

people matters

VOL VII / ISSUE 1 / JANUARY 2016

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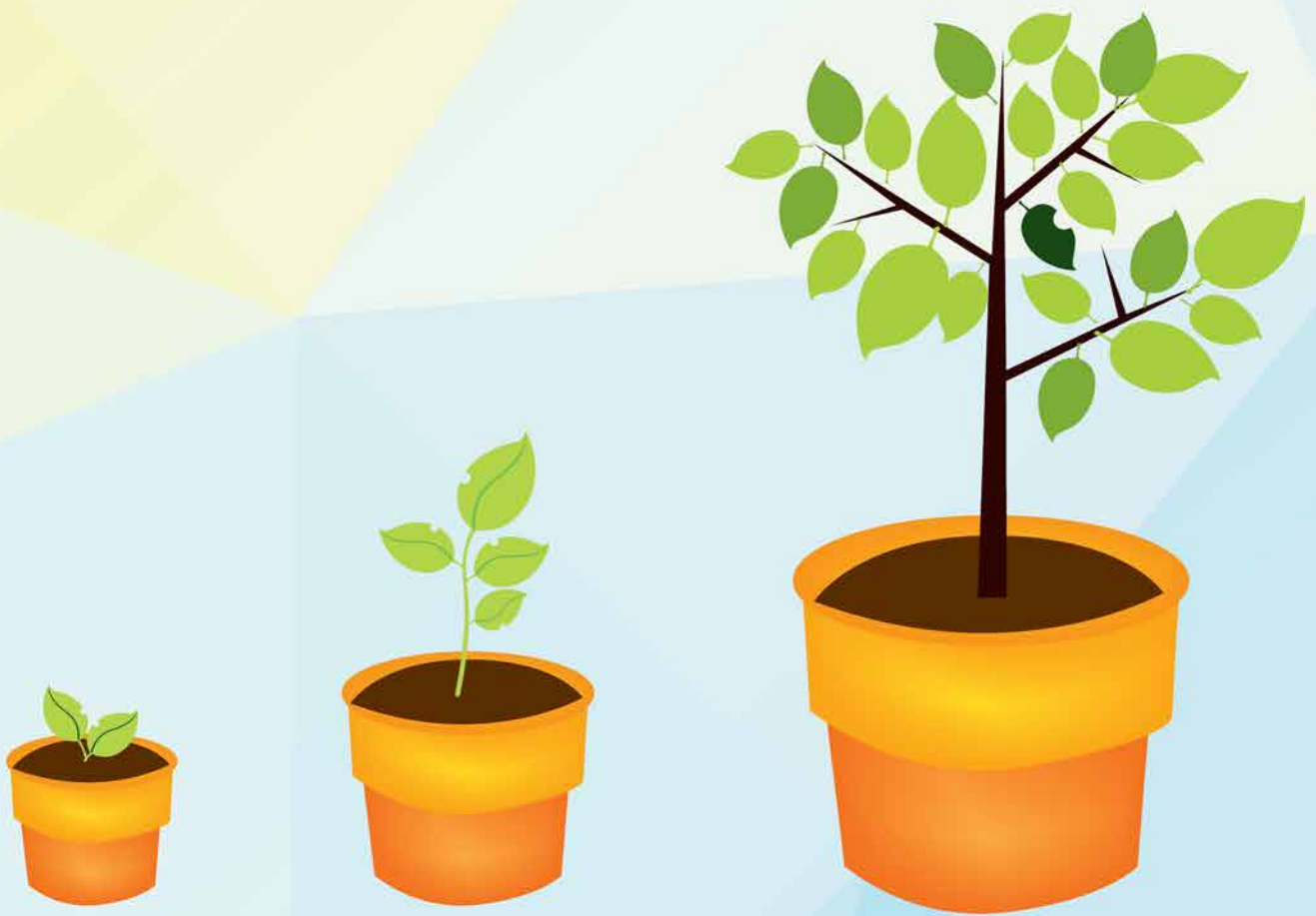
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Bring it on in 2016!

It's that time already - 2016 is here. The year is already being planned by most of the companies. And the reality is that we are anticipating more disruptions, innovations and unprecedented business outcomes in all domains – whether technology, HR, learning or IT. With more support initiatives and aegis by the government to the Indian business set-up, the year can see some interesting things happening. The year 2015 saw some great investments by the government – from 'Skill India' to 'Start-up India; Stand-up India' campaigns; and these have given the much needed boost to the Indian organizations to proliferate on the global front.

And in all this, the people factor retains its position as the number one driving factor and a catalyst that pivots the economic and business universe. It is people, and only people, who can take such disruptions and turn them into opportunities, connect the dots and make a difference in such a dynamic and unpredictable business environment. The year 2015 saw a renewed emphasis on the employee-employer relationship, which encompassed all domains – talent, hiring, employer branding, rewards and

recognition, retention and internal mobility. And this trend is stipulated to get more intense in the coming months of 2016. The CEOs who understand this clearly, need their people function to operate beyond the traditional 'business as usual' HR. The traditional approaches have ceased to apply anymore and companies need to innovate all the more to take people and talent challenges head-on. The message from business is clear this year that the people function needs to lead these as they are the most impactful to business.

It is interesting to see that for organizations, the talent agenda for 2016 comprises employer branding and culture building as two most impactful levers for attracting, managing and retaining talent. For our Cover Story this issue, Talent Agenda 2016, we asked business and HR leaders of top companies to share their talent agenda for 2016, the talent 'big rocks' that they will look at accomplishing and their biggest priority in planned talent initiatives. And from making employees talent ambassadors, to ensuring that the best talent stays with companies & focusing on leadership development, organizations are planning on doing it all this year.

For the Big Interview this time, we have Josh Bersin, Founder and Principal at Bersin by Deloitte, who shares remarkable insights on the evolving HR trends and the importance of experience designing in learning. The issue features a Special Story on India Skills Report 2015, by CII, Wheebox and PeopleStrong, which showcases the huge employee reservoir of India and not only the employability factor of the youth from across the country but also portrays the needs & expectations of the employers. This time, we also have a Supplement on 'Driving Rewards and Recognition, which provides enriching perspectives on how organizations are personalizing and contextualizing their R&R programs to create a culture of employee engagement.

A Happy New Year to all; this year, be bold and take risks.

Esther Martinez Hernandez EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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THE COVER STORY (BEHIND THE SCENE)



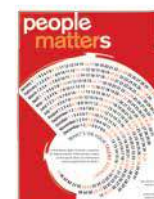
1 hmm...weight lifting?



2 not really, dussehra is over!



3 ya this looks like it! just add some color



4 ya nice! but why did you add this color



yippie!

THE BEST COACHES HAVE A SECRET, THEY TREAT EACH TEAM MEMBER **UNIQUELY.**



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By Ester Martinez & Jafar Rehman

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Emotional Intelligence and Interpersonal Skills	E S Srinivas	Sept.1 - 3	Bangalore
Business Analytics	SK De & Girish Punj	Sept.7 - 9	Bangalore
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Letters of the month



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DECEMBER 2015 ISSUE

Big Interview: Analytics changes the discussion

Amazing insight on how Analytics can be leveraged for HR related processes such as performance management. With more data available these days and new technologies like IBM Watson, the possibilities are limitless. For example one could link the social media data related to employees (such as LinkedIn) with other factors such as age, job profiles, qualifications, etc., to determine the right job even before on-boarding a new employee. This way, the cost of retention is reduced and also chances are that you can expect better productivity from the new hires.

-SHAILESH TEKURKAR

Blogosphere: Making good losers of winners

It has always been a delight to read Oscar's writing in the magazine and on the website. Never failing to touch important points, he once again focused on a point which others don't even think of for even once. What a wonderful point when he says "These fallen angels need appropriate assistance or they could become demons in the workplace – and their home". One cannot disagree with his views and takes on the matters he speaks and writes about. It has been a great loss for the people he worked with and for the readers who read his articles.

-PRATIK CHAWLA

News Feature - The labor pains of the 'Shrinking' Dragon

China had to put a stop to its one-child policy sooner or later. Now the picture portrayed gives a mix message and it looks like it has done more damage than good. Companies opting to shift their manufacturing units is one of the many outcomes amongst many of the consequences of such a policy. The damage however has been done and it may take more than the normal time to get the required workforce in place. People are undoubtedly the most important resource of an organization and for the country as well, but it seems that China did not think about the economic ramifications of the policy.

-ANUJ SHARMA



Wearables at the workplace

Earlier, I didn't know much about wearables, but after reading Abhijit Bhaduri's article, I think this is where the future of workplace will transcend to – mobile wearables, location based technology and data to extract insights.

-VINAY JOHAR



Donna Morris @DonnaCMorris

Thanks for opportunity to share @Adobe story -celebrate failures as much as successes <http://bit.ly/104H1A3> PeopleMatters2

James Parsons @JamesWParsons1

How tech has globalised the skills market in last 10 yrs. Watch my interview with @PeopleMatters2 @arrowsgrouprec <http://bit.ly/1ILHOK5>

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Michele Franklin @MFrankli100

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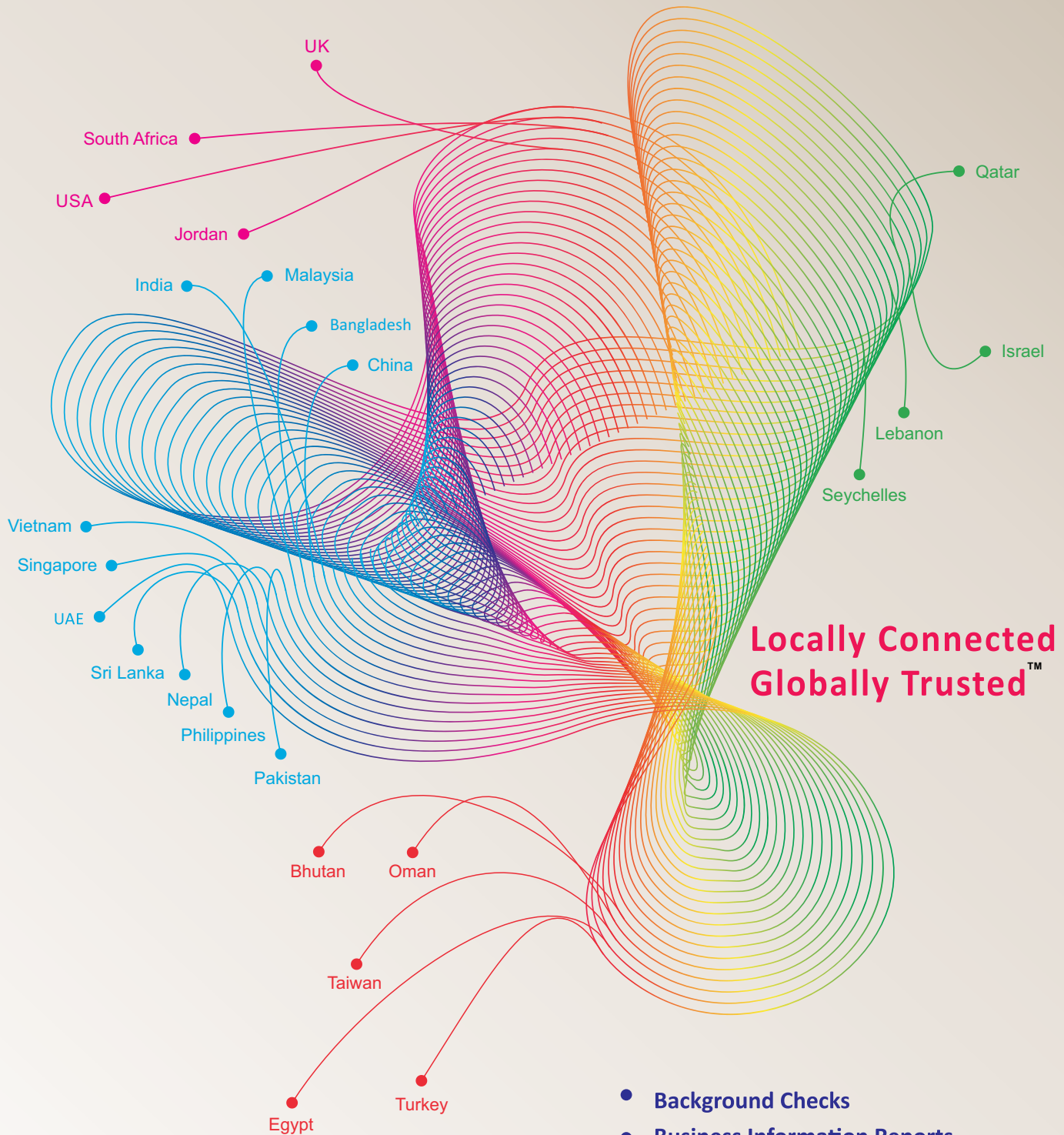


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CORRIGENDUM

Volume VI, Issue 12, December 2015

1. We regret the error in the title of the column by Ravindra Kumar on Page 72 in the Special Story "Architecting the next curve together". The correct title is 'Employees should be connected to the overall business purpose'
2. We regret the mis-spelt name of Naveen Narayanan on Page 34.
3. We regret the interchange of the pie charts on page number 14 in the "Quick Reads" section. The question "Whose input would matter to you the most while taking up a job?" should appear under the section "Who takes the final call?", and "How do you want to be contacted after submitting a resume?" should appear under the section "How they want to be reached?"



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IN NEWS

Chennai floods cause loss of over Rs 15,000 crore

According to the Associated Chamber of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSO-CHAM), Chennai floods have resulted in a financial loss of more than Rs 15,000 crores. "Unprecedented torrential downpour in Chennai and other parts of Tamil Nadu has led to total chaos, thereby creating an atmosphere of uncertainty and panic not only for the trade, industry and other commercial activities but especially amid common individuals who are bearing heavy financial losses to their properties," said DS Rawat, Secretary General of Assocham, in a statement. Telecom operators alone have suffered some Rs 300 crore of losses. Out of the Rs 300 crore losses estimated by Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI), "Rs 100 crore is on account of network restoration and Rs 200 crore on account of revenue losses over the past seven days," according to Rajan



Mathews, Director General of the GSM industry lobby body.

According to SMERA, a credit rating agency, the micro and small industrial sector is estimated to bear a loss of nearly 840 crore every week due to floods. "On a national scale, SMERA estimates that the loss incurred by Chennai's industrial sector can potentially shave 0.07 percent off the Indian Industrial Gross Value Added (per week). A fast-tracked approach to get the industry back on track is the need of the hour," the agency said.

PLACEMENTS

IITs not to disclose salaries from this placement season

IITs have decided not to reveal any pay package figures from the start of the coming hiring season. This decision has come after the IIMs have received complaints of peer and parental pressure on students. Prof Sudhir Kumar Barai, Chairman, Career Development Centre at IIT Kharagpur said to a news agency that "We have noticed that only the highest salary is discussed. But people forget that the average salary which an IITian gets is far less than the fattest one," Barai said. However, he added, "we can't stop students from making any disclosures on their own."



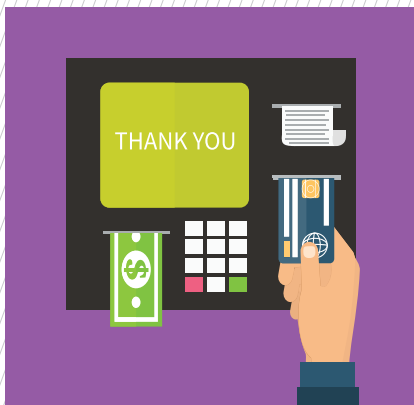
PERFORMANCE REVIEW

No annual increment for non-performing govt. employees

The Seventh Central Pay Commission has recommended that the Central Government Employees should not be allowed to earn their annual increments if they do not meet performance criterion. It has also called for the introduction of Performance Related Pay (PRP) for all categories of central government employees. "This will act as a deterrent for complacent and inefficient employees. However, since this is not a penalty, the norms for penal action in disciplinary cases involving withholding increments will not be applicable in such cases. This will be treated as an efficiency bar," it said in the report.

Employees can now withdraw EPF money without employers' permit

The Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) revealed that employees can now withdraw money from their EPF corpus without the approval of their employers provided important details such as Aadhaar unique identity number and bank account number are linked to the universal account number (UAN). Also, the employer must have completed the know-your-customer (KYC) verification. The new development which delinks the employer from the EPF withdrawal pro-



cess is expected to come in effect soon as the state-run retirement fund manager has issued orders to implement the rule across all its field offices in India at the earliest. Until now, employees had to take the approval of their employers to withdraw their EPF corpus, which often led to delays.

INDUSTRY UPDATES

Young employees signal an end to trade unions: Survey



According to a survey by Deloitte and the CII, India's young workforce is choosing not to be affiliated to any employee union, signaling the end for the trade union movement in the country. The survey which saw the participation of over 8000 employees includes over a dozen large firms including Mahindra and Mahindra, Tata Steel and Hindustan

Unilever. It also covered contract workers as well as permanent employees. The survey revealed that over 60 percent of young workers in the age group of 20 to 35 years chose to stay away from collective bargaining mechanisms that unions offer. The top ten central trade unions in 2013 represented around 100 million workers, which was up from just 24 million in 2002. "The latest generation of workers represent a new class of blue-collared employee: one shaped with a deeper appreciation for technology, higher learning orientation and ample opportunities to grow," the report's lead author, Vishalli Dongrie, Senior Director at Deloitte India said.

India to ratify WTO trade facilitation pact



In the World Trade Organizations (WTO) meet scheduled to be held at Nairobi, India is expected to ratify the agreement aimed at easing customs rules to expedite trade flows. The ratification will be in line with the government's

emphasis on attracting more investments. The government is aiming at improving its ranking in the World Bank's "ease of doing business" report from 130th this year to the top 100 in the next year. However, the Agreement will only become operational when two thirds of the members ratify it. So far, 53 countries have ratified the agreement out of the 163 member countries. When ratified, the agreement is expected to infuse 1 trillion dollars into the world economy besides creating about 21 million new jobs.

India Inc to see 10.5% salary hike in 2016

Indian companies are expected to increase base salary by 10.5 percent in the next year, according to a survey by Mercer. While this increase is expected across industries and career levels, the percentage increase



will be higher for life sciences, IT and chemical industries. "Life sciences has really caught up as an industry sector, not just in India but also in other parts of the world," Mercer's global CEO Julio Portalatin said to a leading newspaper. Mercer's India All Industries Total Remuneration Survey saw the participation of 691 organizations. The survey also noted that almost half of these companies are planning to hire more workers than the previous year.

RBI employees take mass leave to protest government's move

In a move geared towards protesting the government's plan to curtail the role of RBI and take power away from the RBI in the name of the draft financial code and legislative reforms, the employees of



RBI went on a strike for the first time in six years. The 17,000 strong unionized employees of the Reserve Bank went on a one day mass casual leave. Employees also demanded the revision of the basic pension, which remained fixed and immutable. "It's fully successful across the country and payment and settlement system is not functioning," said Samir Ghosh, Convener of the United Forum of four RBI unions.

People Matters Asks*

Does your company have a paternity leave policy?

60.90%
YES

39.10%
NO

* Based on the poll on www.peoplesmatters.in

WHAT KEEPS HR UP AT NIGHT

What are HR's biggest concerns? SilkRoad.com's annual survey "What keeps HR up at night" highlights the biggest concerns of HR leaders. The survey saw the participation of about 329 professionals ranging from Vice Presidents, Directors and AVPs of HR to Executive Recruiters, Benefits Managers, Organizational Development Managers, among others. 56 percent of the participants had more than 10 years of experience in Recruitment, Learning and Development, HR etc.



The top three talent management concerns



THE THREE MOST TERRIFYING HR FUNCTIONS

Respondents say they are most concerned about linking the success of new hires to learning and development of the employee and understanding how that process can be measured in performance management.

- 1 31% → Recruiting
- 2 25% → Learning and Development
- 3 20% → Performance Management

THE THREE LEAST TERRIFYING HR FUNCTIONS

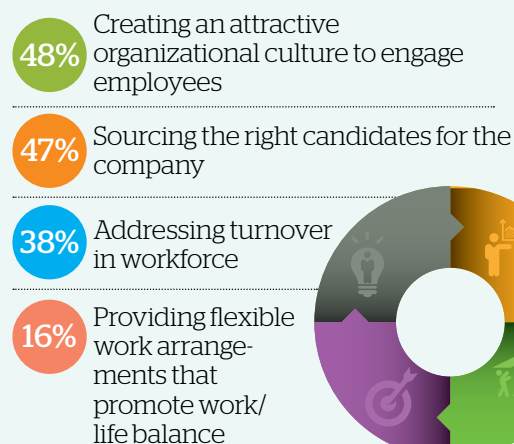
- 1 1% → Offboarding
- 2 7% → Onboarding
- 3 11% → HRMS (benefits, administration, payroll)



THE EMPLOYEE LIFE-CYCLE

A majority (55%) are 'concerned' or 'very concerned' that HR processes provide a consistent & compliant approach to employee transitions.

Recruitment and retention anxieties:



LACK OF STRATEGY PLAGUES HR

These are the top two strategic concerns for HR

- 60% want performance to be perceived as a strategic business activity, not a yearly tactical event
- 52% point to developing an HR organization that acts strategically and not tactically

THE THREE TOP TECHNOLOGY WORRIES OF HR



In today's ever changing world having transformational mind-set is compulsory!

Our extensive research and consulting experience with successful organisations and professionals have helped us create an intervention focused on enabling transformation effectively and imbibing transformational mind-set into the culture of the organisation.

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"The Transformation Navigator" offers participants the required tools, strategies, tactics, mind-set, knowledge and practice that they need to get on to their transformational journey to achieve exponential growth.

After going through this intervention, participants would:

- Begin looking at their role in a new light and start creating solutions that enable growth
- Understand and appreciate the need for transformation and develop a mind-set of creating sustainable growth
- Constantly look at new opportunities to position themselves as a transformation agent
- Be able to sift through traditional practices to retain what continues to work and discard those that no longer work
- Constantly look at self as a leader who needs to adopt to the changing environment and implement solutions that cater to the needs of the customer

Reach out to Shailja at +91-22-28732863 /+91-8879183426 or shailja@successwrks.in to know more about this intervention

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NEWSMAKER OF THE MONTH

Leena Nair – The Achiever



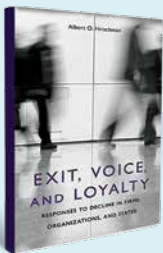
Leena Nair joins the league of global Indian corporate leaders as she has been appointed as the HR Chief of the world's second largest FMCG Company, Unilever. Leena, previously the SVP – Leadership and Organization Development and Global Head of Diversity and Inclusion at Unilever will replace Douglas Baillie. At HUL, Leena became the first woman in the Management Committee of Hindustan Unilever heading HR in 2007 and became the youngest director; she was also appointed the first woman on Unilever's South Asia Leadership Team.

As a Global Diversity Leader, Leena had been instrumental in bringing in a number of innovations to enhance HUL's culture e.g. winning balance, Maternity and Paternity support etc. Known for initiating a number of HR interventions including a 'Career by Choice' program that allows women who took a break in their career to rejoin the workforce, she is also credited with transforming employee relations and negotiating with 96 unions across 40 units and reducing the loss of man-days from 50,000 per year to 100 days per year. Commenting on the development, a Unilever spokesperson told a leading newspaper "As senior vice-president, HR leadership and organizational development, she has been instrumental in driving our employer brand to a record high and in step changing our diversity agenda". Leena Nair has also been on Business Today's "Most Powerful Business Woman" list for 7 consecutive years and has been voted as one of the 50 most influential women in India by Verve magazine.

QUICK READS

People Matters Eclectic Reading List 2016

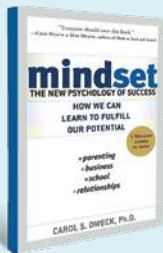
Starting this month, People Matters brings to you a reading list of the 'must read' books of HR that inspire, educate & offer unique perspectives on multifarious aspects



Exit, Voice and Loyalty

Author: Albert O. Hirschman

In this classic, Albert O. Hirschman distinguishes between different ways of reacting to deterioration in business firms and, in general, to dissatisfaction with organizations. This book investigates the interplay of the three concepts "exit", "voice" and "loyalty" and illuminates a wide range of economic, social, and political phenomena.



Mindset: The new psychology of success

Author: Carol S. Dweck

Stanford University psychologist, Carol Dweck, brings decades of research on achievement and success and arrives at a groundbreaking idea on the power of our mindset. She explains that it's not just our talent and abilities that ensure success; it is also about whether we approach them with a fixed or growth mindset.



