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The new breed of heroes

One of the challenges that growing organizations have had always struggled with is to identify and develop future-ready leaders. The challenge, however, has turned fierce today with the man-versus-machine conundrum. So much so that 80 percent of respondents in a global study done by Deloitte in 2019 rated leadership building a high priority for their organizations. Technologies such as Artificial Intelligence and robotics made it binding for executives to equip them with new skills and competencies.

There are several studies that tell us that leadership has new requirements today. Leaders today operate in an environment characterized by ambiguity and complexity which calls for attributes such as being tech-savvy and being able to manage the workforce with a combination of humans and machines. All this boils down to building digital leadership models and new competency frameworks and investing in new leadership programs a new priority. Next-gen organizations with dedicated leadership programs have made strides in that direction.

There is a long journey that lies ahead for the c-suite executives to make sure their organizations have the capabilities to prepare for the future.

The cover story in this issue attempts to delve deep into the current digital leadership landscape – including the essentials of digital heroes, producing a new breed of digital leaders, the role of technologies and innovation, the rising skill gaps, and the way the forward.

For the big interview, we have Ellyn Shook – the Chief Leadership and Human Resources Officer at Accenture, who takes us through her journey of 30 years in the HR domain while sharing insights on how Accenture transformed its business and culture –and in turn, elevated their people.

This issue also features the winners of People Matters The Are You In The List Award of 2019. We also have a rapid-fire interview with Ashwani Prashara, the Chief Human Resource Officer – Hydrocarbons at Reliance Industries.

We have a special feature on the recently concluded People Matters TechHR Startup Program 2019 that provided a platform for the upcoming HR technology startups in India.

After the huge success of People Matters TechHR 2019 India, Asia's Largest HR & Work Technology conference is back for the second time in Singapore, scheduled for February 19-21, 2020 at Marina Bay Sands Convention Center. The theme for the event this time is "By Design - Digital by Design, Experience by Design, and Impact by Design". TechHR Singapore 2020 will host the who's who of influencers, analysts and HR technology experts from across the globe.

We invite you to join our event and be a part of our journey in making HR mission critical to business.

As always, we would be happy to hear your views, comments, and suggestions regarding our stories.

Happy Reading!
Esther Martinez Hernandez EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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THE COVER STORY (BEHIND THE SCENE)

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5	Negotiations Skills Clinic	Prof. Jerome Joseph	Jul 22-23, 2019	Bengaluru
6	Strategic Industrial Relations	Prof. P Ray	Jul 22 - 26, 2019	XLRI
7	People Analytics	Prof.Gloryson RB Chalil	Jul 22-25, 2019	XLRI
8	Basic Leadership Skills	Fr. Antony Uvari S.J. & Prof. Sunil Sarangi	Jul 23-27, 2019	XLRI
9	Emotional Intelligence and Interpersonal Skills	Prof. Manish Singhal	Jul 29-Aug 02, 2019	XLRI
10	Managing in a Globalized World	Prof. Manoj Thomas	Aug 05-07, 2019	XLRI
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HR-TECH: UNLOCKING NEW POSSIBILITIES

The time is ripe for leaders and managers to integrate technology into their DNA. As we witness the increasing use of intelligent tech in recruitment, engagement, learning, and retention, new tools and solutions are being created to solve operational challenges that have plagued HR for decades. The cover story discussing the use of technology in HR to unleash new potential and explore new possibilities is a must-read for all HR leaders and professionals. The story encapsulates the many perspectives of using HR-tech and brings together some of the world's most renowned business leaders and experts to contextualize ongoing developments in HR and discuss what the future holds. Leading experts who participated in the story agree that HR needs to take the lead in designing the future of work and re-imagining the purpose and function of HR. It's time for us to transition to transformation and embark on a journey that redefines what it means to work.

- RAHUL SANGWAN

AUGUST 2019 ISSUE

Workplace burnouts

It is a matter of grave concern that employees across industries are battling severe mental health challenges and experiencing workplace burnout. Research suggests that employees working in high-pressure environments and stressful workplaces have lower levels of productivity, which eventually impacts the bottom-line as well. Moreover, add to that today's lifestyle and health challenges, and it should come as no surprise that employees are being worn out within a few years of starting their professional life. I also believe that there is a deep-rooted stigma attached related to admitting mental health issues and seeking relevant help. Considering that employees spend a considerable part of their day, and life, in the corporate world, the onus to ensure the well-being of individuals falls on employers as well. If we are to succeed, we need to design effective talent management strategies to prevent, identify, and remedy employee burnout effectively and promote holistic well-being of the mind, body, and soul in the workplace.

- DHWANIKA SALVE

The man-machine conundrum

If one-third of all the work we do today can be completely automated, we urgently need to restructure the way we do things in the workplace.

However, instead of competing against machines, we need to learn how to work alongside them. So, in addition to learning new skills, we need to create ecosystems that combine the best of human and machine capabilities. Unfortunately, we have been focusing more on job losses, whereas the reality is that most jobs will evolve and roles will expand in their scope. Similarly, new tools and technologies provide organizations with modern talent management practices and can be used to hire and retain employees effectively. I agree with the writer that we must view technology as a welcome addition to existing capabilities and use it to solve pressing talent and HR-related challenges of today.

- VIDYASHREE KUMAR

Sadhguru on why human is not a resource

Sadhguru's interview made for a refreshing and insightful read. In a world driven by numbers, deadlines, and targets, it's essential to take a step back and remember what it means to be a human and how we can work to the best of our capabilities. Sadhguru's ideas and insights serve as a timely reminder of the fact that we must look inward to find our unique human abilities in order to succeed. We must move away from the high-pressure work environment and pave the way for more relaxed and enabling workplace systems that bring out the best in people and elicit their trust, time, and efforts. We need to nurture traits like curiosity, resourcefulness, innovation, collaboration, respect, and compassion to build a workplace that encourages people to be their best. The premise that a human being is not a resource, but a possibility, really struck a chord with me and will stay with me for a while.

- SUCHITH NAGARKAR

The state of HR-Technology in India 2019-20

The research conducted by People Matters on the state of HR-technology in India in 2019-20 highlights crucial trends and practices in the HR domain. Being in the HR consultancy profession for over two decades now, I have been working with a variety of organizations across industries, and all of them echo the sentiment to digitize their HR operations and talent management practices. There is also an increasing awareness to leverage analytics and AI in the domain to obtain predictive edge. While improving efficiency and bringing down costs is a key driver, leaders today want to create a robust HR function that truly enables the organization in solving crucial business challenges. As the research shows, budgets for HR-tech are increasing, and one can expect organizations to continue to invest in people-centric technology in the near future. This presents HR with a unique opportunity to design the workplace of the future that combines the best of human and technology, and I, for one, am extremely excited for the same.

- PRAWAL SHARMA

Imitation is the sincerest flattery – but the worst strategy

Visty Banaji's article regarding the compensation for business leaders in India is a brilliant take on how we have changed the remuneration model for the C-suite since liberalization and made some avoidable mistakes along the way. I agree with him that moving from a diversified compensation and benefits model to a cash-focused model has done more harm than good. Organizations need to offer the benefits and advantages that are valuable to their leaders and employees. Banaji's suggestion that organizations must de-commoditize compensation by focusing on health, housing, and education can restore balance and value in the remuneration models as well. I must add that the rich historical and cultural references mention serve as excellent analogies and hats off to Visty Banaji for penning such an engaging, relevant, and thought-provoking article.

- POOJA PILLAI

We believe in creating 'hire-to-retire' experiences for our employees

It was fascinating to learn through Lara Hernandez's interview how a century-old hospitality brand like Hilton is putting its employees first. I quite like the concept of using the term 'Team Members' instead of employees as it firmly roots collaboration in the heart of the company's culture. Similarly, if an employer is creating a 'hire-to-retire' experience for its workforce, it indicates that every step of the employee journey has been carefully calibrated and designed for maximum engagement. I wasn't surprised to learn that Hilton has been recognized as a 'Great Place to Work' considering that they have numerous employee engagement and development programs. Although Lara is referring to the hospitality business, I think she raises a very relevant point when she says that no matter how efficient or advanced technology can be, it could never take away the element of human touch.

