team that they "can do" helps the team members achieve superlative results. Dr. Arnold Mol in his book "Creating Winners at the Workplace" suggests that when managers help their people experience success, allow them to make decisions for themselves and recognize their efforts genuinely, team members are really excited to go the extra mile for exceptional results.

**Be a Coach:** Even winners need coaches who are able to ask them the right questions, nudge them to constantly learn new skills to be ahead of the competition.

It is, therefore, important for managers to be effective coaches to unleash the untapped potential of their teams. When the members in the team see that they are growing both personally and professionally, they give back more in return exuding positive vibes all around. Certainly, a happy team is any day a more productive workforce.

While the above mentioned points look simple, the manager will need to be committed and flexible for a successful approach to building a winning team. A manager can no longer assume a 'know-it-all' attitude and control everything. Information and decision-making are dispersed. Plans need to be flexible to be adapted constantly to changing conditions. Managers must help their team members understand the organization's mandate and direction. This in turn helps members feel empowered to achieve their goals using the best of their capabilities and judgments. Only when hearts and minds are aligned miracles happen and winning teams are built. ☺

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# Blogosphere » ASIF UPADHYE



There are five characteristics that recruiters need to look out for while hiring individuals who are emotionally intelligent

## Hiring emotionally intelligent individuals

**A**s you sow, so shall you reap. If you look around, you will find a fair number of studies that positivize the need for having leaders with high Emotional Intelligence (EI) at the workplace. Based on the principles of top-down management, organizations with such leaders will be emotionally intelligent as a whole.

But, how about looking at this from a different perspective? Instead of focusing on the leaders to inculcate these competencies and then trying to pass these on to the subordinates, what if we were to make EI a parameter on the basis of which new recruits are hired?

From the recruiter's point of view, academic performance or work experience of applicants is not really [not only] a sufficient indicator of whether they should be hired for a job. Recruiters are constantly on the lookout for that 'edge', which can set an individual apart from the large pool of applicants. In our opinion, this 'edge' could be equivalent to elements of 'Emotional Intelligence' as defined by Daniel Goleman who, defines this construct as 'the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships'. While hiring individuals who are emotionally intelligent, there are five characteristics that recruiters need to look out for.

**Self-Awareness:** An individual who is self-aware is the one who has an accurate understanding of one's strengths and weaknesses. This is an important quality to possess as it is likely to make the individual more receptive to feedback from others. Being aware about one's areas of improvement enables the individual to learn from one's past mistakes as well. Being self-aware also has a positive impact on one's interpersonal relationships at work and allows the individual to unders-



### Unlike IQ, Emotional Intelligence is an evolving construct that can be learnt and inculcated over a period of time

tand others keeping the same process in mind.

**Self-Regulation:** The ability to manage one's emotions and adapt to the needs of the external environment constitutes the second element of EI. At the workplace, the individual is likely to face several deadlines and work pressures. In order to deal with these effectively, s/he needs to be patient and rational while taking any decisions. The ability to adapt to the demands the external environment places on the individual is an asset that recruiters look out for while hiring.

**Motivation:** It refers to the ability of the individual to strive towards achieving one's goals and initiate actions that will benefit the organization in the long run.

Recruiters look out for individuals who are highly motivated.

**Empathy:** It is the ability of an individual to understand how others think or feel about a particular situation from their point of view. This skill comes handy when the individual is interacting with diverse groups at the workplace. Working in a diverse set-up is one of the biggest challenges that employees today and being empathetic is a skill that is considered imperative in such settings.

**Social Skills:** It is the ability to manage one's relationships, communicate effectively and understand the networks within the organization. The nature of work today expects individuals to constantly interact with one another and get the work done efficiently in teams. Being socially skilled gives an individual the advantage to work in such a dynamic environment.

There are certain psychometric tests which aid recruiters to measure the level of EI in an individual. While interpreting scores of such tests, one needs to keep in mind that unlike Intelligence Quotient (IQ), which remains fairly stable after a certain age is reached, EI is an evolving construct that can be learnt and inculcated over a period of time. If you are building an organization for the future and your employees are your strength, then having the 'right' talent will go a long way and help you [as a leader] to avoid a series of people issues. After all, who wants to hire a falcon and then train him/her to become a mouse? Eh? ☹️

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**ASIF UPADHYE** is the Chief Fun Officer of Never Grow Up


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