The Alliance: Managing talent in the networked age

Authors: Reid Hoffman, Ben Casnocha & Chris Yeh

Trust is at an all-time low in the business world. The old model of guaranteed long term employment is unsuited to employee aspirations and dynamic business marketplace. In this environment, what should managers do in order to ensure mutual investment and mutual benefit? This book calls for "alliances" and is a practical guide for managers and recruiters.

You can send us your picks on Twitter tagging @PeopleMatters2 #BooksWeLove or email us at editorial@peoplesmatters.in

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RISHI GOUR NAMED AS COUNTRY PRESIDENT SODEXO INDIA

Rishi Gour was named as the Country President of Sodexo India. Gour worked as SVP with WNS Global Services before joining Sodexo in 2011.


KAHEER KAZEM APPOINTED AS THE PRESIDENT & MD OF GM INDIA

GM India appointed Kaheer Kazem as the company's new President and Managing Director. Kazem joined GM Holden in Australia in 1995 as a senior engineer and later held several leadership positions at GM Holden Manufacturing Operations.


ASHISH MEHROTRA APPOINTED AS MD & CEO OF MAX BUPA

Max Bupa appointed Ashish Mehrotra as its MD and CEO. Ashish has experience of over 22 years in banking and was the MD and Head-Retail Bank at Citibank prior to this appointment.


ICICI VENTURE APPOINTS PRASHANT PURKER TO MD

Prashant Purker has been promoted to Managing Director by ICICI from his current role as Executive Director. He was the Managing Director and Head Global Finance, India at Nomura and Lehman Brothers before joining ICICI.


PK SINGH TO BE NEW CHAIRMAN OF SAIL

PK Singh CEO of Duragpur Steel Plant has been appointed as the new Chairman of Steel Authority of India Limited. An alumnus of IIT, Roorkee in Metallurgical Engineering, Singh started his career in SAIL at its Bokaro Steel Plant in 1980.


JOY BANDEKAR JOINS OLA AS CORPORATE PRESIDENT

Joy Bandekar has been appointed as the Corporate President and will lead new initiatives for Ola. Bandekar has over 20 years of experience and was working with Flipkart prior to this appointment.


SANJIV PURI APPOINTED AS THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BY ITC LTD

Sanjiv Puri has been appointed to Executive Director from the post of President, FMGC. Puri has been with ITC for more than 5 years and is a graduate from IIT, Kanpur.


TARUN JAIN TO HEAD PRODUCTS DIVISION IN FLIPKART

Flipkart has hired Tarun Jain, a former executive of Twitter to head its products division of online advertising business. Jain worked as a group product manager in San Francisco.


PAYTM HIRES ABHISHEK RAJAN AS VICE PRESIDENT

Abhishek Rajan joins Paytm as the Head of its newly-launched travel segment. Rajan a graduate from IIM- Ahmedabad comes from Myntra where he headed the mobile business.


LEENA NAIR APPOINTED AS UNILEVER'S GLOBAL CHRO

Leena Nair is appointed as Unilever's next Chief of HR. Previously, she was the Senior Vice President for Leadership and Organization Development and Global Head of Diversity and Inclusion at Unilever.


BERNARD MARTYRIS IS NEW GROUP CHRO OF KUONI GROUP

Bernard Martyris has been appointed as the Group Chief Human Resources Officer by Kuoni Group. Earlier Martyris worked with VFS Global as the Chief of HR. He will be responsible for HR strategy, leadership development, and talent and performance management at Kuoni.


RICHA CHUGH APPOINTED AS HEAD OF TALENT

Hire Space has appointed Richa Chugh as head of talent. Richa lead the performance management work stream at Plan International where she was part of the Business Operating Model-Change Programme.


NEERAJ TANDON JOINS TOWERS WATSON AS DIRECTOR

Neeraj Tandon has been appointed as the Director for Workforce Analytics and Planning for the Asia Pacific region. Prior to this, he was the Head of Workforce Planning and Analytics at Ericsson.


GOIBIBO CO-FOUNDER DEEPAK TULI JOINS MAKEMYTRIP AS SENIOR VP

Former co-founder and Chief Operating Officer of Goibibo Deepak Tuli has been appointed by MakeMyTrip for the role of Senior Vice President – growth business. Tuli will focus on building and implementing strategies for growing new business lines in the accommodations segment for the company.


NIKHIL RUNGTA APPOINTED AS CHIEF MARKETING OFFICER BY HOUSING.COM

Housing.com has appointed Nikhil Rungta as its Chief Marketing Officer as part of the strategy to further strengthen top management team. Rungta was the Senior Vice President- Marketing at Reliance Jio and was the first CMO for Google in India.


FREECHARGE APPOINTS ANSHUL KHETERPAL AS CFO

FreeCharge, an online and app based payments service has appointed Anshul Kheterpal as its Chief Financial Officer. Kheterpal will help craft strategies for the payments business. Kheterpal was the CFO and principal officer of Airtel Money before joining FreeCharge.

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Evaluation Benefits



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The hire and fire diaries

The Indian start-up scenario doesn't look to be promising anymore with significant lay-offs that have been seen lately. Does this signal impending doom for the start-ups?

By Suparna Chawla Bhasin



First, there is fire to hire and then there is fire.

At least this is true for the start-ups in India. Although this is not an all pervasive start-up phenomenon, the trend has sneaked in the hyperlocal delivery start-ups. The recent layoffs at various Indian start-ups like Zomato, TinyOwl and Housing.com have led many to think that maybe the much hyped start-up business in India is spiraling downwards. This has come amidst speculations and claims by analysts that many of the start-ups may be overvalued, and many are still to show profits. It is not unknown that more than 80 percent startups die within the first three years of starting. Most of them today are struggling with fund-raising and are trimming escalation costs or coping with cost reduction targets that have been set by their stakeholders. Currently, in order to work their business models, the start-ups have accumulated so much human capital that their “not-so-profit-making” business models have suddenly started to see it as a liability. According to Kris Lakshmikanth, Chairman and Managing Director at recruitment consultancy, the Head Hunters India, stated in an interview that “There

As the Indian economy keeps up its escalating growth trajectory, the job market also looks very positive


is no doubt that Indian startups have gone overboard with hiring in the last few years, and that has happened because they raised so much money and they had to spend it in some way. Now as funding starts getting slower, due to reasons like the crash in the Chinese markets, these companies will need to cut costs and then may look at layoffs or freeze hiring.”

Many are also of the opinion that this might be another case of dotcom bubble that so spectacularly burst in the early months of 2000. But why? The reasons for this are attributed to the fact that this is another phase of pragmatic and exponential growth that is coupled with rapid technological advancements in every sector just like it was during the 1997-2000. And

although the start-ups are getting magnanimous investments, many of them don't have any real capital. Another reason for this is that the interest rates in the US have not changed since the financial crisis of 2008. And if the US raises its interest rates, the start-ups will find it difficult to raise funds. According to Paras Adenwala, investment consultant at Capital Portfolio Advisors, “You will see a lot of these start-ups falling by the wayside once the US Federal Reserve starts raising rates and funding dries up.” But are these layoffs a necessary part of putting the start-ups on a sustainable footing? Many do believe that such decisions are a necessary and inevitable part of the evolutionary process of any startup business.

However, in a stark contrast to this scenario, the hiring trends have been also seen to be on a positive path. According to a recent Monster survey, hiring activity in India has increased by 53 percent in November from a year ago. And about 90 percent of companies are looking to hire especially in pharma, social, mobile, analytics and cloud computing etc. according to Sambhav Rakyan, data services practice leader for Asia Pacific at Towers Watson, a global HR consulting firm.

And this seems to be continuing trend for 2016 as well. The Manpower Outlook Survey reveals that globally, first-quarter hiring confidence is strongest in India. For the first quarter of 2016, India's net employment outlook is at 42 percent, the highest among 42 nations that were surveyed, followed by Taiwan (29 percent), Japan (23 percent), Turkey (19 percent) and the U.S (17 percent). According to AG Rao, Group Managing Director at ManpowerGroup India, “As the Indian economy keeps up its escalating growth trajectory, the job market also looks very positive. Employer hiring intentions remain positive, primarily driven by transportation and utilities, wholesale and retail trade, finance, insurance and real estate and public administration and education sectors.”

On the one hand there is a definite uncertainty of what lies ahead especially in how the start-up set up in India manifests in the coming months, however on the other hand, the overall hiring sentiments seem to be high. 

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Q & A

Learning has to shift to experience designing

Josh Bersin, Founder and Principal at Bersin by Deloitte on the evolving HR trends, the importance of experience designing and on being an inspiring leader

By Nandini Rath

Josh Bersin is the Founder and Principal at Bersin by Deloitte which is the leading provider of research-based information and advisory services focused on corporate learning. He has been responsible for Bersin by Deloitte's long term strategy and market eminence. Josh has spent 25 years in product development, product management, marketing and sales of enterprise technologies.

Q What are some of the new dramatically changing HR trends that you have come across in your research?

A Millennials have created a dynamic in the workforce that is actually good for all of us. And I will tell you what research we have done on that. Firstly, today there is an incredible amount of transparency and information gets out easily. So people looking for jobs or opportunities or even just evaluating work find out things about you like never before and all of that has remarkably altered the industry scenario. Research has revealed that the number one challenge that companies have today (and this is 3300 companies that were evaluated) is culture. Secondly, the issue of engagement has been in the industry for long now and is much harder to deal with as the workforce and work environment has transformed rapidly over the years. The third most important issue that was found was related to 'Learning'. Learning is seen to be not just for performance anymore but more for engagement. So if the organization does not invest in a continuous learning environment, it may actually lead to attrition because one of the reasons why people look for a job is to develop themselves.

The research also revealed that if data on millennials is to be considered, the characteristics of young people in workforce are observed to be very different. And this is true for all sectors. 80

percent of millennials want to give a performance appraisal to their boss. So how do we deal with that? Today, a whole new market of feedback applications and feedback solutions has been trying to work it. Two thirds of the millennials want to be creative – they don't want to be just given a job that says "do this and use this ERP system to get it done". They relate to their team almost as much as they relate to the company. So another interesting trend that is seen is a reinvented focus towards teams as the center for work, which in turn demands solutions that aim at training and engagement of teams and how they need to work together. Finally, millennials want regular feedback. They don't want to wait till the end of the year for a performance appraisal. Once-a-year performance appraisal is not giving people what they want out of work.

Q There has been a paradigm shift in the way learning is perceived and provided by organizations. How do you think learning can be provided to enhance an employee's sense of belonging to the organization?

A If you're really looking at the value of learning in companies, it is in creation of an engaging experience, which in turn translates into many other things. So, when a company provides a professional learning experience or job rotation, or a coach to its employees, it motivates them to be more productive and become better at their job. Such things happen when learning is done

HR has to think of itself as a consulting function and proactively push innovation and change



well, and these are more than just performance improvements.

In a rapidly changing world, learning has also changed and is now imparted through social means, connections, online experiences, videos and subject matter experts. The shift that we're seeing is from pure instructional design to what would be best called learning 'experience design'. For example – Deloitte has a very famous university in Dallas called Deloitte University. It was designed as an experience and not just a facility. When one signed up for a class in Deloitte – every email one got, about getting on the plane, what would happen when one got off the plane, when one entered the door, or when one walked into the class – all of it is designed so that one can have a great experience. People love going for this! That's an example of what L&D professionals have to do. So now, the L&D professionals need to shift from instructional designing to experience designing.

Two-thirds of the millennials want to be creative – they don't want to be just given a job that says “do this and use this ERP system to get it done”

Q The HR industry, particularly in India, has taken longer to adjust to the use of HR technology. What is your advice for companies who are just beginning to change their traditional way of doing things in HR?

A If companies are fortunate enough to get to start from scratch, they are probably in a good state because there is some incredibly integrated new technology available now. First thing is that you can't run HR without good technology because you end up spending time, money and wasted effort on administration, which should instead be spent on high value functions like developing people and coaching leaders. If a company is new to HR technology, it should look at one of the major ERP providers. They are all cloud-based. Next thing is to work on data first or at least simultaneously. It is absolutely important to define data standards and ensure you have good data from the beginning as it aids in correlating and predicting.

Moreover, the other thing is the user experience. These days with the core HR technology, there is a fair amount of parity in functionality, but the different systems look and behave very differently. Therefore, the system needs to be engaging. It becomes imperative that companies spend a good amount of time with their users in testing the system with the help of IT team to improve the user

experience and in building mobile apps. I think every HR department has to have a mobile app development team, either insourced or outsourced, to build something in the new digital world of mobile because mobile is taking over. Most of the core ERP have mobile versions but they don't have everything on mobile. But that's coming fast. Familiarity with mobile technology is the next big thing.

Q According to you, how important is it for HR to reinvent its approaches? How can the HR function adopt a more strategic role in business?

A If a company is not developing its HR function, it is not doing its job. Just as IT teams can't do their job without skills, sales people can't do their job without skills, the HR can't either. Firstly, HR has to hold itself accountable for driving the business. If sales productivity is a problem, it's HR's problem too and it should work on it. Similarly, if retention is a problem, it needs HR as well. Secondly, really great HR organizations take time to do job rotations in a very deterministic way. They move people within HR and even move people out of HR into the business and then back. Similarly, people who have been in the business should take a developmental experience in HR, to bring the business into HR. Thirdly, the HR should be able to benchmark itself. Attending conferences, visiting other companies and reading research is important. The HR needs to keep track of new technologies and great ideas that are going on the outside world and bring them in. The HR has to think of itself as a consulting function and proactively push innovation and change into the organization. Consulting firms are always developing their people constantly, because it's the only way they can stay ahead.

Q You've been an entrepreneur and have also worked in organizations – both big and small. What has really worked for you as a leader to create engagement, motivation and a culture of innovation?

A Well, I am an engineer. So I like to build and create things and I like to innovate. I spent 10 years at IBM in various roles including management and 8 years in a database company, couple of years at a couple of start-ups. I have also run marketing and business development for a couple of companies. Most people find me to be an inspiring leader because I do have a lot of passion, inspiration and vision. I am detail-oriented and believe in being very client-focused. When we were building Bersin, what differentiated us was the practicality of our research, and the reason it was practical was because we always talked to the clients, listened to their problems, diagnosed them and used research as a tool to solve them. And then we would call them again to ask them how they were using it. If you're not talking to the customer, you may not be coming up with the right answer. So I really believe that my role is to be with customers and reflect that back to the organization. I also think that I am a relatively humble person and I really appreciate what everybody did and does. 

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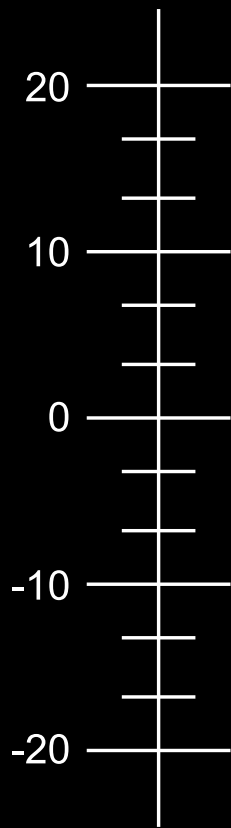
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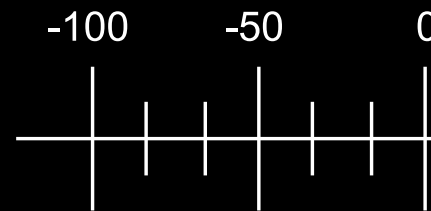
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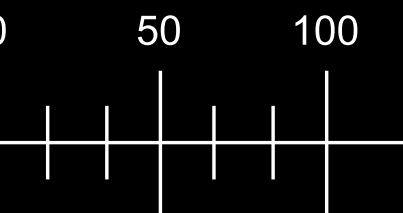
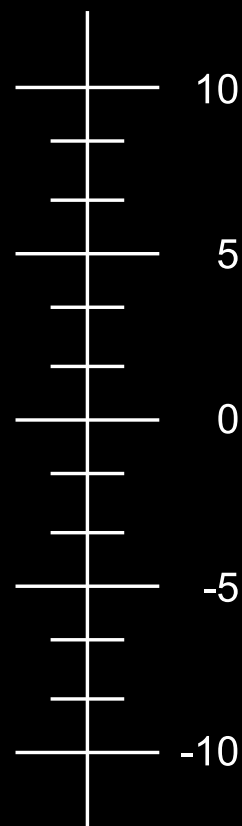
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INDIA SKILLS REPORT 2015:

MATCHMAKING THE SUPPLY
& DEMAND OF TALENT





With India slated to become the world's youngest nation by 2022, the India Skills Report 2015 showcases not only the employability factor of the youth from across the country but also portrays the needs & expectations of the employers

By Suparna Chawla Bhasin

Findings and observations from the India Skills Report, an initiative by PeopleStrong and Wheebox, in association with CII, LinkedIn and AIU

It is not a distant dream that India will be something that the world will look forward to by the year 2020. Skill development is a topic that is holding the first position on the government's agenda – the renewed impetus to the skill initiatives has brought about a vision that not only sees India as self-sufficient in terms of manpower but also the one which has the capability to meet the needs of the rest of the world.

However, India is still relatively a young nation – a repository of a young waiting to-be-employed generation on the one hand along with jobs that demand a very niche and skilled workforce on the other. Although India's demographic dividend allows it to be a reservoir of huge manpower, the question of making this workforce employable is a big challenge that India has to tackle.

Although, the Government's initiatives like Skill India, Make in India, Digital India, Start-up India are geared towards revitalizing and channeling various aspects of the economy and business in general, the main aim however is to build a conducive and promoting ecosystem that allows for skill development in India.

India's demographic dividend allows it to be a reservoir of huge manpower, but it has to tackle the question of making its workforce employable

The India Skills Report is a joint initiative of CII, PeopleStrong, Wheebox and LinkedIn and showcases not only the employability factor of the youth from across the country from different educational backgrounds but also portrays the needs & expectations of the employers. It is this scientific tool that can help address the skill gaps in labor market and facilitate better employment opportunities for the youth, thereby increasing India's industrial productivity.

The report analyzes and assesses the various government initiatives, the possible challenges and the impacts on economic growth. The report significantly captures the skill levels of the supply side as assessed on WEST, the Employability skill assessment test launched by Wheebox.com, and the needs of the demand side of the Talent Supply chain as captured by Corporate Job Survey. The Wheebox Employability Skill Test – a cloud-based online assessment platform has been the tool that is used to measure the job-readiness was used for the survey. Over 5.2 lakh candidates across 29 states and 7 union territories were assessed on various parameters such as numerical & logical ability, communication skills and domain knowledge etc. Apart from these, there were four behavioral parameters introduced: Learning, Agility, Adapt-

ability, Interpersonal Skills as important assessing parameters for corporates. The Corporate Job Survey on the other hand surveyed 150 Employers across 12 major sectors like Manufacturing, Core, ITES, IT, BFSI etc. to understand job demand and potential hiring forecasts for the coming year.

One of the main things that the India Skills Report 2015 showcased was that from the total number of students entering the job market across the country, hardly 1/3rd met the criteria of the employment set by the employers. This is augmented by the fact that the economy is expanding, jobs are getting generated in many sectors especially the ecommerce, retail, banking etc., however the number of skilled people is on the decline. And to deal with such a situation, the government has adopted skill development as a national priority.

Another one of the main research findings of the WEST score of participants or test takers across states was the employability status of the available skill pool. There has been a rise in the employability of the skill pool with the corporates expecting a rise of about 14.5 per cent in various jobs. This positive hiring sentiment is retained for a second consecutive year. This was corroborated by the India Hiring Intent Survey by PeopleStrong, which captures the state wise hiring preferences of employers across industry sectors. Therefore, with the knowledge of where the best skill pool resides, there is also the list of states where employers chose to hire. Both these data portrayed a clear picture of states where talent and job had the best opportunity to meet each other. The states that had the most employable talent and were preferred hiring destinations of employers were Maharashtra, Delhi, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh and Haryana. Along with the preferred hiring destinations, the report also found the data related to the preferred destinations to work. And when this information was combined with the top states where companies of various

Methodology

The study was carried out with a sample of 5.2 lakh students, across 29 states and 7 UTs and above 150 employers

5,20,000 Students	3000 Educational Campuses
29 States	7 Union Territories
150+ Employers	12 Sectors

sectors have a presence (as captured from The India Hiring Intent Survey), it rendered the list of states where the thought processes of the talent supply and demand sides met. And these states were Karnataka, Delhi/NCR and Tamil Nadu.

One of the factors that govern the workforce demographics is that the work culture and work environment of companies varies significantly. And for understanding the dynamics of the overlaps between the supply and demand side over such factors, the WEST scores of the supply side and survey responses of the demand side were analyzed through the demographic lens. And this presented a striking match between the supply and demand side. As per the data and employers across industry sectors, the most preferred age group for hiring is from below 24 years till 30 years. And on an average, more than 60 percent of the employers preferred to hire from the age group less than 30 years. When it comes to the supply side, about 37 percent of the test takers in the age group less than 30 years were found employable. And most of this lot belonged to the age group of 18-21 years (about 42 percent) significantly higher than the other age groups. It was also found that one in every five surveyed employers had a preference for the age group of 18-21 years.

One of the stark facts that were found by the India Hiring Intent Survey was that the current gender diversity status across industry sectors was 72:28. This meant that even in this year, women do not form even one-third of the total workforce. It was also found that women test takers were significantly more employable than the male test takers. And when this data was compared to the preferred hiring locations, it was found that almost all sectors have equal opportunity of improving the gender ratio of organizations, as they already hire from the states where the “employable” females were found in large numbers.

The India Skills Report was launched in the year 2013 for creating a platform for the supply and



Only 1/3rd of the total students entering the job market met the employment criteria set by employers in 2015

demand side of talent to come together and bridge the demand with the expectations. This third edition of the report reached out to over 5,20,000 students across domains for taking the WEST. The reach for corporate survey also increased by 20 percent and over 150 employers spread across 12 industry sectors were surveyed. The report aims at matchmaking the needs of the supply and demand side of talent supply chain and continues to provide the much needed insights that can help in making it possible.

Measuring Skills: Using WEST (Wheebox Employability Skill Test)

WEST is a cloud-based online assessment platform that is used to measure job-readiness. It identifies the skill gap that exists in the industry today by deploying a scientific approach across 320 domain areas and brings reliable and authentic assessment to various aspects of education, training and employment.