- JASWANT JOSHI

Culture truly is king

Surabhi Washisht's journey as a young CHRO and her role in building the HR function at WeWork India is truly inspiring. Her take on workplace culture, recruitment, and startups is fresh and enriching. The idea of allowing the culture to grow and enrich while the business expands is essential because we need to let cultures evolve in order to support change and innovation. While working with supportive and driven people who 'own' their work is crucial, particularly in start-ups, it is not always easy to find such people and we need to look beyond conventional recruitment practices to find the right 'fit'. I am pleased to know that organizations like WeWork are conducting 'cultural interviews' alongside traditional interviews to assess skills to help bring out the authenticity and personality of candidates in order to make the right hiring decisions. Kudos to People Matters for introducing us to young inspirational HR leaders like Surabhi!

- SHRUTI JOTRAO

{WRITE TO US NOW BY SCANNING THIS CODE}

TECHNOLOGY

67% of business leaders plan to use tech to remove human bias: Report

AS ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI), Extended Reality (XR) and Internet of Things (IoT) continue to underpin the wave of continuous innovation and disruption of traditional business models, it is important to understand how business leaders plan to leverage this human-machine partnerships.

Globally 67 percent and in India 86 percent of business leaders expect using new technologies to create equal opportunities by removing human bias in decision-making. With a new immersive technology like XR, collaboration among employees will empower workers more than ever before. Interestingly, the report highlights that human capabilities will not be replaced by AI, it will rather complement and augment them.

JOBS

Cisco cuts a few jobs in India as part of global realignment

MULTINATIONAL CONGLOMERATE, Cisco has laid off a few tens of employees in India, from the workforce of 11,000 employees as part of a global realignment. As the firm relooks at realigning its resources, a few jobs in the country gets affected too. The realignment drive has been initiated across the globe for Cisco. Jobs in California have also got affected. The technology firm has laid off 397 employees in San Jose and 91 in Milpitas. Commenting on these layoffs, the company stated, "It's important that we make decisions to continually ensure that our investments and resources are aligned with strategic growth areas of the business and customer demands."

UNEMPLOYMENT

India's regular jobs do not pay well: Periodic Labour Force Survey

ABOUT 17.8 PERCENT OF THE youth (15-29 years) are unemployed, according to the Periodic Labour Force Survey 2017-18. The challenging job scenario has been reflected with 6.1 percent of the entire country's labour force reporting to be unemployed.

The PLFS has raised concerns about the rising unemployment in the country and the job market conditions. Back in the years between 2011-12 and 2017-18, the proportion of the labour force busy in a regular wage or salaried jobs had increased by five percentage points. However, the overall workforce participation reduced by four percentage points during the same time period. As far as

JOBS

Maruti Suzuki trims temporary workforce by 6%

THE AUTO INDUSTRY, which accounts for nearly half of India's manufacturing output, is going through one of its worst slow downs in nearly a decade. For Maruti Suzuki, the effects of this slow down have reached its temporary workforce--bringing it down to 18,845, on average during the six months ending on June 30, down 6 percent, or 1,181 people, from the same period last year. These job cuts have only accelerated since April, according to a report shared by Maruti Suzuki. First, the company had to cut production by 10.3 percent in the first six months of the year and now the percentage of temporary staff. At the end of March, the permanent staff stood at 15,892. It is not only Maruti Suzuki

but companies across the auto sector are struggling. As per industry body FADA, two lakh jobs have been cut across automobile dealerships in India in the last three months as vehicle retailers take the last resort of cutting manpower to tide over the impact of the unprecedented sales slump.
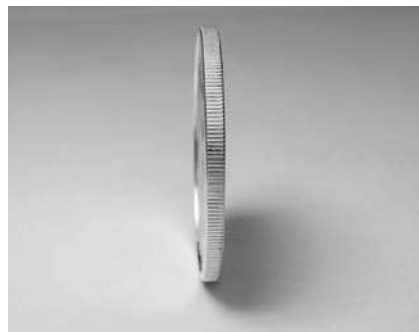
the regular workers were increased, the number has increased by eight percent.

On the other hand, 53.1 percent of the total workforce in China is engaged in a salaried or regular job. India lags behind Brazil (67.7 percent) and South Africa (84.8 percent) in terms of moving a larger population of the country into the salaried or regular jobs sector.

QR

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

Cognizant may increase variable part of pay: Report

IT SERVICES FIRM COGNIZANT may increase the variable pay component in the compensation structure of its employees in order to lower costs, as per an ET report. Rejigging compensation structure is another measure in a roadmap that is aimed at making it 'fit-for-growth'.

The idea is to increase variable pay to actually reward contribution and growth. It could be 35 percent or more in mid-levels but it won't be significantly higher for freshers, who are on a low base. There is still no clarity on what proportion of an employee's salary would turn into variable pay as the discussions around change in compensation have just begun. However, CEO Humphries, who is spearheading the overhaul, had stated earlier that changes to compensation were being considered. This is not the first-ever measure being considered by Cognizant to improve margins. In May this year, to keep the pyramid lean to improve its margins and accelerate revenue growth, Cognizant had offered voluntary separation to at least 300 top executives.

SKILLS

43% recruiters struggle to hire for AI roles- Report

MOST INDIAN IT RECRUITERS are presently hiring for Android/iOS (36%), Python (24%), Java (23%), C/C++ (8%) and R (4%) technologies, among others. These facts were revealed in the latest TechGig survey on 'Developer Hiring Trends' of 1,758 hiring managers and IT recruiters who were actively scouting for new tech talent in diverse industries. While Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a disruptive technology and is seeing mass adoption, Indian IT recruiters find it utmost difficult to recruit talent for AI. When asked about technologies for which finding talent is challenging, most respondents named Artificial Intelligence (43%), Machine Learning (17%) and Data Analytics (14%) as their biggest worry. Interestingly, most technology recruiters see a sabbatical or maternity leave as a big red flag in a CV. About 59% of IT recruiters say that they won't consider a candidate who has a long employment gap.

TECHJOBS

Best paid tech jobs in India: Indeed

TECH-RELATED JOB ROLES have grown in the last five years, according to data from Indeed. Between February 2014 and 2019, technology job roles saw an 8 percent increase, according to data from Indeed. Data Warehouse Architect job role has a median salary of Rs. 15,00,000, a Senior Technical Lead secures a Median Salary of Rs. 12,00,000, an Analytics Manager gets a Median Salary of Rs. 11,50,000, a Technical Projects Manager gets a Median Salary of Rs. 10,00,000 and a Lead Developer secures a Median Salary: Rs. 10,00,000.

JOBS

Investment banks are cutting 30,000 jobs globally this year

ABOUT 30,000 INVESTMENT-BANKING JOBS are getting axed this year as the global banking industry looks set for a gloomy second half of 2019.

According to a report by The Financial Times, most of the cuts have been in European banks, with Deutsche Bank making up a large portion of the layoffs after last month's overhaul. However, American banks such as Citigroup are also struggling as falling interest rates, along with increased use of automation and AI, have hit investment banking jobs.

Earlier this year, Deutsche Bank announced 18,000 job cuts as part of a major overhaul of its business. The bank also announced its biggest loss since 2008 in its latest earnings report, indicating the toll of the changes.

Barclays has also cut 3000 jobs this year and made some major changes at the top of the business. In April, Société Générale announced that 1600 jobs would be cut, with most of the cuts in France and New York.

Citigroup's challenges look to be the trend across global banking. Bloomberg reported that in the latest round of earnings earlier this month, the five biggest American banks' trading revenue was down 8 percent last quarter, following a 14 percent slide in the first quarter.

NEWSMAKER OF THE MONTH

Retiring the retirement age:
The new generation of leaders

By 2030, older Singaporeans who want to continue working on the same employment terms will have the assurance that they can do so up to the age of 65, instead of 62 now

Raising the retirement age will cause a tectonic shift at the workplace that will make many jobs redundant and demand new skills and competencies. The challenge, therefore, will be on how to transition the older workers to newer jobs

" …We are healthy for longer, we live longer, but we don't want to spend more years idle in retirement. We want to stay active, engaged, feel a sense of worth and purpose… Also, many of us want to build up bigger nest eggs for when we eventually, retire," said Prime Minister of Singapore, Lee Hsien Loong on Singapore's National Day Rally speech.

In a bid to extend support for older workers in the aging island nation, Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong announced that retirement age will be gradually raised to 65 from 62. The re-employment age, where employers must offer work in the same organization, will rise to 70 from 67.

The statutory retirement age will go up to 63 in 2022, and eventually to 65 by 2030. The re-employment age will also go up from 67 now to 68 in 2022, and eventually to 70 by 2030. Also, workers cannot be dismissed on the grounds of age before they reach the retirement age. Employers must also offer eligible staff works up to the re-employment age but with the flexibility to adjust contract terms.

The move comes at a time when several countries are looking to reform retirement practices.

For example in the US, the retirement age is set to increase to 67 years. For those who turned 62 in 2018, full retirement age is 66 and four months. But for those who turn 62 in 2019, full retirement age is 66 and six months. Under current law, retirement age is set to increase by two months each year until it hits 67.

Similarly, for India, the retirement age is 60 years but for special cases of health and education, the retirement age is increased to 65 years. A recent survey by Economic Times also pointed that retiring at 70 may be a reality. The possibility seems inevitable due to increase in life expectancy.

So, is it time to retire retirement?

While it sounds easy, raising the retirement age can prove to be a zero-sum game. While, raising the retirement age will help us benefit from the experience and wisdom of seniors, it raises concerns on the opportunities for youth and their promotion for the higher positions.

Raising the retirement age also highlights a bigger issue of skilling. The nature of work is changing with the arrival of advanced technology like AI and Robotics. It will cause a tectonic shift at the workplace that will make many jobs redundant and demand new skills and competencies. The challenge, therefore, will be on how to transition the older workers to newer jobs.

Organizations need to have a thought-through strategy on skilling and creating jobs for aging population. @m

APPOINTMENTS

ASHUTOSH GUPTA JOINS LINKEDIN AS COUNTRY MANAGER, INDIA

LinkedIn has named Ashutosh Gupta as Country Manager for India. In addition to his country manager role, he will continue to lead the LMS Online Sales Organization for APAC and China. Gupta has been associated with the U.S-based firm since 2013. In his first role at the firm he led LinkedIn's Marketing Solutions (LMS) in India, where he scaled the enterprise business.

MSL ELEVATES AMIT MISRA AS CEO, SOUTH ASIA

MSL has promoted Amit Misra to CEO, South Asia, to lead the brand across SAARC regions, with a primary focus on Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. A company statement says that the move comes with the goal of driving greater synergy across the region and group companies. He was previously CEO, MSL, India.

NATIONAL AUSTRALIA BANK ROPES IN RBS HEAD AS CEO

National Australia Bank has chosen Ross McEwan as the new Chief Executive, as it looks to battle through the troubles and put the bad times behind. He was the Head of RBS and stepped down in April, this year. He had earned plaudits for returning RBS to profits and dividend payments after almost a decade without either following its £45 Bn bailout by the taxpayer during the 2008 financial crisis.

BREADTALK CEO QUITS, CHAIRMAN TO TAKE OVER

Henry Chu was appointed as CEO on July 1, 2017 and was responsible for overseeing the group's global operations, focusing on strategic planning, investments, business development and regional expansion. Henry Chu Heng Hwee is leaving the company for "personal and health reasons".

SOFTBOX APPOINTS NEW CEO

Softbox, the provider of temperature control packaging and thermal covers for the life science and logistics industries has announced the appointment of Kevin Valentine as Softbox new global CEO, effective 1st September 2019.

YUM BRANDS PROMOTES DAVID GIBBS TO CEO

David Gibbs who had been recently working as the COO of Yum Brands has been promoted to the position of Chief Executive Officer. Gibbs will be succeeding Greg Creed who will be retiring at the end of 2019. Gibbs, who has been with the company since 1989, is a company veteran who has held several senior roles including CFO for three years and COO from early 2019.

ANSHULA KANT NAMED MD AND CFO OF WORLD BANK

Anshula Kant, MD of the State Bank of India, has been appointed as Managing Director and Chief Financial Officer of the World Bank. The announcement was made by President David Malpass. As Managing Director and Chief Financial Officer, Kant will be responsible for financial and risk management of the World Bank Group, reporting to the President.

ACTIVISION BLIZZARD APPOINTS AIG VETERAN AS CPO

Activision Blizzard, the producer of some of the most famous franchises including World of Warcraft, Call of Duty, Candy Crush, Hearthstone, and Overwatch, has appointed Claudine Naughton as the Chief People Officer. Naughton will directly report to Bobby Kotick, CEO, Activision Blizzard. She happens to succeed Brian Stolz who will be taking up the new role of Senior Adviser for the organization.

AUDI INDIA GETS A NEW HEAD

At a time when Audi's sales have been in a downward spiral, Balbir Singh Dhillon, an industry veteran who has spent nearly 12 years in the Volkswagen group, will take charge of the company. Dhillon replaces current head German-born Rahil Ansari, who is moving to the group's global headquarters in Germany, nearly six months ahead of the usually-stipulated three-year term. Dhillon is currently the head of dealer development of Audi in India.

MEGHNA APPARAO JOINS GODREJ CONSUMER PRODUCTS AS CMO

A senior marketing veteran, Meghna Apparao has joined Godrej Consumer Products (GCPL)'s as the new Chief Marketing Officer. Prior to joining Godrej, she was working with Amazon India as Director. She joined Amazon India as General Manager in the year 2015. She was responsible for overall P/L responsibility for the entire Beauty, Personal and Health Care Appliances categories.

VOLKSWAGEN NAMES KIA VETERAN SAAD CHEHAB AS CMO IN US

Volkswagen has named Saad Chehab as the new Chief Marketing Officer in the US. Chehab has previously worked with FCA and Kia will take charge from 19th August 2019. He will report to Volkswagen of America CEO Scott Keogh. Previously, Chehab also headed the Chrysler brand in the US and elevated the Maserati in the country.

RAJENDRA GHAG JOINS BLUE DART AS CHRO

South Asia's premier logistics company Blue Dart ropes in Rajendra Ghag as CHRO. Among the top 100 HR professionals, Ghag comes with an experience of over 30 years. In his long career spanning over three decades he has worked across FMCG, Insurance and Logistics industries.

AIG NAMES KAREN LING AS NEW EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, CHRO

American International Group has appointed Karen L. Ling Executive Vice President, Chief Human Resources Office. Based in New York, Karen will report to AIG President and Chief Executive Officer Brian Duperreault and will join the AIG Executive Leadership Team (ELT).

Ashwani Prashara

Chief Human Resource Officer - Hydrocarbons at Reliance Industries

1
One thing that makes you passionate about HR?
"Human Beings" and the opportunity to make a difference. The canvas is limitless and it's an absolute joy to get to see ordinary people deliver extraordinary results – that's special.

2
What was the turning point of your life as an HR professional?
The fact that I got into this domain more by accident than by design! I had no other option – and so for me this was TINA (There is No Alternative Factor). I poured myself into this because I had nothing else to fall back on. Having said that – even if I had done it by choice, I wouldn't have scripted it any differently.

3
One perception that you wish to change about the HR function?
That it is a "Transaction Liquidation" function.

4
Key Talent Priorities for Reliance – Hydrocarbon, currently?
There's one overarching priority – Future-proof the organization from a Talent perspective.

5
Flexi work or 9 to 5
Directionally Flexi. However, need to be cognizant that in "Brick and Mortar" corporations, key asset facing roles will have to be fixed time with no room for flexi.

Set your own Pole Vault (not High Jump) standards and continue to beat them. Go with the flow

6
One Tech / Innovation that will transform HR?
Using AI to create a Win-Win situation for both the organization and the workforce.

7
HR as a Business Partner or HR as a Business Driver
Neither. These are semantics. To me the key is for HR to be able to command (and not have to demand) a seat at the table.