West Assessment Parameters

	Numerical & logical ability
	Communication skills
	Domain knowledge

4 Behavioral Parameters

	Learning
	Agility
	Adaptability
	Interpersonal Skills

The Results



5.2 lakh students appeared for the test, and **only 38.12%** were found employable

LEVERAGING THE DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDEND

INDIA SKILLS REPORT 2015

Human Capital is in abundance in India. India has one of the highest youth population in the world but this is an opportunity as well as a challenge. Although the demographic dividend provides for a huge reservoir of manpower, it also invites attention and focus towards its talent pool in terms of its employability



THE GRAPH IS GOING UP IN TERMS OF EMPLOYABILITY AND HIRING

EMPLOYABILITY INDEX

37.22%
In 2014

38.12%
In 2015

THE HIRING SENTIMENT IS POSITIVE

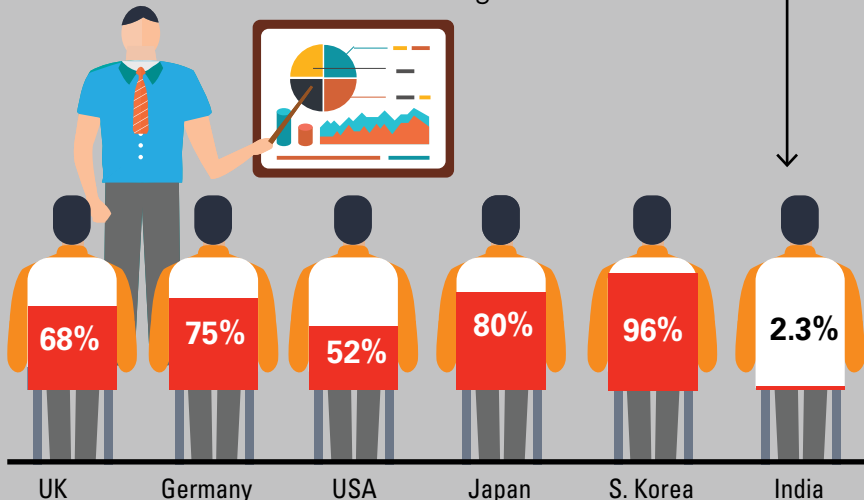
14% Increase in hiring is
expected by employers

However, when it comes
to **SKILLS**

Only **1/3rd**
of students meet the criteria of
employers



Only **2.3%**
of the workforce in India has undergone
formal skill training



DECONSTRUCTING EMPLOYABILITY

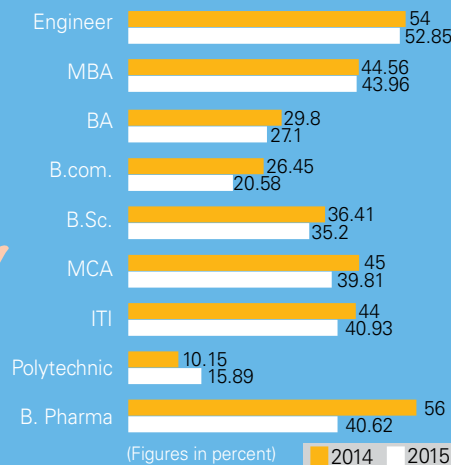
STATES WITH THE HIGHEST EMPLOYABLE POPULATION

1. Andhra Pradesh
2. Uttar Pradesh
3. Delhi
4. West Bengal
5. Maharashtra
6. Rajasthan
7. Tamil Nadu
8. Himachal Pradesh
9. Jharkhand
10. Haryana



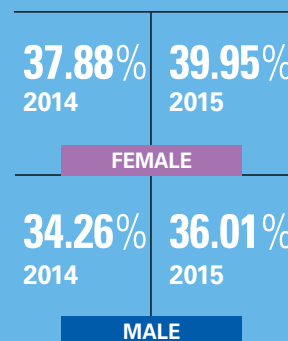
DOMAIN SPECIFIC EMPLOYABILITY RATIO

For the year 2015, B.Tech grads had the highest percentage of employability



GENDER WISE EMPLOYABILITY

Gender diversity has emerged as an important focus area among corporates. As it turns out, female candidates happen to be more employable than male candidates

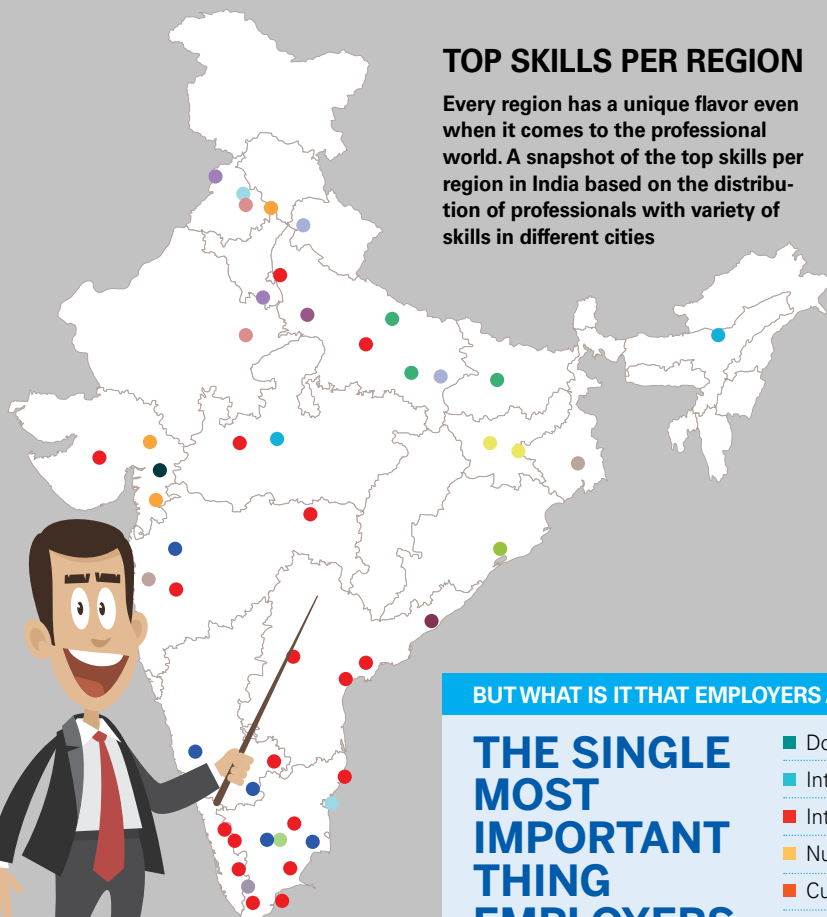


HARNESSING THE POTENTIAL OF DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDEND

To get the most out of India's demographic dividend, it is important to look at the skills scenario of the country

TOP SKILLS PER REGION

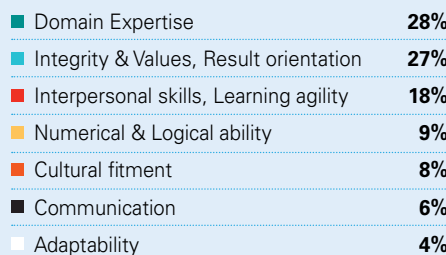
Every region has a unique flavor even when it comes to the professional world. A snapshot of the top skills per region in India based on the distribution of professionals with variety of skills in different cities



- COMPUTER:** Bengaluru, Kolkata, Chennai, Cochin, Gujarat, Hyderabad, Indore, Kanpur, Madurai, Noida, Pune, Rajkot, Thiruvananthapuram
- ENGINEERING:** Coimbatore, Mangalore, Mysore
- LAW:** Allahabad, Lucknow, New Delhi, Patna
- MEDICAL:** Ahmedabad, Chandigarh, Surat, Vishakapatnam
- BUSINESS:** Gurgaon
- ECOLOGY & ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE:** Bhopal, Guwahati
- EDUCATION:** Jalandar, Pondicherry
- FASHION:** Jaipur, Pondicherry
- FINANCE:** Kolkata, Mumbai
- LIFESTYLE:** Agra, Amritsar
- MINING AND COMMODITIES:** Kochi
- SCIENCE:** Dehradun, Varanasi
- ENERGY:** Vadodara
- POLITICS:** Bhubaneswar
- RETAIL:** Tripura

BUT WHAT IS IT THAT EMPLOYERS ARE LOOKING FOR IN PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYEES?

THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT THING EMPLOYERS WANT





RECONSTRUCTING THE LEARNING ECOSYSTEM

Learning ecosystems are key to the long term viability of organizations. A peek at how companies are fostering dynamic learning cultures in their organizations

By Nandini Rath

Seventy percent organizations globally state “capability gaps” as one of their top five challenges, according to a Bersin study. With technology and innovation disrupting the businesses today, a cohesive learning ecosystem within organizations, which not only facilitates and makes learning available but also motivates individuals to learn constantly for the organization’s success is fast becoming indispensable.

According to a Pluralsight customer study, instructor-led modules are the most

dominant form of training (68 percent) in India. However, today there is a transformation in the way learning at workplace is seen – learning in organizations is seen to be no longer just about training and development sessions anymore. The linear and prescribed forms of learning constructs no longer resonate with the millennial workforce generation and organizations are adopting a more pragmatic and flexible approach towards their learning needs to accommodate different learning styles.

However, in some businesses, many L&D professionals still struggle to infuse

such a learning mechanism in their organizations as learning budgets are the first target of the company's prudence measures. Companies still overwhelmingly make decisions about learning initiatives in isolation, often ignoring the employees' perspectives. On the contrary, senior management needs to realize that developing an agile model of learning, which includes communicating with the employees about their learning aspirations and focusing on making learning options available in company's DNA, is critical for long-term success of the business.

In order to build a sustainable learning ecosystem, the responsibility of learning should shift to the employees through triggering and allowing genuine interest to emerge from their end. Here are five approaches to keep in mind:

1. Voluntary learning

Top-down approach to learning is fast becoming obsolete. Training teams are no longer fit to drive learning, especially without the input of employees. A lack of attendance and interest in learning is also a common issue with employees in companies that still adopt linear training methods. Also, when employees are not consulted about what they need to learn and when, they are likely to find the trainings irrelevant. The way to address this is to enable them to come up with what they want to learn. Employees directly working with various projects have the best knowledge of what gaps need to be addressed through learning. Manish Sinha, HR Head, Motorola Mobility India, says that conventional trainings in the company have been completely disrupted in favor of open systems where individual employees can claim ownership for the development of products that the company wants to develop in the next six-month period. Once these responsibilities are claimed, people managers just set deadlines for when the product would go into test phase, leaving the necessary skill acquisition up to the employees. Their role then is to provide learning support as and when asked for. Mohan Sitharam, Chief People Officer, Subex Ltd., also explains how 70 percent of their L&D budget is driven by voluntary communities of learners who decide what they want to learn and how, while the leadership fine-tunes these decisions by allocating funding as per its priorities.

2. Mentoring one-another

Mentoring and Peer-to-Peer learning are effective ways of learning and facilitating healthy generational interaction. Raj Karunakaran, HR Director at Philips Healthcare feels that these social ways

keep learning interactive and personal. This way, participants from previous batches are involved with new learning groups to share experiences and even participate in the teaching aspect. In the same spirit, senior employees with several years of work experience can provide mentoring and coaching support to the younger employees, and conversely learn new market insights through reverse mentoring from the recently-hired, young employees in informal, friendly spaces that companies can design for such interactions.

3. Incentive of recognition

Employees would want to learn more when their efforts are being noticed at some level. Recognition of individual learning efforts generate collective motivation in others too. Kunal Wali, Global Learning Solutions leader at IBM India, shares that at IBM, employees are encouraged by the company to clock-in and highlight their learning hours, whether it is in the form of reading a book, attending a seminar or

ired for handling customer projects and solving real-life problems. At the Bhubaneswar-based residential Global Learning Center of Mindtree Kalinga, the graduate hires get together with a few experts and work on real time problems that are of direct concern to their fully sustainable campus. This immersive environment allows them to think real world solutions and connect isolated nuggets of knowledge from their experiences. In the process, they develop an engineering, business and social mindset to confidently take on client problems once they join the workplace.

5. Employee buy-in

People like being a part of something they love, which motivates them and makes them feel proud. It is therefore really important for an organization to have a strong vision that people can buy into and relate to. When there is a vision and a purpose, employees can get behind that cause. According to Jeff Petersen, VP of North American Sales at Pluralsight, if the


Building a sustainable learning ecosystem means shifting the responsibility of learning on employees by triggering and allowing genuine interest to emerge from their end

going to external course websites for additional certifications over the weekends. While these hours are not mandated, clocking-in implies that management can take notice of who is learning what, even if these are 30-minute nuggets of information. These records are also picked up by an analytic-powered, centralized LMS which enables searching through profiles with relevant exposure, skills or education in case a new role needs to be filled.

4. Interdisciplinary skill development

Learning, questioning and problem solving are facilitated by genuine curiosity and interdisciplinary thinking, which take a back seat in the single-stream, theoretical mindset commonly propagated in the Indian education system. Anindya Maitra, GM at Mindtree Ltd., points out that due to a lack of coordination between academia and industries, a large number of campus hires join their respective industries without the interdisciplinary mindset requ-

employees can buy into the vision, they will find it easier to jump on the bandwagon in which everybody moves towards the goal. In other words, the key is to align individual and organizational goals in such a way that employees don't need to be 'pushed' to learn but inherently desire to 'pull' themselves (and the organization) up through new knowledge and skill acquisition.

There isn't any one right form of learning for a multi-generational workforce. Companies have to leverage different approaches to generate employee initiative in cross-skilling and make various learning platforms available while keeping the communication channels between the employees and management open. Companies should be bold and experiment with various approaches until they figure out their own dynamic recipe. 

(This article is based on the learnings from the People Matters and Pluralsight Roundtable series)

REINVENTING THE LEARNING STRATEGY

Arun Rajamani, Consultant and Country Manager, Pluralsight gives insights on the complex situation that L&D professionals in Indian tech sector find themselves facing



MOST OF THE TRAINING TIME AND EFFORT TODAY IS GOING INTO TRAINING FOR LEGACY TECHNOLOGIES WHEN IT SHOULD REALLY BE PUT INTO THE TECHNOLOGIES THAT ARE SHAPING UP THE FUTURE


In order to stay competitive, the Indian tech sector today needs to adopt quality and innovation, focused business models, along with building enhanced capability. Technology skills, as entrepreneur Eric Bloom has expressed, have a two year half-life. This means that “that the exact set of skills you have today will only be half as marketable two years from now.” And so, they must constantly keep upgrading their skills while servicing the legacy technologies.

Everybody in the industry understands that the technologies that will shape the future such as SMAC (Social, Mobile, Analytic, Cloud), artificial intelligence,

augmented reality and methodologies such as agile learning are here already. Most of the training time and effort today is going into training for legacy technologies where the organization’s maturity already exists, when it should really be put into the technologies that are shaping up the future. When majority of the revenue today is coming from legacy technologies, there is a classic dichotomy of short-term versus long-term investment that learning professionals need to balance.

As per a Bersin study, an average of \$1,1847 are being spent on training an individual. This amount is actually spent on just 20 percent of learning, as 80 percent

of the whole learning takes place on the job, according to an HBR study. But when 70 percent of companies still report “capability gaps” in their employees, one can gauge the limited effectiveness of the learning programs, many of which still rely on old school methods such as textbooks and instructors. L&D professionals are aware that they need to shift to digital, modern age learning which is a better-suited medium for different types of learners, unlike classrooms.

E-learning or on-demand learning has statistically showed itself to be quite effective. Business leaders in an IBM study reported a 26 percent direct increase in business revenue from employees who underwent self-paced learning. Additionally, 50 percent of employees in a Bersin study conveyed that their productivity increased from adopting e-learning, as opposed to from textbook-oriented learning. Still, the bulk of the Indian training style is instructor-dominated. The demand for e-learning in India is low – 10 percent as opposed to a 36 percent globally. There is certainly room for intervention and scaling up this learning, because even out of these, only 46 percent of these learners are skilling for future technologies and the rest 54 percent are still just training for its legacy counterpart. 

LET THE ONUS BE ON THE LEARNER

Mohan Sitharam, Chief People Officer at Subex Ltd., on championing the agile model of decentralized learning

A sustainable learning culture can only be built when the onus of learning is shifted from the organization on to employees. The responsibility of the HR is to create an ecosystem that facilitates this learning instead of trying to organize more trainings for the employees.

At Subex, we provide Business and Operation Support Systems (B/OSS)

to Communication Service Providers (CSPs) globally. As a product company, we always have a roadmap for products or new versions of products needed by a specific date in the pipeline. Thus, instead of organizing training program calendars, we have shifted to an agile model, which is driven by the pull factor. When our engineering teams feel that they do not have all the requisite skills to deliver the



DEVELOPING MINDSETS, NOT JUST SKILLS

Anindya Maitra, GM and Centre Head, Mindtree Limited, on designing an environment that stimulates curiosity and learning



At Mindtree Kalinga, our first global learning center in Bhubaneswar, 500 engineering graduates come together for a 90-day residential experience. Before designing this place, the question we asked ourselves is: if I were to live in this environment for 90 days, who would I be when I leave? And the answer that we found was, that my mindset cannot be a single-track, one discipline mindset. This is how we started thinking along the lines of how we could design an environment where such a mindset would be developed.

Mindsets are nothing but lens of experience, exposure and learning. Mindtree is an engineering company, so an engineering

STUDENTS BECOME GLOBAL CITIZENS AFTER APPLYING THEIR MINDS TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS IN REAL PROBLEMS ON THE CAMPUS


lens is required and since we are running a business, a business lens is needed as well. An additional social lens is requisite when the aim is to make the business and the society flourish as a result of our actions.

Learning is inevitable for an individual, right from the beginning of life. There are certain factory fitted things that human beings come hardwired with, but the rest is learnt from the environment. The environment must constantly provide opportunities to sharpen one's skills and courage. I don't believe that we can create institutions to teach anybody in any other sense – we can only design triggers that stimulate curiosity and learning.

At Mindtree's fully sustainable campus, there are no classrooms, departments, curriculums or faculty and no new content is created. The focus is solely on real time problem solving, which demands inter-

disciplinary thinking. The young hires get together with experts and collaborate to solve real life problems. For instance, if they need to understand supply chain and build an app that connects different elements of a supply chain, the residents take up a project entailing laundry management supply chain, which is an actual business challenge for a campus with over 500 residents. The experts are present there to work with them and to empower them. Employees with 4-6 years of experience play this role; they take sabbaticals and become resident guardians at Kalinga.

In a nutshell, graduates are encouraged to turn problems into working prototypes and implement a similar workflow that they would with a client's project in a professional setting. The environment at Kalinga simulates it. Tremendous change is noticeable in the focus, clarity and professionalism of these young professionals after going through this experience. They become global citizens after applying their minds towards sustainable solutions in real problems on the campus. There is much more of a pull factor in a learner-led model like this.

At Mindtree, the design for learning keeps in mind the platform of the learner and multiple channels are made available. The plan is to soon launch mobile based learning program in Kalinga that will supplement the learning by providing bite-sized nuggets to the residents. 


product or a version they are responsible for developing, they decide what learning is needed to fill the gap and enable it too. We have created a technical training team that includes a group of trainers who are experts in the business. When teams get stuck at work, the trainer attached to that particular team is available to build that skill, walk them through the problem on the spot and enable them to move forward. We strongly feel that this kinesthetic form of learning is the more effective than getting people in a classroom, training them on something and asking them to implement it.

This evolution has happened because of the change in expectation and learning style of the generation at work today. If the millennial workers are stuck on a

PROVIDING HELP AS AND WHEN EMPLOYEES NEED IT IS THE MOST APPROPRIATE WAY OF BUILDING A LEARNING ORGANIZATION TODAY

problem today, it makes no sense to them to have a training session planned for that problem two months later. Providing help as and when employees need it is the most appropriate way of building a learning organization today. Technology has helped us think differently. Self paced

e-learning is highly relevant today because it is decentralized – available any time, any place and according to the need of the learner. The times are changing; we have got to be dynamic and keep things agile when the target is a moving one.

Today we have to do things differently and do different things. For training leaders, we now tap into unusual resources by inviting people from different walks of life – from the *dabbawalas* in Mumbai to the CEO of a media company or an astronaut – to share their insights with us. I take my leaders to hospitals, to NGOs and to meet theatre artists, which they love doing. I think leadership is a behavioral change and that is unlikely to happen just by putting people in a training room with conventional modules. 

For the first cover story of 2016, People Matters asks business and HR leaders to share their talent agenda for the next year, the talent 'big rocks' that they will look at accomplishing and their biggest priority in planned talent initiatives

By People Matters Editorial Team

TALENT AGENDA 2016

Technological advancements, capability gaps, shifting demographics. This is where the businesses operate today. And the only thing that provides competitive advantage to any business is the 'talent' it acquires, manages and retains.

Talent seems to occupy the business agenda for all organizations in 2016. And the connotations of the term 'talent' have gone beyond the nomenclature. The meaning of the term 'Talent' has metamorphosed into something very different. And as the pace of change accelerates in organizations – acquiring, retaining, developing and engaging talent is strategically critical. It is stipulated that millennials will comprise 75 percent of the global workforce by 2025, and with

And with 'social' being the new norm and the talent market getting digital and social savvy, "the ability to connect and amplify both the company's message and employer brand across multiple social media by making content available, relevant and engaging" is all the more indispensable for organizations, according to Raj Raghavan, Country HR Leader, Amazon India. Today, the new talent depends heavily on social media for everything and anything – from applying to jobs, to perceiving the employer and how an organization's brand comes across. Enabling "candidates to browse and apply online, especially via mobile devices is essential as young people are going to dominate the future workforce and they have high digital expectations, inclu-

THE FUTURE WORKFORCE WILL HAVE HIGHER DIGITAL EXPECTATIONS AND IT WILL BE IMPORTANT TO FOCUS ON GIVING PROSPECTIVE AND EXISTING TALENT A DIGITAL EXPERIENCE

millennials entering the workforce ecosystem that rapidly, the need for organizations is to enable a novel work order that facilitates new ways of attracting, managing and retaining talent. The traditional, siloed approaches to talent acquisition and retention do not work anymore. And it has become all the more imperative for organizations to generate new thinking and strategies for talent and future workforce to amplify the overall growth of the organization.

"Talent Management today is not just about getting the right talent; it is more about the long-term impact of the talent you hire" according to Jacob Jacob, Chief People Officer, Apollo Hospitals Enterprises Ltd. Whether its leadership development or establishing a facilitating organizational culture or strategizing R&R initiatives, organizations are leaving no stone unturned to manage their talent.

ding being able to browse jobs without registering; being able to easily and quickly apply; and being able to apply for jobs via mobiles" is a priority. Along with this, smarter hiring, involving technology-enabled platforms and more psychometric anchored evaluations, will help us get more efficient and more predictable according to Prabir Jha, Global Chief People Officer, Cipla Ltd.

The new age talent mantra includes trends like creating mentorship through co-leadership, accommodating different communication and learning styles and offering flexible working hours. And in all the turbulence of a VUCA world, the priority will be to keep the talent together. And in doing this, communicating with them, offering a reward and recognition mix that will be relevant to the demographic segments and reinforcing a culture of trust and respect will be relevant. 

Jan

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Dec

MAKING EMPLOYEES OUR TRUE TALENT BRAND AMBASSADORS

Srikanth Balachandran,
Global CHRO, Airtel on
turning employees into true
talent brand ambassadors
& connecting them with
the organization's growth
agenda



At Airtel, talent is everybody's agenda, not just HR's. The talent agenda has always been at the forefront of our business strategy. Since I took over this role, our first exercise was to reconnect with our business leaders and people, both existing as well as ex-employees, to get a sense of what we should do new or better. We also revisited the employee engagement survey results to remind ourselves of the voice of our employees.

Talent First

When we did the exercise of reconnecting with leaders and employees alike, we also connected with respected HR leaders and practitioners from other organizations on the latest industry practices. Based on their feedback, we arrived at a 10-point people agenda for Airtel called 'Talent First'. Through Talent First, we want to build a high performance culture, and

standpoint, currently, Airtel is the world's third largest mobile operator in terms of customer base. We have achieved this in exactly 20 years. And we are embarking on the next wave of growth with a proposed investment of \$9 billion in the next three years which will propel Airtel to greater heights. Our employees are going to be at the forefront of this exciting era. We want every employee to feel a sense of belonging and connectedness with Airtel's growth agenda, and in the process, carve out a long term future for themselves at Airtel. We want to make our employees feel a part of this journey and become true ambassadors for Airtel. That is the basis of our Talent First agenda.

Focus: Building our employer brand

Keeping that in mind, our number one agenda will be to develop a strong employer brand. We want to leverage the fact that we are a big telecom brand,

WE WANT EVERY EMPLOYEE TO FEEL A SENSE OF BELONGING WITH AIRTEL'S GROWTH AGENDA, AND IN THE PROCESS, CARVE OUT A LONG TERM FUTURE FOR THEMSELVES AT AIRTEL


organizational and people capabilities to deliver and grow, and enable functioning of cross-functional teams across Airtel. At the core of the 'Talent First' initiative are the culture and values that every Airtel employee experiences day-in and day-out. Our culture is to keep the customer at the heart of everything we do and this manifests in our employee behavior at the workplace. People collaborate with each other to deliver a delightful experience to Airtel customers and help achieve our vision of enriching their lives. Everyone in Airtel is obsessed with winning customers for life. Our values of being alive, inclusive and respectful define who we are. Talent First will help employees know what is expected of them, what their future is and how they can learn, deliver and grow. It will also make Airtel an exciting place to work, and employees would feel energized and connected.

Connecting talent and business strategies

We want to tie our talent strategy with our business strategy. From a business

the number three mobile operator in the world.

Going forward, in 2016, our plan is to use social media to attract the best and brightest talent. At Airtel, employees are doing some great work in terms of latest technologies, cutting edge digital apps, customer propositions and market development. We want our employees to be our best (talent) brand ambassadors, and we want them to use the power of Social Media to do the same. We will also enable and aim at enhancing our employer value proposition by sharing the exciting work, and enriching and enticing activities that are and will take place at Airtel. For instance, we are launching our Payment Bank soon, and we are looking to leverage the power of social.

For us, the picture of success is that all employees feel inspired to do their best every day, and take pride in the feeling of "I am Airtel". Our culture, together with our values, is the glue that binds our people, and creates lasting relationships within Airtel, and with millions of our customers. 