8
Next big HR deployment Reliance – Hydrocarbon is working around?
There are several in store. Wait and watch.

9
Self-paced learning or guided (organization-lead) learning?
Self-paced is the present and the future. However, it is also important that timelines to complete company critical and mandatory learnings are adhered to.

10
Appraisals based on rating or rating-less performance management?
In an ideal world – would reckon a rating agnostic performance process where team outcomes are tracked.

11
How do you make decisions when you don't have all the necessary information?
I don't. The approach is to let better-equipped people make the decisions and provide them full cover-fire in case things don't turn out as expected.

12
What percentage of decisions (approx.) taken by HR Heads are based on insights?
Difficult to put even an approximate percentage on this. A lot of it is contextual where even insights don't really help.

13
One leader you closely follow and one hallmark of that leader
On this, will take my pick from the world of sports – Roger Federer. His hallmark being his cool, calm composed demeanor with an icy steel resolve.

WHEEBOX NATIONAL EMPLOYABILITY TEST

Wheebox
Measuring World's Talent and Skill Potential

India's largest employability test is now Wheebox National Employability Test, National Employability Test is the most accepted and recognized test that focuses on the strength and development areas of graduating students. The test measures candidate's Business Communication, Critical Thinking Skills, Coding Skills, Numerical Reasoning, Learning Agility and Team Work.

Students from over 5000 colleges from India participates in this initiative and the outcome of the test culminates in building the employability index for 'India Skills Report 2020.

A PeopleStrong Company

Highlights of National Employability Test

1. Partners AICTE, AIU, CII, UNDP and PeopleStrong for India Skills Report 2020.
2. Partners over 5000 Higher and Vocational Education Institutions in India.
3. Standardised and Validated Employability Test.
4. Measures knowledge, skills and behaviour using Simulators and Gamification.

Benefits for the Industry

1. Hire fresh talent from pre-assessed and validated pool of candidates.
2. Talent pool from Pan India in Engineering, Business Management, General Purpose Graduation, ITI, Diploma and Polytechnic colleges.

AICTE

UN DP

CII
Confederation of Indian Industry

ASSOCIATION OF INDIAN UNIVERSITIES

PeopleStrong

Call our specialist: +91 639-100-5466
Or email: mayank.tandon@wheebox.com

Candidate Registration: www.wheebox.com/west

Defining leadership in the digital age

The digital age is upon us. As businesses scramble to make the best of technology has to offer, we look at what leadership means during such times and the role that business leaders need to play to ensure the digital transformation is a success

By **Dhruv Mukerjee**

The business ecosystem today is vastly different from the past. The nature of work is more collaborative and fast-evolving than ever. Consumer preferences have been rapidly evolving and companies face both uncharted threats and opportunities as this opens newer markets and revenue streams. Unlike a time when changes within businesses were incremental, the current age of digital growth—both within business and consumers alike—has been far from taking small steps; today it is more akin to taking giant leaps.

As technology becomes the bedrock of market change, companies are slowly realizing that they now need to get used to surviving in a dynamic ecosystem where short term equilibrium is rare to be found. Business models have been under a constant need to evolve in an effort to reflect consumer needs more accurately and in turn, many who have failed to do so have perished. New market leaders have emerged as a first-mover advantage has played to great benefit, while in certain cases, companies that have adopted digital technologies later on, by driving their growth through a clear purpose and a well-honed work culture, have grown to capture a major portion of the market share. Traditionally big corporations compete with upstarts as decentralized use of technology helps surpass the economy of scale and build profitable enterprises. What has been called the Industrial Revolution 4.0—often with good reasons—has thrown the global economy into chaotic waters. It has led to terms like 'Digital Darwinism' enter the business lexicon, again with due reason.

It is in this reality that business leaders today find themselves at the helm of their organizations, on their shoulders the responsibility to successfully navigate their companies.

A response to this rise of a digitalized world has been to embrace and leverage such technologies. Digital platforms, cloud computing, big data analytics, and the rise of AI and automation are

> A recent DDI-EY report on the forecast of global leadership found that digital leadership skills are becoming critical and companies with the most digitally capable leaders financially outperform the average by over 50 percent

all enabling the shift towards digitalization that many companies have today embarked upon. And as business leaders, it has become imperative to have the right skills to enable such journeys to find a successful outcome and ensure that technology becomes a tool that enables and not hinders company growth. A recent DDI-EY report[1] on the forecast of global leadership found that digital leadership skills are becoming critical; companies with the most digitally capable leaders financially outperform the average by over 50 percent.

Competent leadership then, arguably, becomes one of the most prized assets of a company. But where, and how, does one stumble into this coveted figure?

The digital age is now. Are our business leaders ready?

Digital leadership has become supremely important in an age where technology can open newer

revenue stream, help expand market reach, and create better customer value. While digital transformation can often lead to companies achieving all that, their ability to do so critically hinges on how effectively your business leaders can guide the change. The role of digital leaders will be prominent as they will need to steer, design and build systems that create an inclusive future for everyone.

Within Indian markets, there remains a gap in how leaders can leverage digital tech to improve business processes. A Korn Ferry research[2] on the state of digital leadership in the country shows that Indian leaders need to embrace a radical mindset shift to enable real and sustainable digital change within their organizations. The study also highlighted that an adherence to traditional structures of decision making and a 'play safe' approach that actively avoids risk-taking and thus ends ups stifling curiosity-driven change are some of the factors that hinder the digital leaders of today.

This highlights an important point towards addressing the question of building leaders that can truly embrace the digital age.

Rethinking leadership

Digital leadership is no longer looking at a top to bottom approach of decision making rather it is about empowering others to lead and creating teams that are self-organized, motivated, and purpose-driven to use technology to optimize day to day operations. It is to move beyond the confines of a hierarchal framework to a more participative and contributing structure where leaders work towards addressing structural gaps within their companies that might impact the success of their digital transformation. It involves building responsibility and accountability at each level while still enabling employees to develop risk-taking abilities and to make it an important part of the company culture.

In a famous presentation of its company culture, the CEO of Netflix noted that a chief part of his focus was building a company culture that promotes 'freedom with responsibility.' Effective leadership thus translates into decentralization of traditional frameworks into one that seeks to build leaders across each level of the company that drives change. This, in turn, facilitates employees to contribute ideas, insights, and knowledge for achieving shared goals. This enables an agile culture that promotes the inherent ability to innovate. Digital leadership also needs to promote the company's adaptability to handle pressure and constant changes and to make decisions with agility. Creating cross-functional, highly effective teams that guide digitalization creates sustainable ways to build such organizational capabilities.

Leadership during the time of digital transformation is also about striking the right balance between the focus on both the technology and human aspect of digital transformation and ensuring investments and company objectives are tuned to addressing needs of both. This begins by providing a clear vision and clarity of approach and pur-

Digital leadership is no longer looking at a top to bottom approach of decision making rather it is about empowering others to lead and creating teams that are self-organized, motivated, and purpose-driven

pose. Instead of investing in multiple technologies, leaders need to take time to assess the changes that align within their overall goals and invest strategically. This helps cut down on chaos and confusion which often hampers the employees' ability to contribute effectively. In spite of the complexity that exists outside of companies, leaders need to have the ability to decipher such complexity break it down to simple steps while being able to motivate their workforce towards achieving the task.

In conclusion

While the ask from digital leaders require both 'hard' technical skills and 'soft' skills that enable them to build an agile culture and motivate their workforce—the current nature of digital change that promotes asymmetric distribution of benefits requires a merger of skillsets. Digital leaders have to find solutions to current problems while creating a vision for the future. An indomitable task at first glance, but one that is achieved through collaboration and embracing the opportunities that digital transformation offers. ℗ⓜ

Notes:
1 Global Leadership Forecast 2018
2 Digital leadership in India

Indian Auto industry hits rough road

The auto industry is having a tough time due to the slowdown in the sector with several companies shutting down their showrooms and handing over pink slips to a large number of employees. The scenario has turned out to be a nightmare for the contract employees as it has already written off more than three lakhs jobs

By **Abid Hasan**

The auto industry in India is going through a major turmoil as the sector is facing its biggest slowdown in nineteen years. In July 2019, the sale of vehicles across categories in the country slumped 18.71% to about 18.25 lakh units, down from 22.45 lakh units, a year ago in the same month. On the one hand, the numbers of cars are increasing while on the other hand, the numbers of jobs are going for a toss in this sector. This slowdown has created havoc among the people working in this sector because the auto industry in India supports around 3.7 crore direct and indirect jobs and contributes over seven percent to India's GDP and nearly fifty-percent to the country's manufacturing GPD.