The New Year will bring a still sharper focus on talent across functions, businesses, geographies and levels. It will attempt to sharpen enterprise risk mitigation at one end while getting the organization future-ready at the other. Recalibrating the threshold talent level is never easy but it is important to be done in a world where everything historical seems to be getting questioned. We will need to get honest about what the new 'ask' is and what our true readiness to take on the future is. 2016 must necessarily start with this difficult question.

Talent analytics will be a key priority. How do we capture, dissect and draw a range of insights in an area traditionally seen as soft and fuzzy? We will leverage more of technology and bring in more discipline to the world of data analytics. 2016 will be a year of greater measurement and effectiveness. The New Year will

will continue to spin and there will be no cookie-cutter solutions. Only when we take our bets with our people, new leadership will get created. This will need plenty of sponsorship and evangelising, and 2016 will show a clear step forward. Similarly, weeding out the deadwood will be a difficult but key agenda as organizational agility and people costs will become business priorities. There are many people who have driven to levels and costs that are not in line with their value contribution. The war for the 'right' talent will have, in this group, unavoidable casualties. To do it fairly and honestly, yet deliberately, is going to help us win the Battle of the Bulge.


Finally, in all the turbulence of a VUCA 2016, a priority will be to keep the talented flock together and fully charged. With the economy hopefully turning the corner and a variety of

REDESIGNING ORGANIZATION STRUCTURES, GETTING MORE OF A MATRIX REALITY TO BE A WAY OF LIFE, MOVING TALENT MORE CONSCIOUSLY TO WHERE THE DEMAND IS WILL BE OUR CONSCIOUS ACTIONS

also keep people productivity on a tight leash. Redesigning organization structures, getting more of a matrix reality to be a way of life, moving talent more consciously to where the demand is rather than be hoarded by an individual manager will all be conscious actions. These are never easy and organizational politics can be challenging but 2016 will demand us to bite tougher bullets.

Smarter hiring, involving technology-enabled platforms and more psychometric anchored evaluations, will help us get more efficient and more predictable. The rub-off on our employer brand is an added benefit as the talent market gets more digital and social media savvy. The war for the talent brand will get sharper in various segments. Reinforcing or reinventing our talent brand will gain focus, especially in the digital reality.

Taking bigger risks with internal talent will be another priority. The top

opportunities tempting talent to take risks with their career, ensuring our best stays together and with us will be key. Communicating with them, offering a reward and recognition mix that will be relevant to the demographic splits in our workforce and reinforcing a culture of trust and respect is what will be asked from 2016. It is in managing these various contradictions of the talent reality that the real challenges and true opportunities lie. One will need to have the cake and eat it too in 2016! 



SCAN THE CODE TO
READ PRABIR JHA'S
ARTICLES AND BLOGS

ENSURING THE BEST STAYS TOGETHER AND WITH US

Prabir Jha, Global Chief People Officer, Cipla Ltd., on how the focus will be on reinforcing & reinventing the talent brand in the future



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A STEP-UP TO THE NEXT LEVEL

At Intel, the focus will continue to be on augmenting talent initiatives and building a conducive culture. **Preethi Madappa**, Director, HR, Intel South Asia tells us about it

In the IT industry, there is a huge demand for talent, which is fairly niche, complex and hard to come by. At Intel India itself, over 80 percent of the 7,000 employees are engaged in pure R&D programs, and they make contributions in critical areas such as Big Data, Internet of Things and wearables.

So come this year, we, at Intel, will continue to focus our energies on building on our already huge talent base, and alongside also encourage and enable the new talent that is coming in to be integrated with the demanding and fast-paced Intel culture.

Additions to the talent base

Going into 2016, we want to increase our employee base in India; and to get the right talent, we are going to put a lot more focus into our talent mapping and our understanding of the external ecosystem.

ENABLING OUR TALENT TO OUTPERFORM AND MEET OUR INNOVATION AND ENGINEERING MILESTONES WILL BE CRITICAL AS WE OPERATE IN A VERY COMPETITIVE IT INDUSTRY

Our focus is on further leveraging market intelligence in our sourcing model, and strengthening our internal processes to capture and manage demand.

Diversity is another important area on our agenda and we would want to take it to the next level this year. Our Home to Office (H2O) program was very successful in 2015, wherein we brought women, who had taken career breaks, back to work, and we want to build on this going in 2016.

Enhancing our employer value proposition, both internally and externally is also going to be very important. Building our academic relations with campuses is a key component of our strategy and we want to engage stronger and deeper with the higher education institutes from a research point on key subject areas such as Big Data, Analytics, sensors, security, etc.

Building the existing talent-base

Enabling our talent to innovate and meet or beat our innovation and engineering milestones will be critical; as we operate in a very competitive technology industry. To accelerate innovation in the organization, we have some key initiatives and we are planning to build on them:


- **Intel Fellow in Residence:** At Intel, the most senior level that a technologist

can achieve is that of a 'Senior Intel Fellow'. We have Intel Fellows mostly in the US, and we aspire to see an Intel Fellow in India as well. As part of the 'Fellow in residence' program, an Intel Fellow from the corporate works closely with technologists in India towards deepening their technical contributions. The Intel Fellow in Residence makes investments in terms of visits to India and working closely with the technical community. The endeavor is to enhance the visibility and competency of that community and overall technical leadership of the organization.

- **Intel India Maker Lab:** Launched in August 2015 at our campus in Bengaluru, Maker Lab is aimed at boosting product innovation and enhance maker capability for start-ups in India and our employees across Internet of Things,

Mobile Devices and other compute-focused domains. Employees are encouraged to use the Maker Lab facility to turn their ideas into innovative hardware products and solutions.

Building managerial capability

Other than focusing on our technical workforce that constitutes over 90 percent of our employee base, we are also aiming to build managerial capability in all managers and leaders by introducing a neuroscience-based training approach, known as LEAD (Leadership Expectations & Disciplines) Architecture. LEAD is a 9-month development journey that includes both immersive in-person and virtual supplemental learning events. The approach of neuroscience is to create a simple, scalable management/leadership curriculum based on common expectations and a consistent architecture that makes it memorable, coherent, intuitive and scalable, designed and delivered in partnership with Neuro Leadership Institute and Intel leaders. By investing in all our managers/leaders through this neuroscience approach, we intend to increase trust and encourage development, build a more inclusive environment; and improve business performance. 



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Talent Management today is not just about getting the right talent; it is more about the long-term impact of the talent you hire. For us at Apollo hospitals, hiring quality talent, capacity development and employee retention are the topmost Talent Management priorities in 2016.

Hiring the best talent available, those with the passion to succeed, fitment to Apollo culture & values, and a commitment to partake in enterprise growth are the strongest focal areas for the upcoming year. Improving the quality of hires amidst a competitive environment and limited talent landscape is without doubt a huge challenge, especially when it comes to core medical talent. Innovative sourcing methodologies and novel channels of information on talent form the core of our talent strategy for 2016. And to drive this internally, we have designed revised metrics for the recruitment teams to measure the

Needs Identification Framework and Impact Measurement Standards. We are relooking at whether the rewards are appropriate today and ensure maximum productivity by tapping individuals and teams wherever there is scope for enhancing capabilities, which is beneficial for both the organization as well as the individual.


Employee retention is also a vital focus for us over the next year. With capability development as the basis, we believe that (while employee engagement and other retention programs are required) both career development programs and a well-defined R&R framework are also crucial elements for employee retention. Also an increased focus in looking at real time data on talent will also take more impetus given the need to deliver better to the patient. With our implementation of HRMS on Cloud, it will mean more effective data being looked rather than just data.

WE HAVE DESIGNED REVISED METRICS FOR THE RECRUITMENT TEAMS TO MEASURE THE QUALITY OF HIRES AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INNOVATIVE HIRING PROGRAMS

quality of hires and the implementation of innovative hiring programs. 'Quality of hire' for us today is the most important metric that has pushed 'Time to Recruit' to the second position (also substantiated by the recent LinkedIn Survey on India Recruitment Trends 2016). While employee referrals act as the top source in most organizations, we have to be a little more cautious in our industry given the impact that any position would have on patient care.

Another major thrust area for Apollo is creating additional value with existing talent. I believe that one of HR's fundamental but unattended areas is to increase the value add of every associate/individual in the organization. Today, tools for helping people improve their capacity have to be more innovative and inclusive. Also, available talent has to correlate with enterprise growth. Only the very exceptional make that quantum leap while others continue where they are with limited growth options. To drive this, we are revamping our Talent

Increasing the lifecycle of the employee to the maximum extent possible needs a clearly defined Career Path program which is to be implemented to 100 percent perfection. Over the next year, we are looking at ensuring that growth opportunities are visible and the right opportunities are available for all employees at all times. With hospitals across multiple locations, we are integrating our Career Growth model to take advantage of the opportunities available. This coupled with R&R programs that touch every good deed or action by an employee are planned and are being rolled out over the next year.

To achieve this, internal development of HR talent is a must and hence we are also planning to initiate targeted HR competency development programs which would be the driver in designing and sustaining the implemented initiatives. 

THE IMPERATIVE OF 'QUALITY OF HIRE'

Jacob Jacob, Chief People Officer, Apollo Hospitals Enterprises Ltd., on how talent management is a part of a long-term strategy and how additional value can be created with the existing talent



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CONTINUING AIM OF LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Shaheen Mistri, Founder and CEO, Teach For India, on how the leadership development journey focuses on both the larger vision of the organization and also on the small things a person does

This article is co-authored by Rapti Mukherjee, Human Resources Manager, Teach For India)

At Teach For India, we hold the very deep belief that each person has the potential to become a leader, and that Leadership Development is a journey. Our endeavor is to create a continuous path towards unleashing every person's greatest potential and thus, try to crystallize the amorphous.

2015 has been an important year for us. Teach For India is currently in phase 2 of its journey which is more about consolidation, phase 1 was about starting up and growing. We are looking at phase 3 from 2017 to 2022, so a lot of planning

OUR THEORY OF DEVELOPMENT PUTS A HIGH LEVEL OF OWNERSHIP AND TRUST IN EACH OF US AND BELIEVES THAT EACH PERSON'S LEADERSHIP HAS A UNIQUE PATTERN

is going on and we are trying to bring out an idea of doing things, leveraging our network and getting closer to the vision we have set out. 2016 stands as an inflection point for Teach For India.

When we say leadership development will be our area of focus, it doesn't mean that it hasn't been our focus so far. But going forward, we are looking at new structures, new ways of inculcating it. We are very open to learning, sharing and in the coming years, we are looking at more and more ways of embedding it in the system. Our theory of development puts a high level of ownership and trust in each of our hands and believes that each person's leadership has a unique pattern and emerges from his/her own life story.

The Leadership Development Journey focuses on purpose, and one is encouraged, again and again, to focus on both a larger vision (for oneself, for education in India) and on purpose, in the small things that one does. Our people processes are structured in such a way that they always touch the 'why', rather than the 'what' and the 'how'. Knowing 'why' you do what you do is at the core of everything. However, it is a daunting task of giving form to something which is essentially nebulous – of marrying the 'why' of the individual

to the 'why' of the organization, of instilling goal orientation but not letting goals define the contribution. This is not something that can be accomplished through an annual or biannual review. It is woven into the very fabric of the organization, and into all structures and processes such as team check-ins, Learning Circles, Step Backs, Staff or Fellow Retreats and most certainly the Leadership Development Journey Conversations which take place twice a year. These conversations encompass learning and inspiration, and support and contribution. These conversations

are very open ended, and every one writes about the aforementioned aspects and hands it over to the manager for the conversation. Although, the conversation is beyond penning it down. For example, a conversation around contribution is not just about achieving your goals, but efforts made to build the team and working towards the shared vision. Leadership Conversations are where we reaffirm the 'whys' - the reason for 'being', 'doing' and for 'never ever giving up'.

Going forward in 2016, we are experimenting different forms and structures of these conversations; and we are running pilots to see the effectiveness of different structures which enable our people to think and reflect more. 🌱



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It is about the value of the organization and seeing that organizational capability on the people front, built across functions and across levels of the business, says **Nagina Singh**, Chief Human Resources Officer, Bharti AXA Life Insurance



managerial level is another priority for us. We are focusing on the 200 plus frontline managers because we think they are critical links to the workforce in the field. When we are hiring for the insurance industry, we know that employees day to day jobs are going to have sales pressures, however it is not fair that we only measure them on sales and not management capability and it is the latter that would enable them to manage the pressure both for themselves and their teams. We train them on the job by involving them in light projects; putting some measurable yardstick around them and then evaluating them. Such long term interventions help (and will help) them overcome the capability gaps they might have. 

As we consider the year that lies ahead, talent will continue to occupy the overall business agenda, not just of the HR leader. This will include components of talent acquisition, engagement, retention, growth and diversity. There are several sub-sets of these talent challenges but the following are most important to consider:

Influence of Mobile and Social

Social media is impacting employer brands like never before. As we become more mobile, and recruiting practices become more global as well as more digital, HR leaders are working to ensure their marketing strategies and social media practices are keeping pace. To enable this, they need awareness around what factors are strengthening or weakening the brand. This is important as majority of job seekers (in particular younger candidates) are likely to research the company (using sites like Glassdoor, company reviews and

ees across all generations have similar expectations at work – a sense of achievement, pride in work, fair treatment relating to compensation, benefits, job security and increasingly work/life balance.

Strategies that some forward-thinking companies are adopting include Creating mentorship through co-leadership, by pairing a millennial with a senior executive which enables the younger colleague to feel empowered and valued and having the opportunity to learn from their mentor; and for the senior executive to learn how to communicate with the company's younger customer base; Offering flexible working options, where companies can increase remote working/telecommuting and flexible work hours; and accommodating different communication and learning styles - for the younger employees who have grown up with digital technology and social media & for those who prefer presentations and face-to-face meetings.

FORWARD-THINKING COMPANIES ARE CREATING MENTORSHIP THROUGH CO-LEADERSHIP AND ACCOMMODATING DIFFERENT COMMUNICATION AND LEARNING STYLES

social media postings) before accepting a job offer, or even engaging in a recruitment process. So how do HR leaders address these areas? It's a complex challenge and requires a high level of skill to be successful, as CHROs need to create buy-in across the entire organization. The factors that need to be considered are:


- The ability to connect and amplify both the company's message and employer brand across multiple social media by making content available, relevant and engaging.
- Making it easier for candidates to browse and apply online, especially via mobile devices.

Back to basics - Developing an engaged workforce?

Today we have a unique workforce where 3 generations are working together but there are myths around this. However, the reality is that despite the fact that these generations have been brought up learning very different methods to produce results (long hours to prove work ethic vs. a more 'results-only' work environment), employ-

Predicting outcomes through HR Analytics

As HR analytics becomes more sophisticated, HR Leaders have more opportunity to provide insights and make recommendations based on facts, rather than gut feel or unsupported opinion, than ever before. The prospect of CHROs being able to provide data-rich, deep insights about a company's workforce is a powerful and attractive one. For most companies, the 'holy grail' remains predictive HR analytics – where HR is able to reliably identify groups of employees who are more at risk for leaving; or more robust, scientific methods of accurately pinpointing employees and managers who are likely to excel in certain areas and under certain conditions. Thanks to rapid advancements in HR Information Systems, HR data is more accessible and more easily manipulated than ever.

In summary, most or all of these points above are on top of HR Leaders' list because of the rapid change that technology is driving on a global scale. 



TALENT WILL CONTINUE TO OCCUPY THE BUSINESS AGENDA

Raj Raghavan, Country HR Leader, Amazon India on how can organizations deal with the talent dilemmas and challenges and what talent strategies they can adopt for 2016

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CREATING A MOTIVATING ENVIRONMENT

Retaining and maintaining the best talent is a challenge that needs to be addressed through creating a motivating environment, says **Veena Swarup**, Director (HR), EIL

Talent is our main asset and we have to leverage it. Acquiring, retaining & maintaining critical talent is the biggest challenge for 2016. We are able to attract the best talent from leading institutes across the length & breadth of India and we nurture it by providing the best training opportunities, blending the right proportion of classroom with on-the-job and experiential learning. This enables a smooth transition from campus to corporate. Training is the most critical function in a knowledge based company like ours. The training interventions focus both on domain as well as behavioral competencies through a well-defined 'Annual Training Calendar' which is arrived at by incorporating inputs from key stakeholders.

We have put together special measures for attracting and retaining talent in 2016. These measures, in addition to focusing on attracting and retaining talent also focus on having the right mix/the right human resource model to meet the demands of the business. The right mix not only

ensures the availability of adequate numbers but also the kind of sourcing model that is to be used taking into account the market dimensions, thereby enabling decisions regarding outsourcing or term-based hiring.

However, there are challenges even when talent is available. For a company like ours, which is competing with the private sector, it's all about competitive bidding, and we have to keep the overheads and the cost of manpower in mind. We are also trying to see what kind of model we need to build to cater to such a set-up. Therefore, Human Resource planning also forms a part of our core agenda.

We also believe that creating an environment that motivates and engages employees is vital. If the people are engaged, enthused and empowered at the workplace, they become partners in propelling the organisation towards its growth path. We have a business strategy for 2020 and we have formulated the HR strategy aligned with the business strategy. To take the HR strategy forward and set the ball rolling, a number of initiatives have also been carved out from the HR strategy which have clearly defined time schedules. We have already started studying the requirements for overseas deployment in tandem with our aspirations to have a global footprint. A team has been put in place which is assimilating the requirements, constraints and cultural sensitivity for doing business in identified countries. 

WE HAVE STARTED STUDYING THE
TALENT REQUIREMENTS OVERSEAS,
BECAUSE OUR BUSINESS IS
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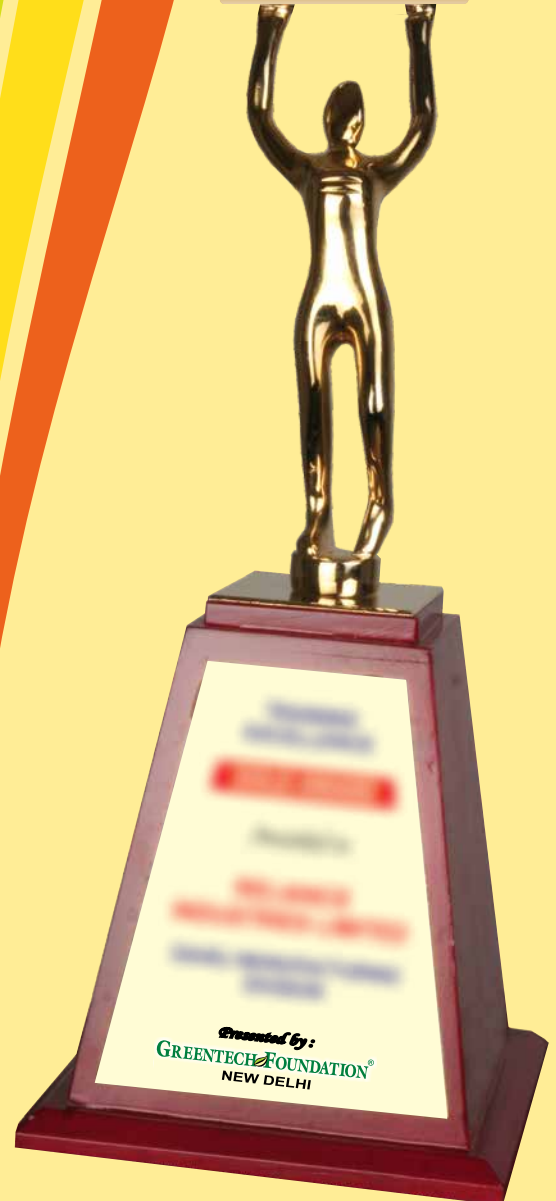


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GETTING READY FOR 2016

NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS FOR CHROs

Beginning of the New Year is the time to start making a game plan for your HR strategy that you need or want to see accomplished, but somehow never managed to get the time to do. Create your own list by brainstorming on your business's 'Big Rocks' – the most impactful efforts that will bring not only short-term but long-term business results. Here are our 10 New Year's resolutions for CHROs in 2016

✓ RESOLUTION #1

Think about the long-term viability of the organization

Today what business needs from HR is not partnership but acceleration of business impact. CHROs must contribute a vision, purpose and a unique point of view and to be able to do that, I resolve to spend at least two hours a week enhancing my knowledge and understating of the future of work, the worker and the workplace.

✓ RESOLUTION #2

Pay attention to the generation mix at the workplace

In the next 3 to 5 years, post millennials will be joining the workforce thereby adding to the complexity of juggling with a multi-generational population at work.

Understanding & designing an approach to managing this complexity will be a critical component for employee engagement. I resolve to take this challenge head on and create a plan to manage multi-generational staff, from workplace environment, to policies and procedures, training, to focus on inclusiveness culture. I will make 2016, the year when we understand the differences between generations and we create a laser focus plan to enable success for every individual.

✓ RESOLUTION #3

Wellness on top of the talent agenda

Sitting is the new smoking. Sedentary lifestyle has a very serious implication on health and wellbeing and that in turn creates absenteeism, and loss of productivity. There are many ways that organizations can support employees to make better choices, from nutrition, to exercise, to sleep habits – from introducing gamification into wellness, employee engagement activities that include outdoor activities, changing sitting to walking meetings, online programs that encourage moving every hour. In 2016, I resolve that I will take a more proactive approach to enable employee wellness.

✓ RESOLUTION #4

Making Performance Process a two-way street

For the last 2 years, organizations have been trying to change the way they look at performance management and have been struggling in this process. The need of the hour is to move from a yearly tick-in-the-box approach to an ongoing exercise that brings together managers and team members for a constructive discussion. In 2016, I resolve that I will train our managers to understand that our role as managers is not to review but to enable, and if we focus on giving frequent feedback to our teams, then success will be a two-way street.

✓ RESOLUTION #5

Bringing Social and Mobility in all HR processes

Social is nothing more than a communication tool and mobile is nothing else than a channel to communicate. It is time for CHROs to finally take on these new tools and channels head on. Social is an indispensable tool today to engage and attract potential candidates and communicate with current employees. Mobile is in many ways the most effective channel today for communication and work. In 2016, I resolve that I will not hesitate to incorporate social and mobile across the HR function.

A CHECKLIST CREATE YOUR OWN NEW YEAR RESOLUTION LIST FOR 2016

Prepare your own New Year resolution, make it real and actionable. Get your team involved, it will restore and renew your energy to take on the possibilities of the year ahead. Here are some of the things to consider:

- ✓ **Consider taking stock on where are you today** – Do an audit, do a benefits utilization review, conduct an employee satisfaction survey, get a view on where you stand.
- ✓ **Prioritize long-term efforts** – Get your succession planning in place, implement a entry level training program, focus on upgrading your middle management effectiveness training, start or strengthen employee R&R programs, incorporate social in your recruitment efforts.
- ✓ **Don't forget the hygiene factors** – Update employee handbook, review data sanity of employee personnel files, review the use of company subscriptions to product and services that you may not be using anymore.
- ✓ **Sharpen the HR's Saw** – Attend events, roundtables, and conferences to learn, experience and expand your professional network. Catch up your HR reading list. Update your social profiles. Draft your own development goals for 2016.

✓ RESOLUTION #6

Apply data-driven approach to unpredictable business of HR

Progressive companies are leveraging the power of data analytics in talent acquisition, L&D and employee engagement. CHROs have a historical opportunity today to make predictions by converting diverse forms of data from different parts of the organization, asking the right questions and leveraging technologies and tools available. In 2016, I resolve to quit avoiding incorporating a data-driven approach to the HR function.

✓ RESOLUTION #7

Looking at alternative talent arrangements

Today, organizations are looking at contingent workers more than ever before and this trend is driven both by the need of the employer in terms of costs, financial structure and particular skills but is also driven by the talent themselves that is looking for

more flexible arrangements that provide an opportunity to increase their experiences and career richness. In 2016, I resolve that I will take proactive approach to workforce planning and incorporate a plan to attract, manage and engage contingent workforce.

✓ RESOLUTION #8

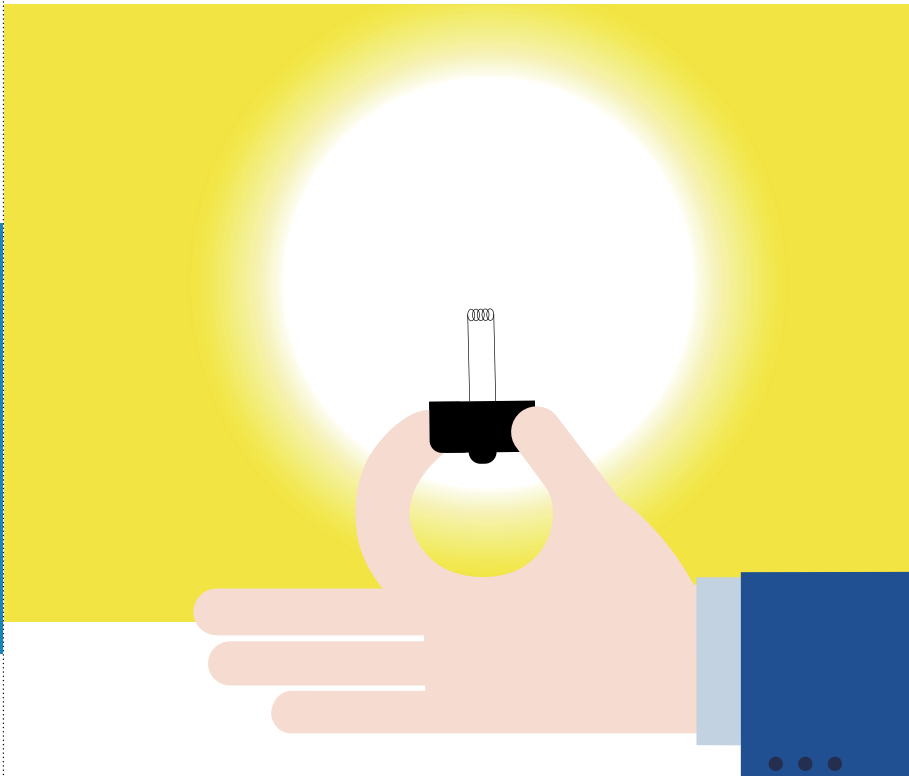
Sharpening the Saw

HR leaders and HR teams are under tremendous pressure to upgrade themselves (as it is true in all other functions in the organization). The importance of functional expertise continues to be very important, and this is coupled with new skills that HR leaders must possess like analytical thinking, technology implementation, and managing large transformational change. In 2016, I resolve to work on improving the skills and knowledge from everybody in the HR teams. I will co-create a development plan with my team that encompasses a continuing education process. 🍷

GURPREET BAJAJ

Time for a HR makeover?

How can HR be 'disruptive' and win a war in the 21st century against challenges of technology, increasing workforce diversity and macroeconomic shifts? Let's find out!



While technology seems to have solved a lot of administrative inefficiencies in HR, it has also exposed a serious imagination deficit in HR professionals

Maybe only to maintain scale rather than quality." With over simplification of HR discipline where any fresh MBA/grad can possibly run your company's interviews or training sessions, HR as a practice often struggles to be seen as indispensable as finance, marketing or IT – in fact it is often perceived as most liquid and tradable in case of a business exigency. Building an HR specialist talent in form of Tech HR Champs (HRIS, LMS, ATS, Mobile) Social Recruiters, Psychometric Docs, Competency Gurus, Comp and Ben Analysts, Instructional Designers, OD Specialists, Regulatory Experts) is the most basic value HR can bring to the business.

HR: The New Business Blog

A lot has been heard and deliberated in countless HR seminars and panels about how HR should or can be more aligned and productive for the business and truly be a 'business partner'. In this context, it is painfully ironic to observe a baffling sense of aversion amongst HR professionals with basic company P&L and a thorough understanding of core business metrics! Try asking your last quarter's revenue and YoY growth from your HR team and in most cases you are oncourse for an

Everywhere I look, I find everyone talking of change. In context of HR and its future, a lot has been speculated and debated – from whether we will need HR at all to how HR function will look like or what kind of value should it bring. I see both the extremes underpinning a common concern – *How does HR stay relevant?*

We all possibly know and have debated in countless forums on how the HR-Business marriage can be saved! My fundamental worry with this checklist of 'Expectations from HR' is probably not what HR needs to do in future but whether HR itself has the right capabilities in its team to pull it off. We seem to be aiming for future HR impact with lofty goals, roadmaps and fancy HR products in the market, but still have no radical change in the 'skillsets' we look to hire today for our own teams from

the ones we hired half a decade back! How does HR with all honest intentions expect to be 'disruptive' and win a war in the 21st century with bow and arrow shooters?

I essentially see critical implications of this in the way HR must relook at its own talent inventory before drafting its charter. The New Age HR Capability Model must have a core of building HR functional expertise but the real propellers and game changers are going to be five other new HR Avatars.

The New Age HR Capability Model

HR: The Indispensable Expert

I have sadly heard so many times for HR than any other function – "Anyone can do HR's job" to "If I can take interviews and deliver mentoring sessions for my team members, do I really need HRBP?"

unpleasant surprise. HR often shoots itself in its foot when it fails to understand the basics of the business it strives to partner. In a VUCA world, where mass hiring, mass layoffs, cost cuts, acquisitions and geographical expansions are a frequent business reality, HR professionals must be on top of their business to effectively deliver and manage the people side of these realities. They must be capable to add personal value to conversations about markets, new products, customers, competition, financials and operations of the business. Without this basic business and financial literacy, HR professionals cannot even imagine shaping a business-centric people and organization agenda and are likely to be restricted to a transactional or administrative value.

HR: The King of UX

Gamification, HR ERP, Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS), immersive learning etc. are no longer alien concepts in HR. There is no reason why an organization or employees designing swanky mobile app for its customers should or will settle for anything lesser for its HR mobile product. Highly immersive induction games, cartoonified policy booklets, a cool mobile app to apply for leaves/record your claims/submit performance review, interview blogs with CEO, creative buzz building campaigns – design thinking and creative writing are two critical skillsets needed in HR teams to deliver an exceptional ‘user experience’ for Gen Ys. I strongly believe that while technology seems to have solved a lot of HR administrative inefficiencies, it has also exposed a serious imagination deficit in HR professionals and left a welcome space for UX talent and seasoned content writing skills in HR teams.

Whether it's a new HR ERP implementation or a new LMS, it's the design imagination and creative usability ideas from the partnering HR team which can make a decisive difference in employee experience once the rubber hits the road. It's time to see HR champions sensitised with UX basics push the ERP vendor not only for accuracy of an employee's leave data on the new portal but insist a need for a neater tab design, to reduce a couple of clicks for an employee and strive for a superior employee experience.

With organizations cutting through borders and standard work timings, e-mail communications are the most critical and potent engagement mediums and there is a dire need for HR professionals who are seasoned, agile and creative writers. Announcing good or bad news, drafting a launch mail for a new HR initiative, writing an engaging write-up on internal social blog,

it is not unusual to see young HR talent either playing too safe and go traditional and plain Jane (which understandably land into junk mails) or take an eternity for the hallowed draft to be ready. You simply can't force people to read emails – may be it's time to don the adman hat and give your product a makeover. Doordarshan can be an inspiration. Written communication lies at the heart of HR communication and sadly is one the least nurtured skillsets in HR professionals – no surprise why even a sizable number of CHROs today would prefer to outsource or delegate their critical organization level communication emails, sadly losing a high impact connect opportunity.

HR: The Mean Marketer

Over the last decade, the Big Data and Social Media have virtually revolutionized the way world thinks and communicates. In context of HR, the disruptive effects of these call for ‘social media specialists’ and ‘mini data scientists’ powering the HR camp.

Having a company Facebook or Twitter or LinkedIn page is far from being an established and engaging employer brand on social media. Our employer brand strategy makers as well as executors need to thoroughly understand the intricacies

of digital and social media marketing – a skill level no less than a professional social marketing talent in our marketing team. Having an in-house designer talent with mastery in design and authoring tools like Photoshop, Articulate etc., HR must be self-sufficient and have its own mini-design-factory – significantly reducing painful dependencies on local marketing/design teams for even basic HR communication.

The same is true for data. With high-end HR ERP, LMS's, Social Job Networks, Compensation Benchmarks at our disposal, the amount of relevant talent data accessible to HR is staggering. What is missing is talent intelligence – an in-house skill for an incisive data analytics powering crucial talent decisions in hunting, evaluating and rewarding top talent. At the moment, HR analytics is largely ‘reconciling’ in nature (basic HR dashboard with joiners, exits, budgets etc.) while the business need is to have HR graduate to a more predictive as well as prescriptive analysis role and connect the dots for vital people insights like expected retention, performance, engagement, fitment, employee's preferences etc.

Given the potential of social media to attract and engage today's talent and the amount of data HR has access to, I would seriously consider to trade off one gene-

While HR is aiming for lofty futuristic goals for itself, there is no evident radical change in the ‘skillsets’ it looks to hire in its own team from the ones hired half a decade back!



ralist/recruiter/trainer for a professional social media expert or a data analyst in my HR team for a diverse team composition.

HR: The Culture Activist

Does your HR team and leaders represent your organization's DNA? HR unarguably is and must be the custodian of the organization's culture and conscience. It's a must to revisit the ethical and culture index of each HR team member as a lot of times rule makers very often survive breaking them, leading to rather embarrassing role models in HR, invoking a poor internal credibility and trust for the function.

Evangelists of culture must also be powerful communicators – confident and well poised public speakers who have the ability to engage, story tell and influence their audience. I have observed plenty of HR careers stalling just by spending way too much time behind laptops rather than people! Just like the written communication, enthusing oratory skill is crucial for HR practitioners to build relationships, and gain trust of employees and key stakeholders. If we want HR to lead and sell critical change initiatives, we ought to have talent who can communicate, reason, mentor and inspire the community around them.


HR: The Ultimate Finisher

One common image issue with HR is often around limited execution ability in sync with dynamic business needs. Initiatives either take too long or lose steam midway after a big bang start. This is somewhere related to an evident skill scarcity around managing high expectations and more importantly long-term projects with moving targets. Just like our cricket captain MS Dhoni, business needs a finisher in HR who can clinically plan and deliver a far-fetched goal even in unpredictable business conditions, learning to live with greys, thrive in ambiguities with a relentless focus on end result. This finishing edge also requires skillsets of a master negotiator – for getting that C-level recruitment handshake, driving change implementation, moderating the super-heated talent pool debates or employee forums and of course, winning the compensation budgets from CFO!

Change is difficult but not changing is fatal!

The writing on the wall is for a change and every function including HR is reengineering its fabric to suit to the exciting but unpredictable weather ahead.

As they say, the best change happens from within. Is your HR team ready with the right skillsets and ammunition to deliver in the face of disruptive business models as well as technology, increasing workforce diversity and macroeconomic shifts? There cannot be a better time for HR Leaders to objectively evaluate and decisively challenge the talent composition of their teams vis a vis the dynamic businesses they are partnering and capabilities they are expected to deliver. And remember, to me these new talent compositions are only the 'new qualifiers' for the race. In the coming decade, this eventful interplay of economies between the new age business models, employee demographics, technological shifts, and actual skillsets in the market may give birth to new formalized HR disciplines with exciting roles and careers of what HR may not even be a suitable title!

To sum it up, HR today doesn't need a boost, its due for a metamorphosis. 

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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The New Age HR Capability Model



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RAJ NEHRU

Change before you have to!

The capability of a leader to transform change adversity to opportunity is what makes a leader distinct and that's what promises business success

Markets have changed, leaders have changed and so has the competitive environment. There was a time when star products or cash cows continued for a long period in the Product Life Cycle and companies wouldn't replace or innovate and would stretch their life till beyond the maturity phase. Think about some 20-30 years back and try to recall the products and services that we used to avail e.g. OK & Hamam Soap, GCG OR Weston TV, Ambassador & Fiat Cars, Topaz or Wilkinson Stainless Steel Blade and many others. None of them are seen today the way we used to see them topping the charts during those days. What happened to them?

When the gates of liberalization opened, it made many companies, products and leaders vulnerable to competitive environment, uncertainty and increasing disorder; organizations and leaders too went through a similar paradox and many haven't still come out it – some are still struggling, but some companies & leaders navigated through these challenges well. For example, in the United States, Southwest Airlines is a living example. When the entire Airlines Industry was going through labor unrest, fuel shocks, deregulation, strikes and recession, and then the 9/11 terrorist attacks also happened, it bankrupted many airline companies. In that scenario, we saw only Southwest Airlines rising to the top with its stock growing more than 63 times in 30 years. Given that other airlines were also operating under the same environment, what made Southwest Airlines to surge ahead? Was it just a good business model or something else?

Another example that none of us can forget is of Dell Corporation, the makers of Dell Computers, a company that sold computers on "made to order model". What happened to this once-upon-a-time-brand-leader of the market or what happened



Successful leaders understand and anticipate the probability of facing continuous uncertainty

to Nokia, Sony or Kodak? Why were not they as consistent in their success the way Southwest Airlines was?

Jim Collins, a business consultant and Morten Hansen, a management professor, in their research, detailed in the book, *Great by Choice*, examined more than 20,400 companies and found that the distinctive behaviors of leaders are the key to the success of their businesses. In one of their researches they studied, two teams of adventurers who had set out on an expedition to reach South Pole in 1911. One team was led by Roald Amundsen and the other by Robert Scott. In the beginning of 20th century there was no modern communica-

tion system nor did they have any modern navigation technologies and other expedition equipment. Both teams went through similar challenges of unforgiving weather and environment with gale force winds and no communication means to call for rescue. While one team led the mission to success, the other failed so miserably that they never returned back. The important question to raise here is what separated the fate of these two teams? What Jim Collins and Morten found was that "Amundsen and Scott achieved dramatically different outcomes not because they faced dramatically different circumstances, but because they displayed very different behaviors."

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It was found that successful leaders understand and anticipate the probability of facing continuous uncertainty and that they cannot control and cannot accurately predict what lies ahead, yet they reject the idea that forces outside their control or chance events will completely determine their results. They accept full responsibility for their fate!

They manage uncertainty. While conditions, environment, circumstances will keep changing and one will have no control over it, it's a leaders competence and capability to manage and drive results and change adversity to opportunity.

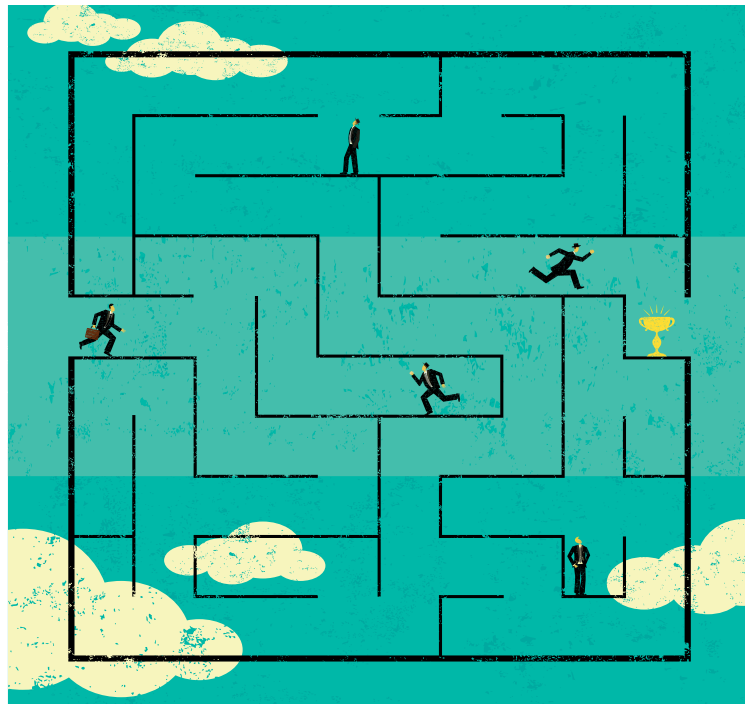
Ram Charan, a renowned business advisor, in his research termed this as Perceptual Acuity or "the ability to sense what is coming before the fog clears", which means the ability of a leader to scan through the dark clouds of uncertainty and act before others act. Ram goes to the extent of segregating 'Uncertainty' into 'Structural' & 'Operational Uncertainty'. When IBM sold its Computer Division to Lenovo, Dell failed to recognize this change, which resulted into an operational uncertainty, and which was followed by a double whammy when Dell got hit by the structural uncertainty of Apple coming out with android-based phones that completely stooped the computer industry and Dell in specific. Dell could have managed it, had Michel Dell understood and recognized winds of change in the market.

Therefore, today there is a need for the leaders to learn and master uncertainty as there is no more a straight road to success. Some fundamental actions that can help one to develop this capability are:

Be a divergent thinker

Build networks: Leaders must continuously build a vast and diverse network that helps them to gather various information, perceptions and viewpoints. The network sometimes also works as a testing ground for new ideas and also building new and diverse repertoire of thoughts through an enabling exchange of views, which is crucial for understanding and appreciating diversity. Also leaders should develop a mentality that is flexible and open to new ideas and calculated risk taking.

Scan and observe: Leaders must develop a flavor and ability to constantly scan and see around the corners and also see over the horizon for even small seemingly un-important signals, information, idea, data etc. A sense of "Wonder" & "Inquisitiveness" are key to developing this skill.



Leaders need to understand that not taking a risk is a decision trap that emerges from a false belief that staying safe is better

Demonstrate convergent thinking

Integrate insights: The vast network that one builds and the insights one gathers from customers, competitor moves, market forces etc. must be integrated together to view new patterns that are emerging and new insights that are becoming visible. This is significant to help one understand the signals of change in advance and also prepare for it before others do!

Step out of the jar: Our physical capabilities have limitations, but our mental capabilities are vast and one must learn to constantly develop, leverage and apply the unutilized capabilities beyond the known abilities by practicing different things, perspectives and also by challenging our own assumptions. Working with or through assumptions won't let us innovate so trying different things will bring life to the work that we do. It would mean to step out of the jar, leaving behind all our old paradigms, attitudes, and relook at things from a different dimension with an unbiased approach, where we willingly consider the opinion of others as well and are ready to sail against the tide imbibing new ideas and innovative thoughts via others as well. This approach will remove our underlying

fears and allow us to experiment new things and also accept new outcomes. This attitude will also prepare us to be receptive to ambiguities and will transform our mental make-up from managing change to creating change.

Finally, take action!

Taking risks: Mark Zuckerberg said, "The biggest risk is not taking any risk. In a world that is changing really quickly, the only strategy that is guaranteed to fail is not taking risks". Sometimes many leaders are gripped by a comfort syndrome and feel that bringing any change in the status quo may be risky, failing to recognize the need to evaluate the cost of inaction in the form of opportunity loss. Leaders need to understand that not taking a risk is a decision trap that emerges from a false belief that staying safe is better. Risk taking can bring success, if leaders leverage diversity of information, Big Data Analytics, Predictive Techniques for a timely directional action. 🏆

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

RAJ NEHRU is senior HR Professional, Director - HARTRON & Governing Council Member for Global Village Foundation (GVF)



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Q & A

Technology has globalized the skill market

INTERVIEW



James Parsons, Founder & CEO, Arrows Group Global, on transformation of the recruitment industry, the emerging trends in the HR industry and the long-term vision of company

By Ester Martinez & Jafar Rehman

James Parsons founded Arrows Group in 2003 with Adrian Treacy (COO) and has overseen the company's growth and international expansion. He champions Arrows Group's employee value proposition and the company's approach to building winning teams – as evidenced by recognition in the Sunday Times 'Top 100 Small Companies to Work For' for five consecutive years, and coming eighth in the 2014 Sunday Times International Track 200, as the highest ranked staffing business.

Q What has changed over the years in recruitment and what is driving businesses now?

A Some things have remained intrinsically the same, such as recruitment is a people services business and it will always remain the same. There are a number of factors around technology and processes that have changed throughout the last 10-15 years in this sector. Looking back, in 2003, staffing was a very straightforward process; it was recruiting staff – contractual, permanent or on a flexible basis but through a very limited amount of resources. Back then you could work closely with the companies in a very linear format. Over a period of ten years, a number of disruptive changes have come in the market and there has been a change in the way we work, and technology is a big part of that. The avenues of attracting talent have exploded over time. What were exceptional circumstances earlier have now become the norm and skills have globalized. We had to re-diversify

what we delivered, and from being a purely recruiting company, we became a people services company. But what has fundamentally changed is the technology platform we operate on and the customer base that is even more demanding now – today, a customer does not just ask for people, they may ask us to source people, manage their onboarding, reference them, sort the outplacement services, training and all of such people services.

Q Customer demands and expectations have increased with time. What is driving these changes and what have been the challenges?

A I think the trend we are seeing now amongst our customer base is that the competition for skills is now global. Technology is driving change at a fast pace and skills market has to react to this at a much faster pace to keep up. Hence, companies today, are under a huge amount of pressure to deliver on the ever-expanding needs and also refining their own services. The customers we work for today want to drive the pricing with value added services and the pace of delivery. So where previously the procurement exercise would have been very cost driven, cost is now one of the three or four of the primary drivers in a procurement process. Companies are becoming very adept at attracting skill.

At the moment, our customers are competing on their EVP – Employee Value Proposition and where they position that in the global skills market is absolutely fundamentally important for their success rate as an employer and that is driven by technology. And it is our job to be able to refine that proposition and put it out there in the market because it is a skills-driven market. Today the customers and companies no longer dictate how and what type of people they want. Now the power shift is very much more going to the skills market, where the new generations coming into the job market is dictating the terms of how and where they want to work. This has provided far more opportunities to the employee than the employer, and the employers have to adapt to that.

Q So the skills or employees today are driving the business and not the employers. How is the HR leadership community evolving to this change?

A Historically, I think HR has been aspirational rather than entrepreneurial. However, the HR will have the opportunity to increase its influence because I think HR will become far more dominant in terms of procurement as skills and people become more valuable in a complex environment that is driven by technology and advancements. HR has the opportunity to become really more mainlined in an organization. Today, I see that very few of the CEOs come from the HR area of business – most come from sales, marketing or finance. And I think that shows that HR is too far from the transaction, commercial side of the business whereas that should not be

the case. With the growing importance of the workforce and the skills that are coming through, there is a potential, there is the opportunity for HR to restart, plug into the main board and to generate CEOs eventually. HR leaders can be significantly more impactful than the others. HR leaders are fundamentally there when their staff comes to them. They definitely have far more inclusive skills, for e.g. they will get involved with sales and marketing and they are commercially aware of how they can impact the overall company direction. Thus, they become really important to the overall fabric of the company and people get to be positioned far more centrally as a service.

Q How will automation empower the end buyer considering the fact that organizations like Arrows are working a lot faster to fulfill the recruitment or other needs of companies?

A I think technology will be shrinking the role of HR from an administrative perspective. And for HR, the value that will be added will be from strategic perspective. For example in America, now it is very common for people to miss out the staffing sector and go directly to the market and put out contracts. There is no HR, no third party staffing provider. Therefore, HR as a whole needs to become far more strategic and far less operational because operations can be automated and we are seeing the evidence of that already.

HR as a whole needs to become far more strategic and far less operational

Q Tell us about Arrows industry's move in India. There has been a lot of effort into building a global team. What drove this decision and how has it been so far?

A It's a massive eye opener working in India; the experience of operating a business here has been fantastic. It was a compelling reason for us to come here because the skills market is globalizing and if we are to remain a strategic player within this sector, we have to be able to deliver a global service. One needs to become people services business and also to be able to offer service across HR training. Working from India gives us that opportunity – the skills are here, it's been the global leader for BPO and it marries very nicely with the evolution of our strategy. The strategy we are pursuing is really being able to have a global operation center based out of India as it provides us the ability to attract high level skills, ambitious, well-educated and motivated people. It also gives us an opportunity to adopt the Follow-the-Sun sourcing methodology where we are now able to start working round the clock to compliment what we are doing in Europe. 

AMIT MALIK



Ask to listen and act to care

Stay interviews remain a potent, though largely unused tool towards retaining employees. A look at the potential of Stay Interviews

HR asks employees the reasons for leaving at the time of exit interviews? Who is trying to understand why people stay in this company? I love this company and as long as my reasons for staying hold strong, I will like to stay." This is a part of conversation that stayed with me long after the meeting with a high potential employee in my company ended. Constantly being nagged by this question, I embarked on the journey to understand more about Stay interviews.

During the late 90s, Beverly Kaye, Founder and Chairwoman of Career Systems International, was consulting for a large company that wanted to retain 38 people on its SAP team. Kaye asked the team members two questions: What could the company do to keep them, and what would entice them to leave the company? This exercise Kaye conducted is what we call today, a Stay Interview. A "stay interview" is a periodic one-on-one structured quasi-retention conversation between a manager and a highly valued "at-risk-of-leaving employee" that identifies and then reinforces the factors that drive an employee to stay. It also identifies and minimizes any "triggers" that might cause them to consider quitting.