According to, Vishnu Mathur, Director General of the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM), the auto industry has witnessed 3.45 lakh job losses due to the slowdown. Nearly 300 dealership outlets have shut, resulting in 2.3 lakh people losing jobs. The auto component manufacturers are reporting the loss of almost one lakh jobs while original equipment manufacturers have sacked 15,000 workers,"

The Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA) also mentioned that around two lakh jobs have been cut across automobile dealerships in India in the last three months as vehicle retailers take to reducing manpower to tide over the impact of the sales slump.

FADA added that with no immediate signs of recovery, the job cuts might continue with more showrooms being shut in the near future. The body has direct government intervention such as reduction of GST to provide relief to the auto industry.

FADA President Ashish Harsharaj Kale said, "The majority of job cuts have happened in the last three months. It started around May 2019 and continued through June and July. Currently, most of the cuts which have happened are in front-end sales jobs, but if this (slowdown) continues, then even the technical jobs will be affected because if we are selling less then we will also service less, so it is a cycle."

As per Kale, around 2.5 million people are employed directly and around 26,000 automobile showrooms operated by 15,000 dealers. Another 2.5 million are indirectly employed in the dealership ecosystem. He added that the two lakh jobs cuts in the last three months are over and above the 32,000 people who lost employment when 286 showrooms were closed across 271 cities in the 18-month period ended April this year.

Elaborating on the reason behind the close of dealerships, Kale said that the "margin of error" in the business in the past few years has really gone down with the cost almost doubling in the last three

CHART SHOWING VEHICLE REGISTRATION DATA

Category	July 2019	July 2018	June 2019	YoY (%)	MoM (%)
2W	13,32,384	14,03,382	12,78,254	-5%	4%
3W	55,850	54,250	46,211	3%	21%
CV*	23,118	26,815	28,478	-14%	-19%
PV**	2,43,183	2,74,772	2,28,198	-11%	7%
Total	16,54,535	17,59,219	15,81,141	-6%	5%

Around two lakh jobs has been cut across automobile dealerships in India in the last three months as vehicle retailers take to reducing manpower to tide over the impact of the sales slump

Source: FDRA Research

to four years. To avoid losses, dealers have been cutting down on costs other than manpower till March. However, the slowdown continued despite good election results and the Budget, which has led to dealers cutting manpower.

As per Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers figures, vehicle wholesale across all categories declined by 12.35 percent to 60,85,406 units in April-June as compared to 69,42,742 units in the same period of last year. Meanwhile, as per data based on registrations collated by FADA, retail automobile sales in the April-June period declined by six percent to 51,16,718 units in the first quarter of this fiscal as against 54,42,317 units in the year-ago period. No wonder, market leader Maruti Suzuki has also trimmed its temporary workforce by six percent this year.

The road ahead

Earlier in August, addressing the annual general meeting, Chairman of Mahindra Group, Anand Mahindra, said, "I do believe that kick-starting the auto industry with a few short-term measures will serve a greater national purpose." He feels that the most obvious and welcome first aid would be some temporary relief on the GST front, either by modifying the slabs or, if that is not possible, by removing the cess."

Mahindra added, "The revival of employment would lead to a revival of consumption and in a virtuous cycle that would get us closer to the 5-trillion economy that is our common goal."

The chaos is witnessed across the country and especially from the manufacturing hubs such as Tamil Nadu, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Gujarat, and other such states. The job scenario is not going to change until a major interference from the central government. In fact, the situation is expected to get worse in the coming days. According to a news website, the President of Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU) of Tamil Nadu chapter A Soundarrajan said that at least 5000 contract workers have been laid off as a result of a slowdown in production.

Managing Director of Mahindra and Mahindra, Pawan Goenka is also facing the heat of this slowdown. In a recent development, the automaker has laid off about 1,500 temporary workers since April 1st this year, adding that if the slowdown continues it will force to lay off more employees.

The journey for this sector is not going to be a smooth ride as the roads are pretty rough. In July

"The revival of employment would lead to a revival of consumption and in a virtuous cycle that would get us closer to the 5-trillion economy that is our common goal"
- Anand Mahindra

this year, the Automotive Component Manufacturers Association of India (ACMA) warned that 10 lakh jobs were at risk and urgent action was needed to bring the industry back on track. A major chunk of employees in these sectors work on a contract basis, and they are the one suffering the most in the current situation. Daily wage workers are not getting work, companies are shutting down their showrooms, and some days are no production days in many automobile companies.

Trade pundits are expecting the situation to come back on track in the coming months, but this can only be possible if the GST rates are revised from 28 percent to 18 percent. Experts believe that the consumers are holding on to their automobile purchase until Bharat Stage VI (BS-VI) norms come into play. The vehicular emission norms will be implacable in India from April 1st, 2020. The consumers are waiting for good offers and also waiting to buy the BS stage VI vehicles. Hence there is a slowdown in demand which leads to less production.

With the job scenario off the track in the auto industry, there are no definite signs in the coming months that can heal the job losses. Auto manufacturers are not upbeat about the upcoming festive season as well; they feel the demand during the festive season will remain slow, and hence they are giving ten-twelve days leave to the workers and production is the bare minimum.

The industry is expecting the government to look into this matter and that is the only ray of hope for all the employees who have lost their jobs in last few months, and a large chunk is under immense pressure over losing their jobs. **Pm**

IN THE DIGITAL AGE, A COMPANY'S MOST IMPORTANT SOURCE OF COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE IS ITS PEOPLE
–CHRO, ACCENTURE

ELLYN SHOOK, the Chief Leadership and Human Resources Officer of Accenture, in an exclusive interaction with People Matters, takes us through her journey of 30 years in the HR domain while sharing insights on how Accenture transformed its business and culture – and in turn, elevated their people

By Mastufa Ahmed

Ellyn Shook is the Chief Leadership and Human Resources Officer at Accenture. She is responsible for helping the nearly 500,000 people of Accenture succeed both professionally and personally. Her global team of HR leaders and experts is reimagining leadership and talent practices to create the most truly human work environment in the digital age, fueling Accenture's differentiation in the market and ability to improve the way the world works and lives.

A member of Accenture's Global Management Committee and Investment Committee, Ellyn is a strong advocate for inclusion and diversity, and Accenture has been widely recognized externally as an employer of choice and for its diversity efforts.

Ellyn serves on the board of trustees at Harvey Mudd College, the Women's Leadership Board of the Women and Public Policy program at Harvard's Kennedy School, and the steering committee of Paradigm for Parity. She is active in Women in America and Ellevate Women's Network, and is also a member of the HR50 division of World50. A 2015 article in Forbes.com named Ellyn one of the top 10 CHROs.

Here are the excerpts from the interview.

Q You have been in the industry for over 30 years serving as an HR leader. How did you get into HR and what have you learned so far being at the helm of an organization like Accenture?

A I started my career outside of HR at Marriott and then joined the Accenture HR team in our New York office. I've held a variety of roles within HR in the past 30 years and many of them focused on transformational change. The people I've worked with have been extraordinary and taught me so much, however, one thing that stands out is – the key to success is lifelong learning.

In these times of unprecedented disruption and high-velocity change, the path forward is through continuous learning – having the intellectual curiosity to remain highly relevant. Gone are the days when you learned a profession and practiced it throughout your entire career. The new life script is "learn, work, repeat". We have a saying at Accenture that we grow our people to grow our business – because we believe that organizations that invest in people and unlock their potential are well-positioned to innovate and drive growth.

Q One of the major topics of discussion at the World Economic Forum's annual meeting in Davos, Switzerland, this year concerned the future of work. How do you envisage the future of work with technology impacting almost all facets of HR?