For businesses, retention of key and critical employees is the real game to stay competitive. Many companies reach out to employees in their own different ways. Some do it like the classical HR business partners, doing one-on-one meetings; some do pre-exit meetings with people likely to exit; some use traditional focus group discussion and some have come up with early warning metrics to identify potential attrition. Irrespective of the path chosen, all organizations will agree that losing employees is a costly affair, and it's not only the costs you incur in hiring and training new employees but goes beyond like lowered initial productivity of new

It doesn't matter so much where, when, or how you ask - But what will matter is 'ask to listen' and 'act to care'

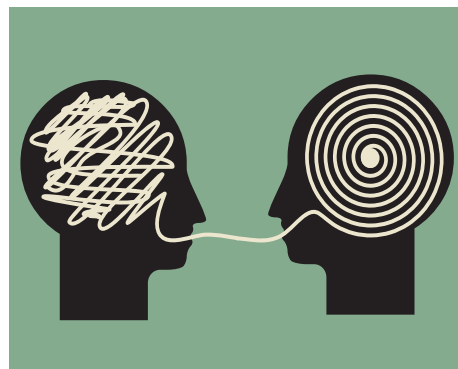
hire, overworked remaining staff and 'lost knowledge'.

Stay interviews remain a potent, though largely unused tool towards this end. A stay interview helps in understanding why employees stay, so that those important factors can be reinforced. There are numerous benefits of a stay interview like unlike engagement surveys or group discussions, this is about what matters to the employee, where the conversation is focused on identifying and reinforcing the positive factors about the job and actions that can be discussed and agreed upon.

However, before conducting a stay interview, managers need training on how to conduct the interview, the questions to ask, how to build trust, and how to effectively listen. Managers need to understand that the essence is in the conversation and need to take into consideration the following points:

Be genuine, or don't do it at all: The sad thing is if you ask "What's important to you" and the employee replies "I want more challenging work," and then you say "That's good" and move on to the next question, instead of asking "So what would challenge you?" Be willing to go deeper on the answers you get.


Don't trivialize how your employees feel: As Tom Peters famously said, 'perception is everything!' You may agree



or disagree with the views expressed, but nonetheless, they are the current reality of the employees. Beyond listening, you need to respond, and what you say is critical.

Keep it disconnected from performance discussions: It is critical to build trust & confidence around this exercise. That will not happen if employees view it as another performance discussion or worse, are afraid that what they say can be used against them.

Informal yet actionable: The manager must discuss possible courses of action to reinforce what the employee values. If you can't deliver, tell them the truth. But also tell them you'll investigate the possibilities.

There are numerous ways to retain employees, but approaches that target employees with the assumption that 'one size will fit all' are likely to be unsuccessful. Asking will not only make your talent feel valued, but their answers will provide the information you need to customize strategies to keep each of them engaged. It doesn't matter so much where, when, or how you ask - But what will matter is ask to listen and act to care. 

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Learning agility: Enablers and derailers



Learning Agility is the leading predictor of organizational and leadership success and it is important to make it a habit. A look at the enablers of learning agility!

Dr Mrityunjay Kumar Srivastava & Arvind Katageri



In a rapidly changing business environment, what happens when we don't keep pace with the change? Answer seems to be obvious. Actually if we look around, several of the fortune 500 companies which created buzz just a decade ago have disappeared from the list today. Many times, explanations given for the downfall are complacency and not keeping pace with the changing business scenario. However, a common-sensical question teases the mind, "Why a company doing so well, did not want to do well always and continue to be on the top forever?" As organizations/business persons, we all want to excel, but why become content and not change for better? In fact, more rational reason for downfall seems to be organizations not reading the future trends carefully and hence, not preparing proactively to tackle the future vis-a-vis the competition that has done it. So, being alert to new business developments, asking questions such as 'what if' to tackle any unforeseen situation and constantly learning new

ways to adapt to changing needs, market situations etc., are the differentiators between successful and not so successful organizations, effective and not so effective leaders. The management literature refers to this ability as "Learning agility", that is, learning in anticipation to deal with new situations and applying the learning appropriately to deliver better performance.

Learning agility, therefore, is not just the ability to change but also the capability to acquire as well as transfer knowledge and experience suitably from one situation to new situations in a timely, effective, and sustainable way when required. In other words, learning in agile organizations, people continuously learn from the experiences they go through, adapt, apply and grow. For sure, these things will not be possible if organizations don't reflect. Hence, reflection becomes the hallmark characteristic of learning agility. The point to be noted here is that although agile organizations often change, they do not pursue change for change's sake. They pursue it for competitive advantage.

Research has proven that organizations/leaders, who demonstrate the same acquired behaviors in all situations without appreciating the nuances of changing scenario, tend to fail more often as compared to those who apply learning from one situation to another after diagnosing the context. Good news is that learning agility is not an innate skill; it can be learnt and refined with sustained effort. Some of the enablers in cultivating and refining learning agility are:

Curiosity: When we are curious about something, our mind expects and anticipates new ideas related to it. In fact, studies show that by being inquisitive, we are able to see new opportunities which are normally not obvious otherwise. Most importantly, when we are curious, we don't take things for granted. We normally question the assumptions. And this mindset enables us to explore new possibilities. It helps us to navigate and work through complex and ambiguous situations discovering solutions by making fresh connections. Inquisitive leaders and organizations pay special attention to make sense of what is going on in the environment.

Divine Discontentment: People with constructive dissatisfaction are positively restless and hence very inquisitive. They hardly feel satisfied as they

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believe there is always a scope for improvement. Challenging status quo and striving for variety is way of life for them. They believe in experimentation and trying out new ideas without getting unnecessarily scared of failure. In fact, they believe failure is the stepping stone for success and therefore do not get overwhelmed by unfamiliarity of the situation. People/organizations with positive tension take risks as well as invest significant effort in continuous learning and improvement, never resting on their laurels believing that they have arrived in life.

Adaptability: The third important enabler of learning agility is adaptability. The critical thing here is to acknowledge the fact that the change has occurred and we will have to let go some of the success formula of past whether it is dealing with people, cultures, competition, internal or external environment or running the business. People with adaptability are quick in creating space to learn new things by unlearning some of the old ways of doing things. They are confident and realistically optimistic in making things happen. Optimism also helps lift the morale of others around to be nimble by creating an environment of positivity and buoyancy to reach desired outcome in legitimate way.

Hunger for Success: Intensity to succeed using ethical means irrespective of past failure or success gives sufficient

indication whether an organization or person can be termed learning agile or not. Hunger for whatsoever reason – stirs us into action and hence learning new things. As continuous learning is important for agility, humility is essential for learning. So failure should not lead to timidity and accomplishment should not breed arrogance. In both the cases, learning suffers and person/organization loses out. Maintaining cool while having aggressive business strategy helps achieve success. But, this requires tremendous self-control and a very positive mindset. To be successful, stay hungry and be open to learning from all the sources like crazy.

Understanding Self: Last but not the least, if we are able to understand our own needs, habits, desires, strengths, weaknesses, and all other things that makes us tick, we will not only be effective but will also help others become more productive. It is generally said the more you know about yourself, the better you are at adapting life changes that suit your needs. The more we pay attention to our feelings and how we work, the better we'll understand why we do the things we do. But the question arises 'is it easy to recognize our needs/wants/emotions?' In most cases, this takes a lot of effort as it's very hard to look at oneself in an objective manner, but it's always worth a shot. The point here is to question our approach, including our methodology,


biases and deeply held assumptions. One can also look at getting critical feedback about self from some trustworthy friends. This way, you see yourself from someone else's perspective and gain a little extra insight into your blind spot. The important thing here is to have courage to reflect and consequently act on the information to develop new skills and use them in combination with existing skills and experience, to derive new solutions.

While enablers pave the way to become learning agile, one has to be cautious of derailers that may pull down the performance drastically. Some of the derailers we must watch out for are:

Complacency: One should be particularly extra careful after a significant accomplishment as many times success leads to arrogance and therefore complacency blocking learning agility.

Shielding: Don't justify your behaviors to other. Being comfortable while receiving uncomfortable feedback leads to learning, on the contrary defensiveness becomes mental block in getting feedback resulting into losing learning points shared by others.

Delaying: *Ho jayega* (it will happen) attitude is about pushing things which are important but not urgent to the end of 'To-do list'. A habit of this sort leads to learning paralysis, a syndrome which is noticed in people who wait for an activity to become urgent before being carried out. In this state, doing the activity takes precedence and learning from it through dissection and reflection gets a back seat.

Obviously, one should strengthen the enablers and weaken the derailers to enhance learning agility. Remember, while all the above discussed enablers are important, what is crucial is being judicious and not excessively using these enablers to be learning agile to make the workplace high performing. In a research conducted by Korn Ferry in 2013, it was found that companies with greatest rates of highly learning agile executives produced 25 percent higher profit margins compared with peer companies. In another study, it was also revealed that learning agility is the leading predictor of success in leadership roles. And therefore, to have a definitive edge over competition, individuals/organizations must focus on making learning agility a habit. 

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Although agile organizations often change, they do not pursue change for change's sake but for competitive advantage



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

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ANITA KIRPAL

Unleashing the potential of diversity

Creating a psychologically safe environment is the key to unlocking the potential of diversity

DIVERSITY



A cultural shift is needed around inclusive leadership which is all about openness, accessibility and availability

they aware of all the diversity that already exists in the organization and in their teams? Are they reaching out broadly to bring in additional perspectives, experiences and ways of working?

The challenge of creating a diverse workforce

Creating a genuinely diverse workplace takes effort and a conscious commitment. Recent research on mirror neurons demonstrates that there is an inherent psychological bias towards favoring people similar to ourselves. There are, it seems, neurological barriers that prevent us from developing empathy towards people very unlike ourselves. The good news is that this can be overcome, and the way to do this is to consciously redefine and widen our group. In an organizational context, it means deliberately reaching out to bring in people who are different. Of course, with all the differences, it is also important for the leaders to create a shared sense of identity e.g. aligning people around a common sense of purpose and strategy.

Building a 'psychologically safe' and inclusive environment

Even after establishing a diverse team, the question still remains – how can leaders benefit from that diversity? How can they leverage that diversity to drive innova-

YSC believes that 'Diversity' and 'Inclusion' are talent and leadership issues. Academic and practical studies have shown that diversity has multiple positive impacts on an organization – from driving innovation to attracting and retaining talent, to creation of more relevant products and better customer relationships. However, it is not as simple as creating a diverse workforce and then reaping the benefits. It is about how the leaders in an organization enable people to bring their full selves to work. Only if leaders create an environment and culture in which people can flourish, can the organization expect to get the full benefit of diversity; and only then people would want to stay in and contribute towards the organization. For that reason, it is impossible

to talk about diversity without also talking about inclusion.

Let's start with Diversity

What do we mean when we talk about diversity? At YSC, we believe that diversity is far more than skin deep. It's not just about someone's gender or race, disability or age – the things that we can see. It's also about all those attributes that can't be seen, such as how gregarious a person is, how they think and learn, what their life experiences are, their value systems and how they approach each new day. Are they positive or skeptical, creative or analytical? Do they prefer to solve problems on their own or in teams?

The first step for leaders is to challenge themselves into thinking about diversity in the broadest sense of the word. Are

tion, retain the top talent and create more meaningful customer propositions? Here, the trick is in creating an environment that feels safe enough for different views to be expressed.

At YSC, we talk a lot about creating “psychologically safe¹” environments. Psychologically safe environments are those in which people feel comfortable to take an interpersonal risk – to challenge someone, to ask a ‘stupid’ question, to suggest a ‘different’ idea. It is these very things – challenging, questioning, suggesting – that lead to innovation that diversity can drive. But people will only challenge, question and suggest something different in a culture that feels inclusive and safe.

The second step for leaders is to create a team and organizational culture that encourages people to ask questions, to say what they think and feel, and to put forward different perspectives – leaders need to create psychologically safe and inclusive environments.

From my own experience, I know that when I feel safe and secure, I am at my best. I know that I only voice a dissenting view, or ask a ‘stupid’ question or challenge someone, when I feel that I am understood and valued. When I first started out as a management consultant and everything was unfamiliar, I was very aware of feeling out of my depth and less useful than my colleagues. I remember being very conscious of my difference – my background, experience and minority status. Fortunately, I had joined an organization that was, by its very nature, supportive and inclusive. When I asked a ‘stupid’ question, people took time to talk to me about consulting, and also valued the fact that I brought a fresh perspective. When I challenged the status quo, people took the time to hear me out – I never felt ‘punished’ for voicing a different idea. It was a great learning environment and it was not long before I stopped thinking about the differences I felt. I therefore learned, first-hand, how psychologically safe environments can drive performance.

What does it take?

What does it take for a leader to build a psychologically safe and inclusive environment? At YSC, we believe that the more secure leaders feel themselves, the more open they are to diversity and the more they are able to create psychologically safe spaces for others. Leadership development programs which support leaders in becoming increasingly comfortable with who they are, so that they can value the difference in others, are key to unlocking the potential of diversity.



Workplaces should be places where people should feel safe to bring their whole complex self

Leaders also need to understand the building blocks for creating psychologically safe spaces – simple leadership behaviors that encourage people to speak up, disagree, or share a distinctive point of view. Leaders need to understand the importance of creating flexible working environments that allow the different needs of people to be met and fulfilled.

When hiring, diversity in talent is not about people who are exactly like you; this is something that can be done automatically. Reminding ourselves of our unconscious biases and making recruiters conscious of their choices while hiring talent is vital. It is important to be open and accepting to varied voices, experiences and of different ways of being successful. For example, a person from a different cultural background might respond differently to a situation based on their cultural constructs, and this might negatively affect them in an interview, even though they are highly qualified for the job. Thus, it is important for us to be curious and dig a little deeper than we usually do. Sometimes, we find faults in an answer that we wouldn't give ourselves; but it is very important to be receptive to varying opinions. So, whilst hiring, it is important that you don't seek a candidate similar to you, but have a broader perspective and curiously seek talent different from you. The same is the case with identifying and developing future leaders. When having talent conversations, if it sounds like people are describing themselves, known as affinity bias, call it out.

And finally, role modelling is critical. One woman VP in a multinational oil and gas company told me that the most useful thing she did as a GM of their retail business was role-model flexible working and talk about it openly. She would spend Mondays working at her children's school and her team was aware of this because she was transparent. They called it her ‘gluing and sticking’ day. The message it sent was very powerful as it empowered many women in the organization who were struggling to find practical examples of senior women doubling childcare and careers in a hands-on way, and this also legitimized conversations surrounding the subject. Even though the organization had a number of structured diversity programs and initiatives, she believed this example had as much, if not more, impact.

In summary

There is a lot of positive intention as companies are recognizing the potential value of diversity and inclusion. If you want to unleash the potential of your people, there are a number of steps you can take as a leader:

- **Think about diversity in the broadest sense of the word.** Are you reaching out broadly to bring in additional perspectives, experiences and ways of working?
- **Create a shared sense of identity.** Are people aligned around a common purpose and strategy?
- **Show simple leadership behaviors that encourage inclusivity.** Are you creating a context for curiosity, humility and the ability to truly connect?
- **Leverage diversity by creating a psychologically safe environment.** Are you encouraging people to speak up, disagree or share a different perspective?
- **Work on surfacing unconscious bias.** Are you open to exploring your own biases, for example, when having talent conversations, if it sounds like people are describing themselves, call it out.
- **Role Modelling.** In addition to formal organizational policy, are you role modeling and encouraging others to role model authentic intentionality which embraces inclusivity? 🌟

¹ A term first coined by Amy Edmonston, Novartis Professor of Leadership and Management at the Harvard Business School.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

ANITA KIRPAL, Director, YSC is a psychologist with a degree in Business Studies, a Master's Degree in Occupational Psychology, and a foundation in Psychosynthesis. She is an accredited coach and is also a passionate advocate of diversity, helping organizations celebrate and value difference; create inclusive teams in order to utilize people's full talents and release creativity and innovation.



Yogi Sriram, Senior Vice President - Corporate HR, Larsen & Toubro on the key influences in his life, the value of diversity, leadership and more.
Excerpts from the first episode of Talking Matters Season 3



Discovering yourself is very important

Q What have been some of your early life influences which have shaped you over the years?

A I had the opportunity to travel to UK, Switzerland and Italy as a 9-year old which gave me a chance to witness different cultures, and talk to different people with different views, especially older people. This was when I realized the value of diversity. I realized it is not necessary to know all the answers, and there is nothing wrong in asking questions. I also learnt opportunities can knock on your door anytime, and all you have to do is to be curious and react fast. I will give you my life's instance. When I was planning to do my Masters, I had already chosen a particular institute, but on a vacation to Mumbai, this changed. I was sitting next to a person who was leafing through a brochure. I just happen to generally ask about it and it turned out to be about the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, an institute that I finally chose for my Masters in HR.

Q What are the ingredients of being a successful leader? What are the leadership lessons you have learned along the journey?

A I am very meticulous and punctual. My day and way of working are very structured. It is important to be determined in the face of adversity and not get intimidated. It is very important to know that HR is not for weaklings and those who don't have strong spines. I respect each person's unique attributes. It doesn't matter what society a person comes from. I realized that every person I met had something that I don't have. This realization has been very profound and very impactful.

Q What have been your biggest struggles? What are the lessons you have learned during these 38 years of experience?

A Corporate life is all about managing the dichotomies; the greatest struggle is to strike a balance between what may seem as an extreme and do whatever is



correct. Secondly, we have only 24 hours a day – the constant struggle is to extract the best out of those hours while managing work and self. As an HR professional, we have to spend a lot of time on listening to people, talking, addressing various groups and email pile ups. Time management is crucial, so I spend a great amount of time in planning my day. I try and not to brood about decisions that were taken in the past, some might have succeeded, and some not. I introspect as to what could have been done in a better way, maybe at the end of the day, or week or even after a month. One should be achievement-oriented. Setting goals is important as for me, life is more like playing golf where I compete with myself. The joy of competing with oneself and outdoing your earlier tasks is more productive contrary to comparing yourself with others. In India, social comparisons are very common; you are compared with your cousins and siblings. Families put a lot of stress about non-achievements of certain things. But discovering yourself amidst all this is very important.

Q You have experience in the training domain. Do you have any advice for L&D professionals?

A There is an obsessive kind of a concern about measuring training inputs. It is futile to get quantitative metrics for train-

ing. What is important is to choose the right kind of training that matches with the strategy of the company; pick up two or three programs and execute them with consistency, but don't crowd your calendar.

Q What advice would you give to freshers who are starting with their first job?

A I think it is important to not start with a herd-mentality mindset. Despite the social pressures, go by your heart but it's important to have a sense of direction. One should have a learning goal, and it shouldn't be about what position you will occupy in your company after 5 years. Look for opportunities, and compensation and career goals will follow. Also, it is important to ask questions. It is important to contribute, and don't get carried away by comparison. It is important to read – to pick up good biographies, good literature, and text. It is also important for young people to interact with older people, and superiors in terms of level. I believe when you do that, you rise to that level.

Q What does success mean to you? Is there any advice you would give to your younger self?

A Success to me means being on top of whatever you are doing and being in control of yourself and being disciplined. It is to find that sweet balance, and not getting carried away by views and criticism. I think my advice to my younger self would be to never grow up. My hobby was scaling model trains. I used to fit transponders and electronic chips into them. The creativity and curiosity is very important and a hobby helps in increasing concentration. 🎧



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TOTAL REWARDS

Companies today are realizing the high ROI of R&R programs and are increasingly adopting innovative measures to establish a culture of recognition, the trends of timely recognition, personalization of rewards and social media | **By J Jerry Moses**

Driving R&R through innovation and choice

The challenge for an effective rewards program continues to be cost effectiveness while ensuring that they are competitive in the marketplace

How do you create a culture of employee engagement and make it work? This is a question that has intrigued HR professionals across verticals, whether in talent acquisition or talent management. According to Aon Hewitt's 2015 engagement survey, the top five engagement drivers for the Asia Pacific region include: Career Opportunities, Brand Alignment, Recognition, Organizational Reputation and Pay – ranked in that order. The report further states, "Globally, the top drivers point to the average employee looking for growth, equitable reward, and pride in his or her company." For this supplement we look at one engagement driver, "rewards and recognition".

The fundamentals underpinning rewards have not changed drastically over the years — they have remained the same, whether it is salary, bonus or long term incentives. What has changed are single sized R&R programs that have now given way to contextualizing R&R programs to suit the needs

programs, and map some of the trends for R&R in the Indian context.

Spike in companies doing R&R

The trend of Indian companies engaging in rewards and recognition is increasing. It is also being viewed as an important initiative at the management level. This has led to active leadership buy-in and involvement in R&R programs. While previously many companies used it as a tool to improve performance in certain departments such as Sales, now more companies are using it across functions and levels. Increased spending in R&R programs is enabling companies to spend on a variety of engagement programs with liberal payouts and policies for medical benefits focused on healthy lifestyle. Companies today are recognizing employees not just for high performance but also for effort and tenure.

The increased spend in R&R is also leading more companies to train their managers, and companies are not only ensuring that these initiatives are included in their managers' KRAs, they are also ensuring that there is enough support in the form of communication strategies and capability building initiatives.

The effectiveness of R&R programs is determined by how an organization's culture is shaped

of specific employees. This is where companies are turning towards more creative approaches in an attempt to keep employees motivated. R&R programs anchored by HR professionals besides helping companies and managers identify the right talent, impact business outcomes like workplace productivity, customer satisfaction, revenue growth and talent retention. According to a PwC report, the rewards strategists will also need to factor a combination of big data, employee preferences and business drivers. This also means that more stakeholders will actively shape rewards strategy other than HR departments.

In this supplement, we look at how companies are coping with the changing demographics at workplace and the kinds of innovations that are being driven through technology in R&R

Increased emphasis on personalization

The workforce today is vocal about their needs, and in keeping with this demand, R&R programs are being designed with an emphasis on personalization. Since the perception of benefits is shaped differently throughout the employee life cycle, more companies are focused on a greater variety for recognition. Companies are looking at categories such as gender, age, profession or location of work to better understand their employee needs. An example of this model involves giving employees reward points that can be later redeemed for a variety of gifts, coupons and experiential programs like outings, health and wellness programs.

With the infusion of a younger workforce, companies are matching their benefits portfolios to the aspirations of the millennials, from quicker feedback to avenues for learning & development and opportunities to work abroad. More companies

are also focused on social recognition, whether it is through initiating fun Friday activities, celebrating birthdays and work anniversaries or encouraging participation in competitions and giving awards. Given that young people are also willing to share information across social media, leading companies actively engage with them through the medium while recognizing their efforts at work.

Technology & innovation

The use of technology has increased over the years including automation of a few recognition and reward redemption processes, where programs are used to automatically track and trend data. This makes recognitions, budgets and top performers easily accessible for review. Using analytics, information is used to consolidate information to allow administrators measure the value of the program. A combination of web and mobile applications are being used to drive connect and collaboration. R&R systems are now integrated with social media, analytics, mobile and the cloud. These aspects will play a vital role in the added emphasis on personalizing R&R.

Gamification is increasingly being applied to R&R frameworks. Using the psychology of game mechanics, companies are introducing elements of game playing including point scoring, peer competition and rules of playing in order to drive greater adoption and engagement. In health and wellness based programs, companies are tracking health based actions of the employees and are rewarding them with points that can be redeemed for gift cars, discount coupons, and other company goodies.

The challenge for an effective rewards program continues to be cost effectiveness while ensuring that they are competitive in the marketplace. According to PwC, the increasing regulation around pay governance calling for greater transparency – including aspects like equal pay, holiday pay, performance pay, minimum wage will continue to shape future rewards strategies. Following the recession of 2008, more companies in addition to looking at macroeconomic indicators like inflation and GDP are also under compulsion to balance between pressures applied by various stakeholders including government and shareholders. For measuring returns, companies are moving away from the traditional approach of focusing on “return of investments”. They are also focusing on the value generated by the investments which can be measured using metrics such as employee morale, worksite productivity, employee absence, presenteeism, workplace safety and also medical cost reduction.