A To first set some context on the future of work through Accenture's study title "Reworking the Revolution", we found that many organizations look to the technology itself as the key differentiator in the digital age and they risk overlooking their most important source of competitive advantage – their people. In fact, our research found that organizational spending on intelligent technology in the past two years increased over 100 percent; yet only 18 percent of organizations plan to significantly increase their investment in training their people. That's a big gap.

At Accenture, we believe that the best of technology should be used to elevate human beings. And, that the biggest opportunity comes when intelligent technology meets human ingenuity – humans and machines working together to deliver value and drive better results.

Turning back to how technology is impacting all facets of HR, we're living that future at Accenture today. We're on a journey where we've automated many transactional tasks, which has freed up our HR team members' time to take on higher value work, spending more time connect-

ing with and advising our people. Additionally, intelligent technology enables us to have data and insights at our fingertips to design solutions that improve our people's work experience. Using these technologies strategically has also led to multi-millions in savings which we reinvest back into programs for our people.

Q How is Accenture different from other big companies in terms of culture? What are the top things that you follow as part of your culture and how does that impact your business?

A In the past decade, we've transformed our business and our culture to be innovation-led. We have diverse talent profiles, diverse people, and over 100 acquisitions that have formed our culture of cultures. It is a truly strategic differentiator for us, but it doesn't just happen. We've been very intentional about putting four cultural building blocks in place to create an environment where our behaviors and beliefs, the way we grow responsible leaders, and the way we do business every single day, come to life.

Our culture is rich, diverse and vibrant, yet we also have common threads that unite us. They are our enduring Core Values, our Code of Business Ethics, and our unwavering belief that our diversity and inclusive environment make smarter and more innovative. And, we've built our whole culture based on an aspiration to be the most truly human company in the digital age – to help our people be successful both professionally and personally. Because in the end, we are an innovation-led business and it's through our people's creativity that we achieve our purpose of improving the way the world works and lives.

Q Accenture has re-skilled over 300,000 of their total body of nearly 500,000 employees over the last four years, investing around $1 billion annually in training. What was your end-in-mind as you took off this initiative and do you clearly see the results in action (as you said in an interview – "training has to have an immediate payoff")?

A We set a business aspiration to become the leading provider of end-to-end digital-related services, and this required a massive talent transformation. "New skilling" our people was at the heart of that transformation to ensure they remain relevant and at the forefront of both technology and industry. This was also part of our broader promise to help our people be successful both professionally and personally, and this remains a critical part of our talent strategy. In terms of payoff, we

reached our goal to achieve 60 percent of revenues in digital-related services, a year early.

To accomplish this, we have an innovative learning approach called Accenture Connected Learning, which abandoned a "one size fits all" curriculum to instead focus on learning opportunities that are highly customized for the individual and highly specialized based on our clients' needs. Our learning opportunities enable real-time, on-demand content (think expert-curated "Pinterest-like" learning boards) that is democratized – accessible by all – using the latest neuroscience research to enable deep learning at massive scale.

At Accenture, we believe that the best of technology should be used to elevate human beings. And, that the biggest opportunity comes when intelligent technology meets human ingenuity – humans and machines working together to deliver value and drive better results

To give you a stat that conveys not only the access to world-class learning but also the intellectual curiosity of our people and their quest to remain relevant: our people have completed over 70 million self-directed learning activities in the past three years. And, we dispelled the myth that these innovative learning methods were too expensive. We achieved more with

less – lowering training costs per hour by 25 percent and increasing our people's training hours by 40 percent. The "new skilling" framework that guided our own efforts is an offering that we also use to help our clients across many industries on their journeys to reimagine work and reskill their people.

A lot of studies emphasize the power of parity including the McKinsey study which says that $12 trillion could be added to global GDP by 2025 by advancing women's equality. Women's participation in the workforce and presence in leadership positions is still off the mark. What's holding us back?

For the past several years we've

published research on the topic of equality in the workplace and a groundbreaking finding was how big a role culture plays. Accenture research revealed that company culture is the key to unlocking gender equality and narrowing the pay gap. We then went a step further to uncover what it takes to create a workplace culture in which women and men have equal oppor-

tunities for advancement and pay, and where all people can thrive. To accelerate change, we identified 14 core factors that are proven to influence advancement. We call them "cultural drivers" and they are grouped into three actionable categories – Bold Leadership, Comprehensive Action, and An Empowering Environment.

What really surprised us is that when you lift women up, men rise too. When these factors that create a culture of equality are in place, men are 23 percent more likely to advance to manager and more than twice as likely to advance to senior manager/director.

Shifting attention back to our efforts at Accenture, we set a goal to achieve a gender-balanced workforce by 2025 and we are making strong progress toward that goal with over 200,000 women now in our workforce. And, we are laser-focused on embedding the drivers that create a culture of equality identified in our research, into our own culture and DNA.

Q How does great leadership look like in the digital age? Has it changed in the wake of unprecedented changes and an unpredictable future that businesses are faced with in Industry 4.0? How will digital leaders show the way in the VUCA world?

A I believe that the more digital the world becomes, the more humanity and human connection matters. And this extends to how we lead.

Trust is the ultimate currency in the digital age, and successful leaders need to be masters at building trust – not just with customers but also employees. There's a stat from the 2019 Edelman Trust Index that is quite insightful: the only institution people still trust are their own employers. What an opportunity that is for savvy organizations who can build upon that trust and unlock people's potential.

To do that, leaders need to adopt new behaviors and attributes. As part of Accenture's business and talent transformation, we redefined our leadership DNA to focus on key expectations that guide how we develop leaders in the "New," e.g., individuals who experiment, inspire others and help them feel they belong, adapt nimbly to constant change, and lead with compassion – bringing both their heart and mind to work each day. This doesn't just apply to our 7,000 managing directors – the DNA is infused into our culture of cultures and integral to how we build leaders at all levels.

Q As HR becomes more strategic, can they help drive business outcomes? Are there parameters to measure and quantify this? Do large organizations have measures to gauge HR's performance in terms of numbers?

A Absolutely. First, HR being strategic is a given. Today's business environment requires HR to create a talent strategy that aligns with the business strategy, to transform talent and culture to achieve strategic outcomes for all stakeholders – the business, shareholders, clients/customers, their people, and communities. And, I truly believe that HR has never been more important than it is today. CEOs consistently say that their biggest internal challenge is employees, talent and skills (Gartner's latest CEO survey from June 2018 confirms this and our research corroborates it.) At Accenture, we directly connect our people results and our business results.

Beyond setting a talent strategy that accelerates growth and value for the business, HR professionals are in a position to make a much larger societal impact. We're at a critical turning point in history with the rise of AI and intelligent technology. HR sits at the crossroads to help business leaders make decisions that can either elevate people or eliminate them. There is an opportunity and obligation for HR professionals today to not only drive value for the business, people and communities where they work and live but to shape decisions that define a broader societal narrative for the years to come.

Societal impact is something we think a lot about at Accenture and proactively plan for, promising to retrain every worker impacted by automation. We reinvest 60 percent of the savings generated from automation back into training for our people. To give you just a few examples, we've reskilled mortgage underwriters to work in IT as software testers, and individuals who used to process billing transactions have been retrained as tech masters who create bots.

Q If you were to share three messages to a large group of CHROs and people managers who are trying to bring value to their business, what would that be?

A When I took the post of CHRO five years ago, I knew we needed to transform our talent practices to be relevant for the digital age. To do that we needed to look at things differently, through these three lenses:

1. **Hyper-personalization:** One-size-fits-all was irrelevant. In the highly-customized world we live in, where people rely on Alexa knowing their preferences and getting curated suggestions on what to watch from Netflix, they expect the same type of highly-personalized experience at work.

Trust is the ultimate currency in the digital age, and successful leaders need to be masters at building trust – not just with customers but also employees

2. **Transparency:** Transparency builds trust, and with nearly three-fourths of our workforce at Accenture being millennials/gen Z, we knew being open and honest was essential.