Ultimately, the effectiveness of R&R programs would be determined by how the culture is shaped. Whether it is greater leadership involvement, personalization, managerial training, or how much employee care and engagement are valued in reward and recognition, all form an integral part of the organizations culture. While push factors like bonuses, gifts, vacations will continue to be central to rewards and recognition strategies,



Companies are using metrics such as employee morale, worksite productivity, employee absence, workplace safety and also medical cost reduction to measure returns

through our engagement with the community, we also observed the need for HR leaders to focus on the environment and design frameworks that would organically interest the employee to perform better. A set up that is conducive to self-motivate a large percentage of diverse people is critically more important than extrinsic motivators operating in isolation. Even as the trend of organizations offering a bouquet of motivational solutions that will eventually drive motivation & engagement continues to catch up, increased impact of mobile technology, social collaboration will make the year 2016 a promising one to look for. 📱

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RAJESH MUNDRA

Health and wellness as an integral R&R component

Health and wellness as a component of rewards and recognition is still relatively new in India, but the scope for the wellness market to mature in the next five to ten years is high.

Over 70 percent Indians consider managing their health a top priority in life. 57 percent feel that health and well-being initiatives offered by their employer encouraged them to live a healthier lifestyle. However, health and wellness as a component of rewards and recognition is still relatively new in India. With the increasing growth rate, expanding business operations and higher investments in employer brand, the scope for the wellness market to mature in the next five to ten years is high.

Benefits have largely been about insurance in India, there is growth in family insurance coverage and critical disease and disability insurance. Apart from these, companies today are focused on tackling work-life balance issues while emphasizing on the importance of healthy lifestyles. According to the 2014 Staying@work survey, stress was rated as the top lifestyle risk faced by Indian employees,

A holistic wellness approach will have to focus on the value of the investment, not just return on investment

and this was closely followed by physical inactivity and obesity. While most measures initiated by organizations have been ad-hoc, it is important for such reviews to be conducted more regularly.

Need for regular reviews

Employees with erratic lifestyles are a cost as well as productivity burden. Most organizations conduct health checkups or employee wellness drives on a piecemeal basis. There is a need for organizations to conduct quarterly or half-yearly reviews in order to reap the full benefits of their health initiatives while also prioritizing employee health and productivity. According to the “2015 India Benefit Trends Study” conducted by Towers Watson, 55 percent companies noted that they

spend more than 25 percent of their ‘benefit spend’ on health. And about 30 percent of companies surveyed spent more than 20 percent of payroll on benefits alone. Regular health reviews would therefore enable companies to rationalize their costs while identifying areas where employees need care.


Our data at Truworth shows that the percent of overweight & stressed population is above 30 percent. And weight and pre-hypertension signal to ailments like diabetes, cardiac issues and renal issues. One major pitfall companies need to avoid while implementing a wellness program is using the “one-size fit all approach.” Wellness is a multi-faceted and holistic issue, no two individuals will respond to a wellness program in the exact way.

Progressive companies are going beyond conventional wellness programs and are creating stress-free workplace environment. Companies are instituting structured wellness programs that cover health risk assessments, biometric screenings to web/mobile based tools and senior care. With the younger tech and social media savvy workforce taking over jobs, companies are also focused on promoting healthy lifestyle through coaching and education initiatives, while also engaging them through social media and gamification.

The future

While traditional approaches to understanding effectiveness of wellness programs have involved calculating return on investment on the program, a more holistic wellness approach will have to focus on the value of the investment based on factors like employee morale, worksite productivity, employee absence, presenteeism and workplace safety, in addition to medical cost reduction. While gamification and socialization is likely to increase employee engagement, the provision of online counseling services using chat/query with experts including dietitians, counselors and doctors will help drive early stage health and emotional issues.

At Truworth, we are creating a new wellness platform that aims to directly improve the top-line and bottom-line of the company. In keeping with the adoption trends, we have also integrated Personalized Weight Loss and Disease Management and OPD visits through our network as a part of our unified wellness program. We are also focused on providing personalization and engagement through mobile apps and wearables.

Even as companies move from a simple and unstructured health program to a standard and structured approach, the goal would require spreading awareness about why a change in approach is required when it comes to employee health and wellness. Moreover, to boost engagement, employees need to feel that their company is taking adequate measures to keep them healthy. This would provide more stickiness to the organization and employees will be less likely to change companies. 

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

RAJESH MUNDRA is CEO and Founder at Truworth Health Technologies Pvt. Ltd.

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SIDDHARTH REDDY

Personalizing rewards and recognition

With employees being the focus for organizations, the need to understand them, creating a holistic culture and customizing R&R programs that facilitate overall development is imperative

The rewards and recognition landscape in India is changing. There are three trends that are driving this change: the first includes the aspect of leadership buy-in. More leaders are realizing the importance of R&R programs and are going beyond approving initiatives – they are actively engaging in them. The second trend comprises the emphasis on personalization, and that there is a need for employers to understand aspirations and goals of their employees. The third trend relates to the employees, who proactively seek non-financial incentives beyond compensation and conventional recognition programs. And these trends are driving organizations to focus on the catalyst for the changes – the employee.

Leaders are now realizing the importance of R&R programs and are going beyond approving initiatives – they are actively engaging in them

Understanding employees

Since R&R is often based on individual employees, it is important to know and understand employees across generations, their charted career paths, roles and aspirations. All individuals are unique and so are their motivating factors to work more intensely. And there is only one person who is in a unique position to understand an employee by coaching them, advising them, understanding and helping them succeed. And that is the manager. You cannot have an engagement strategy that doesn't empower managers to do what only they can. For that, companies should also recognize great people managers because that is so rarely done and so conspicuously absent these days.

In a survey conducted by BI Worldwide, employees who answered between 'agree' and 'strongly agree' to the statement "My manager


understands me" had a high very high correlation to "I feel an obligation to work as hard as I can for my company". Interestingly, those who fell between the 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree' were somewhat neutral about their obligation to work hard. This simply means that they are looking at the clock each day to leave for home and they are in it only for the pay check.

"Feeling an obligation to work for my company" is a measure of "Intensity of Performance" which is one of the two pillars of Employee Engagement and the other being Intensity of Commitment. As organizations seek to create consistency between employees, employees are at risk of losing the 'Me' within the 'We'. True diversity happens when a company insists that each person is managed, coached, given opportunities, and recognized as a category of one!

Facilitating development through change

The infusion of a younger workforce not only adds to the diversity, it also makes a brand 'cool' – the definition of 'cool' is reflective of the aspirations of the millennials today. They want companies to be more open to ideas, have a diverse work environment and want to be given platforms where they can be heard.

Companies also need to strategize their rewards and recognition programs with flexibility and choice as value-addition attributes. Future R&R programs will see an increase in gamification and health and wellness initiatives. Recognition is still grossly underplayed in the Indian context of Total Rewards, and it is important for companies to fund their rewards and recognition programs adequately. Another aspect of change that companies need to be wary of is leadership involvement. Often, when leadership roles are diluted in a rewards and recognition program, the engagement rates fall down. While it is highly valued at the top management levels, what we have observed is that there is a need for focused training and constant sensitization at the middle-management level. Companies with the best practices tend to use quarterly scorecards, including goals for managers in their KRAs and having quarterly calls across geographies on communication strategies and training.

Whether change has to be brought in at the managerial level or through increased leadership involvement or through increased personalization by taking into account the needs of individual employees, any engagement initiative will only be successful when it is a part of the culture of the company. 

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

SIDDHARTH REDDY is Managing Director (India), BI Worldwide



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Designing a dynamic R&R framework

Recognition programs need to promote social appreciation, allow crowd sourcing of feedback and enable peers to recognize each other without hierarchical barriers

Rewards & recognition is all set to play the role of a big brother to employee engagement in the near future. With increased emphasis of modern workforces to be recognized socially and instantaneously, there is a desire amongst employees to choose their own rewards and participate actively in the recognition process. We are moving into a phase where more than 50 percent of the workforce will comprise millennials. These are people who are highly influenced by communities, have a deeper intrinsic need for appreciation, like greater levels of empowerment and are more tech & mobile savvy than the previous generations. What this means is that recognition programs will need to promote social appreciation, allow crowdsourcing of feedback and enable peers to recognize each other without hierarchical barriers.

A rewards strategy should have a multi-tiered framework with frequent review mechanisms, benchmarking exercises and a configurable technology to manage it

While traditionally, the emphasis has been on push factors such as cash rewards, gifts and experiences, working with large organizations across diverse cultures, we have come to believe that when it comes to engagement, pull factors outshine push factors. Thus, it is important to focus on the design frameworks that would organically interest the employee to perform better. The provision of a set up that is conducive to self-motivate a large percentage of diverse people is critical than extrinsic motivators operating in isolation.

Need of a framework


Reward strategies need to culminate into a framework that has enough fluidity to align with the dynamic business environment we operate in today. This scenario makes it imperative for rewards strategy to have a multi-tiered framework

with frequent review mechanisms, benchmarking exercises and a configurable technology to manage it. Most reward frameworks that are not founded on principles derived from the company's vision, mission and business objectives and are being managed without the use of technology, struggle to adapt to changes. Alternatively, organizations that have the best practices tend to have flexible frameworks that allow personalization, use relevant nomenclature, drive real time insights and are aligned to and integrated with other talent management interventions. In this context, the organizational culture plays a vital role, both in communicating and designing interventions.

Global statistics say that companies spend 1-2 percent of their annual salary bill on Rewards & Recognition programs and another 1-2 percent on allied engagement interventions. Put together, we are talking about a trillion dollar market in global spends. With such magnitude, it is imperative for these frameworks to have measurability and real time insights. At Peoplecart, we have focused on identifying the right metrics at the design stage, aligning the primary metrics with recognizable metrics at various grades of the organizational structure and use technology to display real-time dashboards and intuitive analytics. However, to be effective in these frameworks, structural control mechanisms will need to be built in to mitigate the risks of allowing such an open culture. Successful models use carefully designed rules and highly automated triggers while keeping with game mechanics to ensure only positives prevail.

The future

The use of gamification concepts and technology applications will emerge as a stand out factor in catapulting results for individuals, teams and businesses through the creation of a highly engaged culture. Some of the leading practitioners are commonly adopting elements of gamification to build R&R frameworks that accentuate adoption levels and are driven by the psychology of game mechanics. Gamification uses typical elements of game playing like 'point scoring', 'peer competition' and 'rules of playing' to organizational activities for driving greater adoption and engagement. Using game mechanics and design along with relational nomenclature, Gamification promises to make the harder stuff in life both fun and engaging.

The year 2016 will be the year of employee engagement. Several surveys in the latter half of 2015 have already signaled this trend as organizations warm up to the importance of offering a bouquet of motivational solutions that eventually drive motivation & engagement. This, coupled with the increased impact of mobile technology, social collaboration and the influence of the younger employees on the rest of the segments is sure to make employee engagement, not only a CHRO's area of focus, but a CEO's agenda. 

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

NIKHIL NORULA is Vice President - Global Sales and New Market Strategies at Peoplecart Private Limited

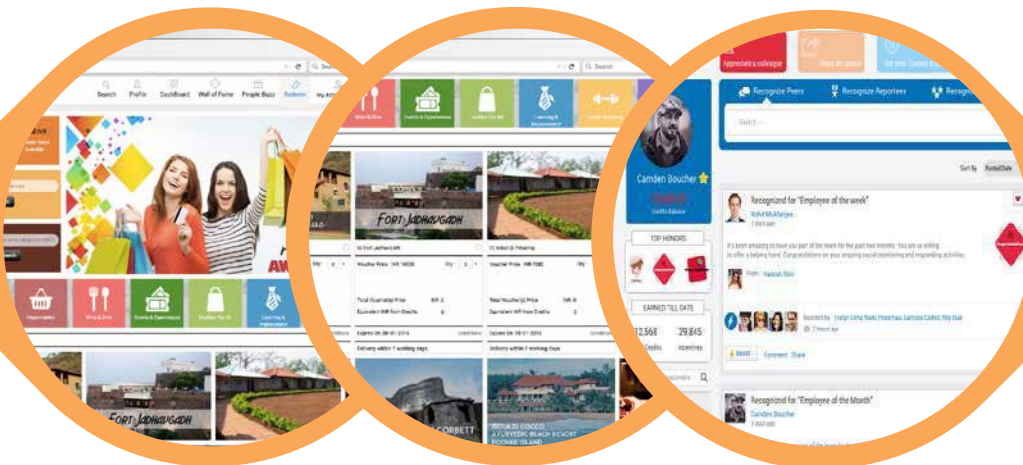
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TY BROWN

Not just an award, but a 'recognition experience'

To be really effective, a recognition program needs to be customized and personal and has to become a part of the culture

If recognition programs are seen as time-consuming, or “just another HR program,” or “too difficult”, the chances of them being implemented consistently become low. If it's not consistent, it won't be effective. And if it's not effective, it's not relevant. Many companies initiate recognition programs because their competitors do it.

However, today many organizations are also leveraging analytics and research to make recognition solutions more effective. Research shows that an effective recognition program pays for itself many times over. The global research we did for our New York Times Bestselling book, *The Carrot Principle*, proved that effective recognition increases employee engagement and decreases employee turnover. Which MD wouldn't invest 0.5 percent of payroll to get a 10 percent increase in engagement or decrease in

The priority isn't the award, it's the recognition experience

turnover? Once you get past “why” recognition is done, it is important to focus on “how” it's done. Imagine the negative impact that would have if a ten-year employee received a long-service award from a Manager who just walked by, set it on their desk, said, “Here's your service award,” and walked off. That manager just told that employee, and everyone around them, the company doesn't really care. On the other hand, if analytics is used to inform managers on to how they should approach rewarding employees, especially those managers that deal across countries and across cultures, it has a powerful impact on the effectiveness of the solution.

When analytics supports decision making, it is not just useful to identify teams and individuals performing well, it is also useful to understand the various factors that drives success. The first step towards developing or buying a recognition system is to make sure that it's easy, intuitive, and comprehensive. While the system is crucial to

implement a reward program, the most important step is training employees and managers on how, when, and why to use it. Making it customized and personal is as easy as opening up systems to all employees so they can recognize each other. They know better than the senior leadership about who is doing a good job on a day-to-day basis. The senior leadership's job is to make sure the appropriate values are set, to set a good example by recognizing others, and then to ensure recognition is happening consistently. Consistency creates effectiveness.

Despite the buzz around gamification, one must be wary of ‘gamifying’ recognition. When systems are used to create competition in recognition, the sad result is insincerity. Managers and employees all feel like they are giving and getting recognition as a game, not as a sincere show of appreciation for effort or results. Insincerity means ineffective recognition solutions.

The future trends in rewards are likely to be focused on the following points:

1. **Impact:** Companies can no longer afford to do recognition just to be “nice,” it's about engaging employees and communicating values.
2. **Symbolism:** Awards that tie the company to the achievement and to that specific employee.
3. **Ease:** For solutions to be effective, they have to be easy for managers and employees to consistently use.
4. **Inclusion:** Inclusion of all employees, not just one group; and include families of employees whenever possible.

A software program for rewards isn't going to have a big impact on the business. It is better than doing nothing and you'll probably see a bump in the company measures. But that bump doesn't last long. To be really effective, a recognition program has to become a part of the culture. It has to reinforce the values of the company. And the place where that happens most frequently is between manager and employee. So it's important to train managers. Recognition takes the values of a company from the Board room to the lunch room.

All recognition companies can provide vouchers that offer access to thousands of awards, or experiences that can create memories, or merchandise awards the recipient might remember where it came from. The priority isn't the award, it's the recognition experience. The award should be appropriate to the achievement, and your system should help you determine that, but the power lies in what experience the manager gives. The goal is that the recipient will remember what they did to earn the award(s) and their associates will want to emulate the behavior. This is how values are reinforced and cultures are created. The best way to do that is with recognition solutions that strongly represent the company. 🍌

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

TY BROWN is Managing Director, OC, Tanner India



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The best among the rest: High performers in TA

The third edition of the TA Leadership League Awards, which saw the participation of more than 130 organizations, felicitated the best organization in the space of talent acquisition | By Vikas Arora

“Some moments are nice, some are nicer, and some are even worth writing about,” Charles Bukowski wrote in his poetry selection “War all the time.” The statement stands true for the night of 9th December, which saw the felicitation of the high performers in the talent acquisition space in a glittering ceremony at the TA Leadership League Awards.

Placed at the backdrop of a riveting TA Leadership League Annual Conference, the TA Awards saw participation of more than 130 companies, out of which eight companies won across eight diverse categories.


The process

The awards ceremony was a culmination of a four-month long process, done in partnership with Deloitte. 132 applications were shortlisted on the basis of their best practices, by a seven member jury which comprised Amit Das, Director-HR, Bennett Coleman & Co. Ltd.; Kamlesh Dangi, Group Chief People Officer, Religare Enterprises Ltd; Prithvi Shergill, Chief Human Resource Officer, HCL Technologies; Rajesh Padmanabhan, Head HR, Vedanta; SV Nathan, Senior Director, Chief Talent Officer, Deloitte; Seema Arora Nambiar, Senior Director, People Resources, Hardcastle Restaurant's Pvt Ltd;

and Yuvaraj Srivastava, SVP & Head-HR, MakeMyTrip.Com.

The shortlisted 21 finalists in the seven categories (exclusive of Most Popular) presented their company's best practices as a case for selection to the jury on the eve of the awards ceremony, which was followed by a Q&A session. After deliberation and calibrating the performance, the jury circled on the winners for every category, who were all awarded. The winners also presented their elevator pitches on the day of Annual Conference, based on which the members of the conference voted Mindtree as the 'Most Popular'.

was moderated by Praveen Kamath of Wipro and the key challenges in talent acquisition were identified, and a large group of more than 250 people was given the choice to select the group discussion they want to be a part of. Every group was moderated by a thought leader from the industry, and they all presented the challenges, best practices, solutions, and applicability of those solutions to an engaged audience. Some of the groups discussed topics like giving a great candidate experience, keeping the humane element in recruiting, tackling the infant mortality of candidates, among others.

The audience had a lot to take away from enthralling sessions from the day; some of these were facilitated by Sandeep Chaudhary, CEO, Aon Hewitt; Unmesh Pawar, Global Managing Director - Talent Acquisition, Accenture; Nitin Sethi, Partner and Chief Commercial Officer, Aon Hewitt; Pramod Sadarjoshi, Senior Director - HCM Transformation, Asia Pacific, Oracle; and Seema Arora Nambiar, Senior Director - People Resources, Hardcastle Restaurants. 

Highlights of the event

The third edition of the TA Leadership League Awards culminated with the awards ceremony. The Annual Conference also saw a successive range of sessions on the relevant and critical pain points of talent acquisition professionals. The open space session was a perfect reflection of the decentralized, engaging and participative nature of the event, and it rightly set the tone of what was to come. This session

CATEGORY	WINNER
Best in Social Hiring	InMobi
Best in Talent Assessment Methodologies	Cadila Healthcare Limited
Best in Technology and Talent Analytics	Ericsson Global India
Best in Recruitment Reengineering	Godrej Industries Limited and Associate Companies
Best in Diversity	Aegis Limited
Best in Candidate Experience	Snapdeal
Best in Employer Branding	HUL, InMobi
Most Popular	Mindtree

The winners of the TA Leadership League Awards across the eight categories



The winners and the finalists along with the jury and People Matters team at the Talent Acquisition Leadership League Awards 2015

And The Winners Are...



Best in Diversity: Aegis Limited

The team of Aegis Limited is seen with Seema Arora Nambiar and Sanjee Tom Jose

The team of Ericsson Global India is seen with Pramod Sadarjoshi and Wriju Ray



Best in Technology and Talent Analytics: Ericsson Global India



Best in Recruitment Reengineering: Godrej Industries Limited and Associate Companies

The team of Godrej Industries Limited and Associate Companies is seen with Pramod Sadarjoshi and Wriju Ray

The team of InMobi is seen with Kamlesh Dangi and Satya Sinha



Best in Social Hiring: InMobi



Best in Employer Branding: InMobi

The team of InMobi is seen with Kamlesh Dangi and Satya Sinha

The team of Mindtree is seen with Pramod Sadarjoshi and Wriju Ray



Most Popular: Mindtree



Best in Talent Assessment Methodologies: Cadila Healthcare Ltd

The team of Cadila Healthcare Ltd is seen with Kamlesh Dangi and Satya Sinha

The team of Snapdeal is seen with Seema Arora Nambiar and Sanjee Tom Jose



Best in Candidate Experience: Snapdeal

THE NEW AGE TECH-TURKS

THE SPOTLIGHT AWARDS 2015 WINNERS

This month we talk to **Vibhor Sharma**, Founder, Acquidoor (formerly TalentWoot) - the winner of TechHR15 Spotlight awards in the Seed Category

By J Jerry Moses

If 70 percent of the startups fail, what happens to the talent in them? This was the question that led Vibhor Sharma to an award winning business idea. As a Talent Acquisition professional who had previously worked for an investment bank and two start-ups, Hoppr and Hike, Sharma once hired a few sales people from a startup that had shut down. Having encountered similar situations in his six years long recruiting career, he soon realized that there was no online interface geared towards managing talent and business from startups. As someone who had entrepreneurial ideas himself, he started to research and soon found a business opportunity. In order to provide the enabling environment for the startup community, he worked on TalentWoot, renamed as Acquidoor, the first tech-enabled acqui-hire marketplace. His business idea went on to win the award at the Tech HR 2015 Spotlight Awards in the Seed category.

The idea

The Indian start-up environment remains largely unstructured. While acquiring talent from startups is not new, the focus has largely been on successful startups, led by venture capitalists, investors and accelerators recommendations. There is no platform that brings startups and companies together with the aim of acqui-hiring.

"People who are entrepreneurs are not only enterprising but they are also big risk takers" says Sharma. Startups build teams, work on the proof of concept, test markets, hire talent and take feasible steps to make sure they achieve business KPIs. Sharma believes that there is an opportunity for companies scaling up their operations to find the right talent in people working at

startups. This would have a twofold value proposition - of organizations finding the right talent, and people who have worked with startups finding, the right job. In fact, any individual who has developed a marketable product could find the platform useful to see where they fit in the marketplace for talent; this also includes final year students who have developed useful products.

The platform

"We want to get to a point where startups that don't succeed must be assured of the fact that its people can get a good job or get their startup acquired" says Sharma. In order for that to happen, there is a need to create a platform that is secure and enables trust. Acquidoor offers anonymity to registering startups. It will enable profiles that will let startups to review the information they will share with buyers, without sharing details about individual/company names. A key feature in the platform is the "Dream Exit" feature which allows startups to share information about their ideal buyer and further allows filtering of the criteria to match the buyer in the marketplace. For an acqui-hirer, the benefits of using the Acquidoor platform would be to leverage technology efficiently in order to find the right target match, stay up-to-date on evolving products, innovation and technology. It would also help in broadening the exposure in potential strategic opportunities and accomplish corporate development and expansion objectives.

The future

Translating ideas to practice has been the biggest challenge for Acquidoor. So far, Internet players and international companies looking at starting operations in India have shown interest in the platform.



Acquidoor enables a two-fold value proposition - of organizations finding the right talent and enabling startups who have not achieved market or product leadership to explore next level of business

Vibhor Sharma

Founder, Acquidoor

However, the company needs to tackle existing challenges such as fair market benchmarks and small team start-ups. Acquidoor recently got incubation offer from a Delhi-based incubator "Startup tunnel (STun)" which will help to expand its operations. According to Sharma "A commission of 1 percent to 3 percent would be charged, once a deal is inked. In case of individual hires a 10 percent CTC will be charged". "Winning the award for the seed category was really encouraging" says Sharma. Acquidoor is on the lookout for partners in the form of analysts and researchers, who have a knack of understanding business development in the HR eco system. At the moment, Acquidoor is in its beta-test phase. The company is focused on devising product and marketing strategies with the idea to offer a great customer experience and value proposition. Even as the Indian startup market matures, Acquidoor has placed itself in a unique place to tackle talent crunch online.

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A differentiating drive for L&D


EVENT NAME: L&D Leadership League Half-day Conclave

ORGANIZED BY: People Matters

PARTNERS: Center for Creative Leadership, Pearson TalentLens, Skillsoft - Sumtotal, Great Lakes Institute of Management, Wilson Learning

The L&D half-day conclave began with an interaction with Amarjit Singh Batra, CEO of OLX India, who spoke about nurturing extraordinary learners. Sharing his insights on the importance of learning, he emphasized on the habit of reading and experiential learning in an agile environment. Drawing insights from the success of OLX in India, he also shared the importance of behavioral training and measurable metrics to bring about learning effectiveness.

Pointing to the changing focus from the "quality of content" delivered to how L&D impacts "business performance", Vivek Chandramohan, MD, Wilson Learning India, emphasized on the need

to help people develop skills to drive organizational performance. He discussed three elements of the learning transfer model, learner readiness activities, learning transfer design activities and organizational alignment activities. This was followed by a presentation by Shashir Shetty, National Sales Manager, Pearson TalentLens India on the importance of critical thinking capabilities. Ritu Malhorta, Assistant Director - HRD, Canon, spoke about the journey of implementing learning solutions in Canon. While outlining the technological gaps in areas of learning, she pointed to the need for L&D professionals to act as consultants in order to supplement and enhance learning activities by working with managers and individual learners. The conclave ended with a workshop session led by Anupam Sirbhaya, Country Manager, Center for Creative Leadership on redefining the learning metrics by drawing up a dashboard where the CEO can recognize the ROI on L&D. 

11th -15th January, 2016

EVENT NAME: TA Leadership League Week

ORGANIZER: People Matters

WHO SHOULD ATTEND: CHROs, TA Leaders, Recruitment Leaders, HR Heads, Senior TA & HR professionals

PARTNERS: AON Hewitt, Mancer Consulting, Talview - Interview Street

12th January, 2016

EVENT NAME: L&D Leadership League 30 minute Masterclass

ORGANIZER: People Matters

WHO SHOULD ATTEND: CHROs, L&D Leaders, Training Leaders, HR Heads, Senior L&D and HR Professionals

PARTNERS: Center for Creative Leadership, Pearson TalentLens, Sumtotal Systems - a Skillsoft Company, Great Lakes Institute of Management & Wilson Learning

13th January, 2016

EVENT NAME: KNOLSKAPE Webinar

ORGANIZER: People Matters

WHO SHOULD ATTEND: CHROs, L&D Leaders, Training Leaders & Senior HR Professionals

PARTNERS: KNOLSKAPE

20th January, 2016

EVENT NAME: HackerRank Webinar

ORGANIZER: People Matters

WHO SHOULD ATTEND: CHROs, HR Heads and Senior HR Professionals

PARTNERS: HackerRank

28th January, 2016

EVENT NAME: The new HR Business Partner (HRBP): Beyond generalist to trusted advisor

ORGANIZER: Bersin by Deloitte

EVENT THEME: Talent strategy for acquiring and developing HRBP talent

WHO SHOULD ATTEND: CHROs, HR Heads, Business Leaders

29th January, 2016

EVENT NAME: Talking Matters: Radio Program with Piyush Mehta, CHRO, Genpact

ORGANIZER: People Matters

WHO SHOULD ATTEND: Every aspirational HR professional would benefit from this conversation

Learning people management from startups

EVENT: HR Summit 2015

ORGANIZED BY: TiE


The TiE HR Summit 2015 held on the 11th of December focused on "issues faced by startups at various stages of their growth, whether in the Angel/Seed Funded stage or in the Scaling up stage". The summit commenced with an impactful keynote by P. Rajendran, Jt. MD, NIIT who talked about the founding of NIIT in 1982 when the learning exclusively revolved around terms like 'faculty' and 'curriculum' and their endeavor to change this. This was followed by a session on reputation management.

Thereafter, a session on new HR technologies featured leaders from Naukri.com, QuestnTechnologies, KNOLSKAPE, Radiowalla Network and People Matters wherein leaders shared the stages of HR technology adoption that each company was at and the subsequent advantages and limitations. Interesting questions followed

from the audience about futuristic technologies and digital readiness of organizations.

The next session discussed how to put a startup team together and zeroed on the practices for nurturing valuable employees by providing them with extra flexibility during changes in personal life.

After networking lunch, the VP of Sustainability Initiatives, Lemon Tree Hotels, talked about the culture of taking care of employees with communication disabilities by mandating sign language training for the whole staff. She shared that this generated an inclusive dividend as these employees are then empowered to contribute fully in their capacities.


Next there was an exciting panel on innovation culture in which panelists from GE, PayTM, Aon Hewitt and University of Chicago Booth School of Business discussed the importance of trusting employees with innovative ideas and providing them full project ownership. 

Inspire, ignite and innovate

EVENT NAME: 5th Jaipuria Annual Management Conference- JAMC 2015
EVENT THEME: Entrepreneurship Rising: Inspire, Innovate, Ignite
ORGANIZED BY: Jaipuria Institute of Management, Noida

Jaipuria Institute of Management, Noida hosted the 5th Jaipuria Annual Management Conference, JAMC 2015, on the 12th of December on the theme of "Entrepreneurship Rising: Inspire, Innovate, Ignite." The Chief Guest of the conference was Arvind Thakur, CEO & JMD- NIIT Technologies Ltd, Ms. Neeru Sharma, Co-founder & Director - Infibeam.com was the Guest of Honor and Pranay Gupta, Co-founder - 91springboard came as the special guest. The conference saw the participation of some of India's most aspirational start-ups engaging actively with entrepreneurs, investors and CXOs from across sectors. It also brought together the best minds from the start-up ecosystem to co-develop a culture of collaboration and value building.

Arvind Thakur shared his entrepreneurial journey and his insights into 'what makes an entrepreneur' and elaborated on the concept of 'high five'. Explaining 'high five', he said that entrepreneurship is about thinking customer first, challenging the status quo, unleashing the new ideas, and about experience and taking ownership. Neeru Sharma emphasized on how the ideas of a person can have an impact on business and the necessity of passion and diligence. Pranay Gupta also stated that it is action that wins recognition and the only mantra for entrepreneurial success is to "believe".

The objective of the conference was to foster, promote and support innovators and leaders with entrepreneurial talent and it was an endorsement for budding entrepreneurs. It provided a platform to open a dialogue among global academic leaders to mainstream entrepreneurship education by providing training and support to entrepreneurship educators and to demonstrate effective global models of entrepreneurship development. 

Upcoming Events

22nd January, 2016

EVENT NAME: Transcend, 2016
ORGANIZER: Symbiosis Institute of Business Management
VENUE: Symbiosis Institute of Business Management, Pune
WHO SHOULD ATTEND: Students
EVENT THEME: Fest

4th - 5th February, 2016

EVENT NAME: Scope International HR Summit- 2016
ORGANIZER: Scope
VENUE: Scope Convention Centre, Scope Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi
WHO SHOULD ATTEND: HR professionals
EVENT THEME: Reinventing HR: Breaking the mould globally

5th February, 2016

EVENT NAME: Total Rewards Conclave 2016
ORGANIZER: People Matters
VENUE: The Leela Ambience, Gurgaon
WHO SHOULD ATTEND: CHROs, HR Heads, Reward Strategists, Compensation & Benefits Heads
EVENT THEME: Becoming a Destination Employer, The Role of Rewards
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Jobs of the week

Vitasta Consulting Private Limited

Deputy Manager - HR

Location: Thane, **Job ID:** 17874721

Description: Driving Performance Management System for all the employees. (Goal Setting & Appraisal).

Krehst Recruitment Solutions

DGM - HR (Realty Company)

Location: Kolkata, **Job ID:** 17842658

Description: Staffing & On Boarding, Employee Engagement, Performance Management & Compensation review.

Spectrum Talent Management

TL/AM-Recruitments(IT or Non IT)

Location: Noida, **Job ID:** 17881768

Description: Front facing with the clients to receive/understand requirements, Mid- Sr. level, Niche skill/ Leadership Hiring etc.

Arowana Consulting

HR Manager

Location: Bengaluru / Bangalore, **Job ID:** 17874400

Description: Should be a MBA Graduate in HR Specialization.

Morpheus Human Consulting Private Limited

HR Business Partner

Location: Bengaluru / Bangalore, **Job ID:** 17874674

Description: Key initiator of new business development targeting medium to large sized accounts for strategic penetration.

Roljobs Technology Services Private Limited

Senior Talent Officer

Location: Bengaluru / Bangalore, Hyderabad / Secunderabad, **Job ID:** 17417006

Description: Source candidates using resume databases, internet searching, networking, & cold etc.

Evolve XL

Chief Manager HR

Location: Navi Mumbai, Ghaziabad, **Job ID:** 17757994

Description: Manage end to end HR activities for a corporate functions (CFO Patch comprising of Finance etc.

Axiom HR Services Private Limited

Assistant Manager- HR

Location: Valsad, **Job ID:** 17869354

Description: Knowledge of all Labour Laws, Knowledge of different returns, Responsible for HR Generalist profile etc.

Best RPO

HR Manager

Location: Delhi, **Job ID:** 17882262

Description: Interview Process, Preliminary Screening, Co-ordinating with Departmental Heads for interviews.

HR Dynamics

Recruitment Relationship Manager

Location: Mumbai, **Job ID:** 17647147

Description: Ability to build and sustain trust while leveraging partnerships at all levels.

Hector & Streak Consulting Private Limited

Head HR

Location: Mumbai, **Job ID:** 15501843

Description: Candidate must have minimum 10yrs of experience in Leadership role corporate HR.

2COMS Consulting Private Limited

Learning & Development Global Trainer

Location: Pune, **Job ID:** 17879118

Description: Establishing and Implementing Competency Modeling System, which includes Designing, Developing etc.

Job Expert

Recruitment - Team Leader / Asst. Manager

Location: Chandigarh, Panchkula, **Job ID:** 17858299

Description: Responsible to manage a team of sourcing staff, achieving daily, weekly and monthly targets of hiring and sourcing.

ABC Consultants Private Limited

Principal HR

Location: Bengaluru / Bangalore, **Job ID:** 17869938

Description: Lead the creation of appropriate organizational design and structure based on the organization strategy.

Technosoft Global Services (P) Ltd

DGM-Recruitment

Location: Bengaluru / Bangalore, **Job ID:** 17878247

Description: Understands the long and short term strategy and market dynamics of IT services skills.

People Logic

Recruitment Professionals

Location: Bengaluru / Bangalore, **Job ID:** 17871113

Description: Looking for Recruitment Professionals with experience in IT Recruitment for multiple Verticals at PeopleLogic.

J Trinity Solutions

Sr HR Manager

Location: Gurgaon, **Job ID:** 17856527

Description: Supports operating unit by implementing human resources programs; solving performance problems.

Black & White Business Solutions

HR Recruiter/ Team Lead

Location: Bengaluru / Bangalore, **Job ID:** 17876919

Description: Should have good knowledge on ITES Recruitment/Bpo Recruitment/bulk hiring.

Manpower Services India Private Limited

Recruitment Delivery Support

Location: Bengaluru / Bangalore, **Job ID:** 17877497

Description: Should be able to do multi tasking, good in working on excel sheet.

Husys Consulting Limited

Sr. Associate HR

Location: Hyderabad / Secunderabad,

Job ID: 17881902

Description: The HR Associates will work with many different clients, supporting them in many areas of HR.

Ramco Systems Limited

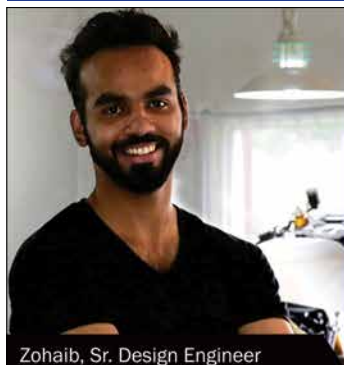
Manager - Payroll Operations

Location: Chennai, **Job ID:** 17669508

Description: To manage the team handling Payroll Processing (End to End) and operations for India/ Middle East or APAC Geos.

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ROHIT HASTEER

A baby growing up

The challenges of Start-ups in the phase where they are propelling from infancy to adolescence are almost common, but there are some things for HR to keep in mind in this phase

In the first half of FY 2015, VCs invested over \$3.5 billion through more than 200 deals into startups at various stages of their existence, right from Angel round to series I. A combination of global economic factors, a huge consumer base, cheap telecommunications and a rich pool of ideators and IT engineers have given a strong fillip to people to increasingly choose entrepreneurship over employment and in the process also further creating employment opportunities. As more and more nascent startups find their footing and get funding, we are seeing a frenzied pace of growth from nascent to adolescent.

This frenzied growth reminds me of those Amitabh Bachchan movies from the 70s where the opening shot has a scene of a child running and by the time the scene ends, you basically have your grown up hero. Well that probably sums up how startups grow up. Not all, however, manage

this growth well and we've seen how quite a few falter and stumble.

One can appreciate that this phase of growth is quite challenging one and among other things given the sheer pace at which this needs to be done. Getting it right then is both a science and art. It is not just about increasing headcount, it is also about building the organization, bringing in quality talent, developing a common purpose and culture, and then driving performance. We've been going through a similar phase having grown from a few hundred to a thousand plus, tripling our size in under one year. This article shares some of the challenges, learnings and things we are still working on and learning as we go.

Always one person short: A startup is a place where you'll always be one person short. There are just so many things to do. Hence, functional managers typically keep requesting for additional roles and additional headcount. When business is expan-

ding (and funded), the temptation to go out and immediately hire is immense. But we took a call to always check for alternatives first, making the hiring manager think for options such as automation, role enhancement, empowerment etc. Ensuring due thought was given to "need" of the role/headcount, we then get the hiring managers spell out the "purpose" of the role in a Job Description (JD), making them clearly articulate what is the value add that this role brings to the organization, their expectations and the kind of profile that would be able to do justice to the role. It has been found that a thorough effort at this stage has had a positive impact on hiring cycle time and results in quicker conversions. These two steps have worked to ensure that talent growth is planned and aligned to long-term vision for the organization and not under short-term workload pressures.

Hire in hurry but not in a rush: Any manager can tell the cost of delayed hiring

Getting it right is both a science and art – it is not just about increasing headcount, but about building the organization, bringing in quality talent, developing a common purpose and culture, and driving performance



but the cost of a bad hire is something that the entire organization feels. But when you've got to triple the headcount, how do you ensure that there are no short cuts on quality and yet hiring speed is maintained. We used the bootstrap mode of RPOs while we built our HR team. A key to maintaining quality was investing time and energies explaining the JD to the recruiters (in-house or consultants) in detail, to provide them clarity on aspects such as where the role sits in the organization, what would be its challenges, what makes the role exciting, or what kind of profiles would most likely be able to do justice to this role. A recruiter who has clarity of these is an effective recruiter. As we built internal team strength, we also discovered another magic key to quality and speed both – employee referrals! It has been found by experience that quality of referral hires on an average has been delightfully good. For this reason, we have designed a very lucrative referral program, along with some governance to ensure a referral is someone the team knows personally and is not just any resume being forwarded. This has helped referrals as a part of our sourcing mix to be as high as 40 percent and something we are looking to drive up further.

The first impression: Getting the impression right on the day of the joining has a direct correlation on employee tenure and to a quite an extent also on performance. Startups being a high churn industry, retaining those who join is thus crucial for growth, otherwise all you get is a leaky bucket that empties as fast it fills. That is why employee onboarding has been one area where our HR team has spent and continues to spend the most of its energies in constantly evolving the on-boarding process. Our onboarding process gets activated much before a candidate joins with multiple personal interactions on call and email before joining to the joining day where they find all the little things pre-arranged for (from laptops and tabs that are ready to go to visiting cards and work stations all setup.). Other than that, based on role and grade, customized interaction programs jointly owned by HR and business are created to ensure that the newbie gets familiar with the relevant stakeholders.

Build talent: Both as a responsibility towards the employees and also as a need of the hour, it is important to ensure that we help our talent to constantly reinvent themselves. For our frontline sales, the onboarding process itself gets extended into training and certification so that our people become quickly enabled and empowered to deliver on the ground. This also allows us to then reach out to sales talent pool outside our industry thus enabling us to get the



Getting the impression right on the day of the joining has a direct correlation on employee tenure and to quite an extent also on performance

best without being constrained by industry experience. Similarly, in other functions especially in Technology where we have campus hires, they get to learn new technologies as well as get cracking on Proof of Concept projects with project mentors to coach and guide them. There's also a culture of sharing knowledge with the seniors holding open house sessions and sharing their experiences and knowledge. Most startups give stupendous salaries, it's not a strong differentiator anymore. The value add in terms of the skill growth has helped us to have a different conversation with our potential talent pool, one that they find holds well when they check and validate from their friends working with us.

Honest Performance Conversations: Two things that are highly espoused as part of our culture are performance and transparency. We've found that what employees appreciate is an honest conversation. Hence, we are building systems and processes that drive that intent. Our goal setting exercise ensures that new joiners work with their managers within the first fortnight of joining and freeze upon expectations for the year. In frontline functions like sales, that are metrics driven, updates on performance are shared with the entire sales team fortnightly. This allows the members to not only see how they are faring but also how everyone else is doing. This kind of openness helps build trust and

an atmosphere of honesty and transparency and both avoids bias as well as a perceived feeling of being biased against. For those performing well they also find that the organization rewards them handsomely with an incentive scheme that gets more aggressive at higher level. The Reward and Recognition program also aids in this with our ethos of public felicitation and recognition of those who perform. Who is getting recognized and what kind of performance and behaviors are getting recognized then become a transparent message to all. We've extended this transparent conversation even to team members' families in the form of commendation letters.

Each startup also has its own unique story, something that connects with both customers and employees. Through various touch points, be it our careers page, our recruiters, social media, JDs, we constantly try and engage with the talent pool to ensure that they understand and get excited about our raison d'être, the kind of people we are and the kind of environment, work and culture they can expect to find once they join in. This avoids any surprises or heartburns post joining. While some of these may sound basic but we've found executing them well has the most impact. 🐯

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PRASHANT BHATNAGAR



Dreaming about getting ahead - Did you collect all the A's?

Annual grades have always determined our capability to take on newer assignments. It is all about getting the A's in life. A look at what A's you need for getting ahead in your career

Clarifying your career aspirations is a great start but it is crucial to understand and develop abilities that are essential to play the aspired role

you are dreaming about getting ahead, however, you will still have to accumulate some A's.

Aspiration

First things first. What (and why) do you want from your career? While that may sound like a simple question, but seriously, what do you want from your career? Do you want to be an entrepreneur, an academician, public servant, leading a function (which) or an organization? While the choices are endless, many among us haven't thought about them. It is easier to see the next job/role but harder to visualize 30-40 year career. The task is made even more difficult by limitations posed by our exposure and knowledge i.e. I don't know what all can I do. Well, if you are plagued by short-termism or unawareness-ism (or both), and can't answer "what do I want from my career", how about answering "what do you not want (to do)". For example, in my personal exploration, I was clear that I didn't want to lead the company. I leveraged connections to explore other possibilities (for example Management Consulting) and ruled them out due to interest/other reasons. Finally, aspire for what you want independent of what others want. By all means, be inspired by your peers but don't follow them blindly. This is your life and dreams, don't live someone else's.

Ability

Clarifying your career aspiration(s) is a great start but not sufficient. It is crucial to understand and subsequently develop abilities that are essential to

Did you consider that workplaces are similar to schools and colleges—learning from teachers we admire and detest; carrying out projects individually and in groups where only a few really work and submitting assignments that feel like out of syllabus. And how can one forget annual grades that determine if we are qualified to take on newer assignments. Thankfully, there is enough ongoing discussion to do away with ritualistic grades (performance management). If



play that aspired role. For example, if you aspire for a functional leadership role, say Head of HR, planning horizontal moves (e.g. recruiting to HR generalist, learning to business partner etc.) is more valuable than vertical (e.g. promotion in the same role). This is not easy for one may have to delay short term gratification in the service of long term rewards. But sometimes one has to step back to leap forward. Catalog the abilities you will require by talking to others and start designing experiences/projects to develop those. A simple approach is to make a list of add, modify and delete. As an example,

add: conflict resolution, public speaking
 modify: influencing, budgeting
 delete: cynicism, defensiveness

And remember, there is rarely the path to get there. Someone once said, *“Success is really ABC – Ability, Breaks and Courage”*.

Attitude

In the words of Churchill, “Attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference”. Everyone has an attitude – the real question is do you have an attitude or ATTITUDE? You can have all the abilities in the world, but a bad attitude is a sure way to crash your flight of fantasy. Are you always right? Can you admit failure or say I don’t know? Do you learn from others including your juniors? Do you walk the talk and say the same thing privately and publicly? Do you like having the last word or re-stating something that has already been said? The list is endless and the best way to know what others think of you is to observe someone else talk about you when they are unguarded. It might sting but that is a sure way to look into your blind-spot. I believe a bad attitude is a like a flat tyre – if you don’t change it, you will never go anywhere.

In life, we often don’t get what we want or worse, what we deserve. Walking out is easy, staying put is hard

Availability

Deciding where to go and subsequently developing skills and attitude are in your direct control. You can’t fault your manager if she doesn’t define your career goals or fails to develop your attitude / abilities. That is squarely on you. Availability of that dream role, however, is an altogether different matter. I think of it as a game of patience, a virtue that is not equally distributed. There are some who are willing to wait and work with their managers to develop the necessary abilities and attitude. And then there are some who will take the next flight out when denied an opportunity as if running out of jet-fuel. I have met both these individuals and simply inquired “what will you do differently when you get there? And why can’t you do that today?” In a number of instances, I have found people unable to answer first and respond to the second with a smile. In life, we often don’t get what we want or worse, what we deserve. Walking out is easy, staying put is hard. Collin Powell famously said *“A dream doesn’t become reality through magic – it take sweat, determination and hard work”*. Have courage, be determined and show a little faith.

As humans we strive for progress. Some experience it by advancing knowledge while others through formal positions and titles. Regardless of methods, we all like painting a better tomorrow. And in that quest, we are all same and unique.

I am busy accumulating my A’s. Are you? 🍷

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Blogosphere » CHRIS GREENOUGH



Have you ever analyzed the relationship you have with your own HR department?

Do brands know you better than your own company?

Imagine today is your birthday and it's 7:30 am. The alarm rings and you reach for your phone, probably under your pillow. Wiping away the sleep, you peel back your eyes to peer at the screen. There's a gift waiting in the form of a notification! Your favorite cafe is giving you a FREE birthday coffee and scone if you come in – you probably will.

Excited about the free coffee, you head to the shower. Since it's your birthday, you're going to kick off the day with Spotify's weekly playlist – curated just for you from your listening habits. As you're getting ready to leave, Google pings you the estimated commute time to the office. While drinking your free coffee, Amazon emails you a gift card to purchase that thing you wanted. It's a good birthday.

In contrast, compare this to the relationship you have with your own HR department...it's not the same. So how did this happen?

To deliver an experience that only an old friend can give, a lot of personal information has to be gathered, trust has to be earned. Marketing and digital services were the first to take advantage of automation and intelligence to not only describe their customer, but also prescribe actionable outcomes. As a result, marketers are able to spend less time on the execution and more time planning ahead. Understanding this value, companies have been rapidly adopting SaaS marketing automation platforms, driving 50%-60% year-on-year growth for the segment since 2012. Today, more than 80% of top-performing companies use it.

Perhaps, the prerogative wasn't strong enough – but with a growing number of disengaged employees and a mobile workforce, understanding and retaining people have become more important

Take it from a leader who knows, Richard Branson, that in the end “companies are people. Employees want to know – am I being listened to or am I a cog in the wheel? People really need to feel wanted”

than ever. In fact, when companies can effectively engage their employees, they are 200% more productive and are more likely to stay. Studies by Bersin, by Deloitte, HBR and McKinsey all corroborate this simple truth – treat your employees like you would your best customers and you'll achieve success.


And it's not just a pipedream. When you consider the added complexity and ambiguity of identifying and analyzing an anonymous consumer, HR is well positioned to be successful and benefit from smart, automation technologies. In fact, the shift has already started. Within 5 years, HR Software is expected to be worth more than \$15B in APAC. So, how can you get started today?

Think like a marketer. Take out your CMO or head of digital marketing for a coffee and ask them how they use technology to deliver better experiences to their customers. Brainstorm a few ideas that are relevant to the employee experience to test and have some fun with it.



Plan for human and machine resources. Create a list of tasks that you have that a machine could do – be open to accepting that it may even do it better. Then, optimize your time with doing work that requires a human touch.

Have a vision. Don't just digitize and automate the tasks of today, but understand the new value these tools can unlock. Consider how they can be part of your competitive advantage.

Take it from a leader who knows, Richard Branson, that in the end “companies are people. Employees want to know – am I being listened to or am I a cog in the wheel? People really need to feel wanted.” Listen to their data, and show them that they're wanted, at scale, by leveraging technology that can help you deliver a better employee experience. 

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

CHRIS GREENOUGH is the CMO & Co-founder of Scout Software (www.getscout.io), a mobile-first employee engagement platform

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