3. **Listening & Involving:** The last one goes hand in glove with transparency and it involves listening to and actively engaging with your people. It means not assuming that we, as "leadership," understand what our people want and need. Leaders no longer "manage people," instead they need to co-create with them. One of the first things we did in our own talent transformation was to crowdsource our employee experience. We invited both employees and future candidates to share what they value most. It was incredibly enlightening. Their input created a roadmap for the future and sparked some of our most important talent innovations – including how we revolutionized our approach to performance management, democratized our learning, and created a Careers Marketplace so all our people could have a transparent view of open roles to pursue new opportunities without leaving the company.

Q What are the top challenges for HR today and how do you as a global HR leader see them panning out in next the five years?

A As an optimist, I'm thinking in terms of opportunities, and there are many:

- How to use the best of technology to elevate people…through human/ machine collaboration where humans do what they do best – be creative, compassionate, etc.
- New types of collaboration across the talent ecosystem – business, government, academia, industry associations, etc. – to narrow the skills gap in workers new to the job market and also those experienced workers who are facing career transitions.
- New ways of working…high-performance habits built over time that help people work smarter, not harder in the digital age…where sleep, time to recharge, disconnect from technology, etc. are priorities.
- Rethinking the traditional HR operating model and focusing on Agile HR teams…assembling diverse skills to solve complex problems in real-time vs. CoEs and shared services models that are perhaps beyond their shelf life, enabling HR to keep pace in today's innovation-focused business environment.

However, given the velocity of change, it's nearly impossible to know what the next five years will bring. I wish I had a crystal ball. The best advice I have is to stay connected to your people and what matters to them – and to dial up your intellectual curiosity to stay cutting edge, so you are able to seize opportunities courageously and quickly.

Q By 2020, artificial intelligence will create more jobs than it destroys, accord- ing to Gartner. And then there are survey findings that tell that robots will take away jobs. What's your view on AI's long-term role in business and the economy?

A We agree there will be a net-job gain, essentially, but there's a pretty long, dark tunnel you need to navigate in order to get to the end. In our future workforce research, as I mentioned earlier, organizations increased their investment in intelligent technologies the past two years by over 100 percent, but only 18 percent plan to significantly increase their investment in training their people. That gap really needs to close in order to get to the bright light at the end of the tunnel.

Also, we're starting to see new roles and capabilities emerge in our own organization, and we've developed a whole new way of doing what we call work planning. We've stopped doing workforce planning. The real value that can be unlocked lies in human beings and intelligent technologies working together.

Q What are your top priorities moving forward? Do you have any specific plan on deploying technologies such as AI, IoT, or Blockchain at Accenture?

A As the world rapidly moves toward a post-digital era, organizations need to look beyond ongoing digital transformations. Digital capabilities are going to become table stakes, so future-minded leaders need to look for new points of differentiation that embrace emerging technologies to drive the next chapter of innovation and growth. In Accenture's 2019 Tech Vision, we prioritize four new technologies that we refer to as DARQ:

- **Distributed Ledger technology…**is expanding networks and capabilities by eliminating the need for trusted third parties. These are best known in the context of cryptocurrencies.
- **Artificial Intelligence…**plays a critical role in optimizing processes, augmenting humans' capabilities, and influencing strategic decision making.
- **Extended Reality…**is an immersive technology that creates entirely new ways for people to experience and engage the world around them.
- **Quantum Computing…**is in early days and experimental, but has the potential to frame and solve the most difficult computational problems in new and novel ways.

As my colleague Paul Daugherty, Accenture's Chief Technology and Innovation Officer, points out, we believe these are the next big technology catalysts for change. **Pm**

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LEADERS YESTERDAY

Limited	Drive Direction	Command & Control	Direct Reports Who Execute	Skillsets	Execution
Reach into the Organization	Critical Task	Framework	Who Is Being Led	What Needs to Be Developed	Leader Core Competency
Democratized	Empower Team	Connect & Collaborate	Agile Teams Which Innovate	Mindsets	Innovation
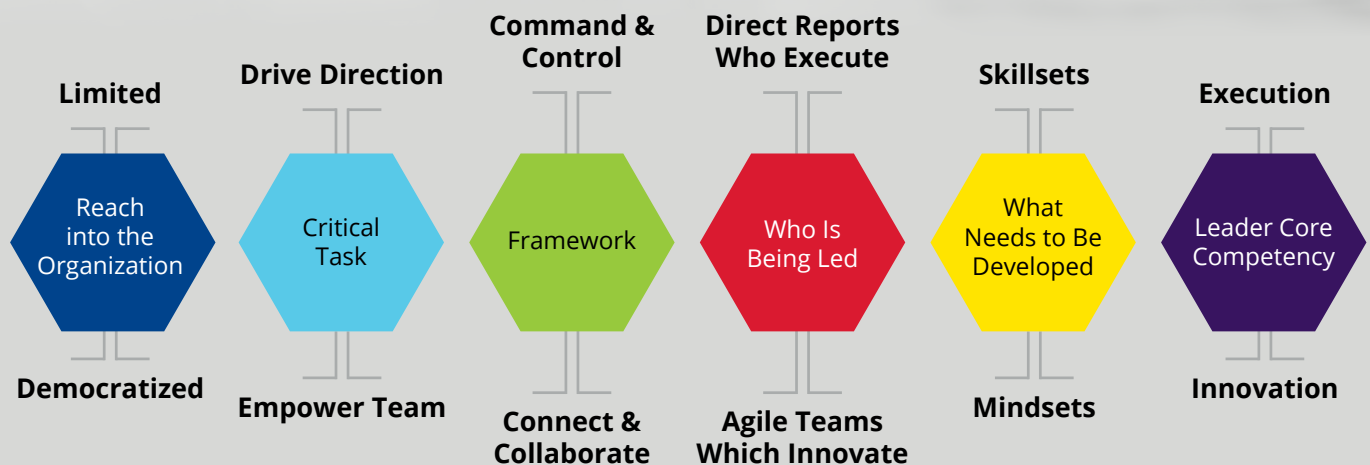
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KAMLESH VYAS

CoBoTics: The art of complimentary co-existence

While technology is extremely value adding to human works in most area and is a sine qua non; it isn't yet capable of taking over those tasks completely on its own. A realistic expectation of what AI can do in the near future and designing for co-operation is the key

On the question of likely application and role of robots, we see views that span the entire continuum.

Here, it is important to include not like the humanoid metal boxes that attempt to replicate human functions but also intelligent programs, chat bots and machines (including Robotic Process Automation systems) that carry out variety of specific task they are designed for.

On one extreme are the doomsday experts who predict an apocalypse with extreme loss of jobs, breakdown of society, as we have known it and human surrender to its own creation. On the other end of the spectrum are those who consider the current rise of technology as another passing fad or phase.

Reality may be more nuanced than either of these scenarios and may take a middle path, as usual- a likely scenario where humans co-exist with robots - the rise of 'CoBotics'.

What are the pointers to the emergence of this milieu?

The first pointer comes from the realisation that while technology is extremely value adding to human works in most area and is a sine qua non; it isn't yet (and predicted to remain that way for some time) capable of taking over those tasks completely on its own. As we analyse today, it is apparent that the capability of robotics and systems is limited. General Artificial Intelligence (AI) is far from reality and most of the successes we have achieved are in specific AI and there too the quest for satisfactory algorithms continues. A realistic expectation of what AI can do in the near future and designing for co-operation is the key.

Thus, the human-robot cooperation and co-existence is part necessity.

Secondly, the capabilities of humans and robots are symbiotic. CoBotics will be a world of complimentary co-existence where humans work alongside smart systems - each doing what they do best. Technology can extract insight out of large, multi-structured data and undertake complex computations (which drive superior patterns, speech and image recognition etc.) and take up repetitive tasks or tasks which may be difficult or unsafe for humans. On the other hand, humans like to undertake creative work; and can take decisions leveraging their cognitive skills, wisdom and overall understanding and sense of the real world.

If we evaluate the current work in AI, a large part of it is in the area of predictions using supervised learning. Predictions enable better decision making but are not decisions themselves.

> CoBotics will be a world of complimentary co-existence where humans work alongside smart systems - each doing what they do best

The prediction vs. decision conundrum is best addressed through man-machine combination. Hybrid decision making appears to be the way forward.

Inter-dependence and complementarity also arise from another angle. There will always be tasks, which technology will not be good enough to take over completely, or the decisions will have human consequences and are therefore too important to be handed over completely to a machine.

If the robots and machines need to co-exist, how do we make this co-existence better? Some approaches include developing AI systems that are designed to integrate with humans. Also, there is a need for building technology that more and more people understand, since it's difficult to co-exist with a system we don't. Interpretative AI is currently a research area. Finally, there is a need to make AI a common currency, essentials of which

> If the robots and machines need to co-exist, how do we make this co-existence better? Some approaches include developing AI systems that are designed to integrate with humans

everyone is familiar with. If humans and machines need to work together, the humans (including non AI-experts) will need to trust machines, which will be difficult if they don't understand the machine's working. Thus, everyone will need to have a basic understanding of the machines- it will be the new literacy or new electricity or perhaps even the new oxygen.

For any complimentary coexistence, communication, trust in each other's capability and commonality of goals is critical. The two will need to have a shared understanding, context, language, objectives and meaning. Most advanced machine learning systems, known as neural networks, are modelled on human brain where an input passes through several hidden layers to give an output. Unlike, logic based traditional software program, there is no easy way of tracking this process to identify exactly why a particular output was returned. Ironically, the best systems are least explainable.

How will CoBotics work?

There are several ways in which coBotics is likely to evolve. First, there are scenarios where humans act as a back-up or escalation layer for the robots,

taking over when the machines reach the limits of their abilities (e.g. automated call centres, semi-automatic cars).

Second type of 'human in the loop' system is where decisions, overrides and control are necessarily with humans as in the case of most robotics weapons, military drones or medical diagnostics today. However, for this too to happen, the two companions will need to have a shared understanding.

Working together also includes humans entering automated process chains and adding value (like in a robotic automobile manufacturing process) while machines being drawn into human chains for the same. This can be complicated – not just because the machines may not be up to it. The risk also is that the humans working with the machines (e.g. robotic doctors) who will blindly

trust the machine recommendations. Will we then require other robots to cross-validate? CoBotics will also require systems in which robots of different types work together. Will humans be able to develop skills in enabling this collaboration or would we need 'Manager Robots' for this?

The AI experts creating the machines will need to part psychologists for they will need to understand human minds better so that their creations work well with other human beings. They will also need to focus on building Artificial Emotional Intelligence in machines.

While CoBotics seems to be the future, it is not without questions and challenges. In particular are challenges related to preparing the human co-workers for this scenario and those related to culture and values of this shared working mechanism. Over millennia, humans have learnt to adapt and co-exist with other humans, nature and changes of different kind, let's hope we will be able to do it again with robots, for the human race to move forward and for field of robotics to advance.

They will, hopefully, be a TEAM where together each achieves more. Ⓟⓜ

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

KAMLESH VYAS is Partner, Deloitte India

How to tackle unconscious bias at the workplace

The problem with unconscious bias at the workplace is that talented individuals maybe overlooked causing a decline in morale and engagement

An organization's workforce today comes from diverse backgrounds - whether it is in terms of different geographies, ethnicity, religion, culture, gender, sexual orientation or even perspectives. A progressive workplace should provide an inclusive environment where this diversity is respected and celebrated.

In simple terms, unconscious bias refers to the feelings we have towards others that influence our judgement of people and groups — feelings we aren't aware that we have. Unconscious bias can create conflict, separate people from each other, and hold back talent, therefore negatively affecting business outcomes.

There are multiple facets to unconscious bias. An easy example would be how one may make hurtful comments based on the education, upbringing, beliefs or sexual orientation of fellow employees or team members without necessarily intending or realizing it. In the workplace, this could also creep in during the hiring process or during performance reviews. As a matter of fact, the 2018 Recruiter Nation Study showed that when deciding on a candidate, female recruiters are more likely to focus on conversation skills while male recruiters are more likely to focus on personal style and sense of humor.

Forms of unconscious bias at the workplace

Stereotyping: This is probably one of the most prevalent forms of unconscious bias at workplace. Stereotyping refers to evaluating someone differently based on expectations about the groups that person belongs to. Have you ever presumed a fellow colleague to speak or behave in a certain way based on their nativity? Has your team ever thought that a certain colleague belonged to a particular state or region in the country owing to their physical traits? If yes, then this is just one of the many forms of stereotyping that you may have taken part in - without realising it, of course.

Halo and Horn: This is a phenomenon wherein, a positive first impression may cause us to ignore negative characteristics or performance traits (halo), or a negative first impression causes us to overlook an otherwise favorable performance. For instance, you may have heard of instances wherein a team lead is hesitant to assign work to a specific team member, because they may not have
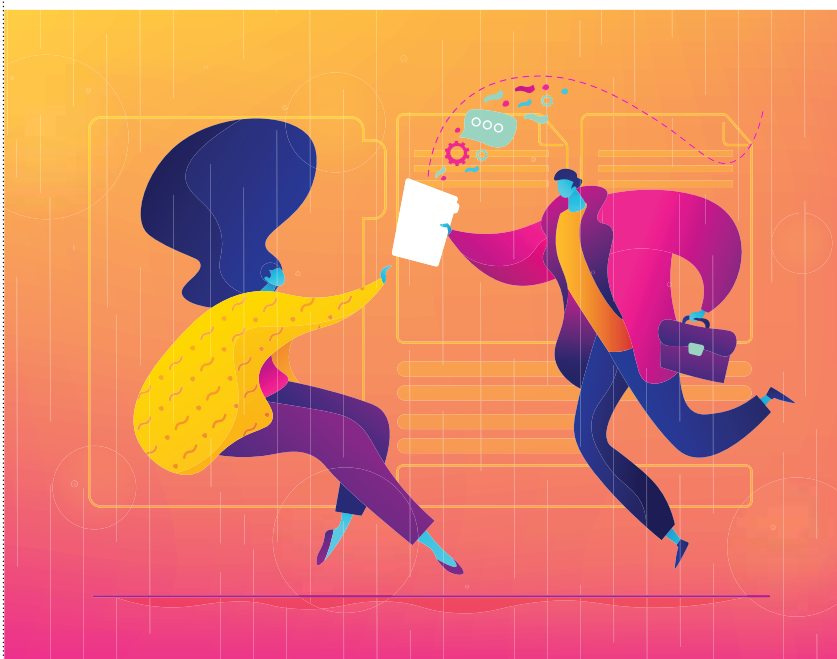
The 2018 Recruiter Nation Study showed that when deciding on a candidate, female recruiters are more likely to focus on conversation skills while male recruiters are more likely to focus on personal style and sense of humor

delivered as expected on a previously assigned task.

Confirmation bias: This is when a person unconsciously uses an internal filter to support already held opinions and ignores evidence that disproves these opinions. For example, a person believes that ambi-dexterous people are more creative than others. Whenever this person -comes across someone who is ambi-dexterous, they give more importance to this "evidence" that supports what they already believe. Often individuals may even seek "proof" that further backs up their beliefs while discounting examples that don't support the notion.

The opportunity cost of unconscious bias

A key repercussion of unconscious bias is that talented individuals may be overlooked or not recognized due to a manager's bias, negatively affecting their morale, engagement, and innovation. This may also in turn affect team collaboration as employees, when continuously ignored or marginalized, stop participating and engaging with the organisation. Research also indicates that exclusion comes at great cost to organizations in the form of compromised job satisfaction, lower sense of well-being, reduced work effort, diminished employee voice, and greater intention to leave.

Eradicating unconscious bias at the workplace

Several progressive organisations are actively taking measures to address and mitigate unconscious bias within the organisation. On such step is hosting 'Hiring trainings for managers. In this session, managers are educated and made conscious of different kinds of biases that could impact their recruitment decisions and how to avoid these. The leaders are sensitized through case scenarios to show if their decision or conversation may reflect subconscious bias. Another conscious organization' effort should be made for performance reviews. It is essential to ensure necessary checks and balances in place, so that appraisal decisions are driven by performance and not the employees' identity whether its gender, culture, sexual orientation or any other.

Industry reports indicate that managers often tend to give women feedback based on judgements rather than facts. Teaching managers to use specific facts and behaviors when giving constructive feedback to employees can help reduce the bias at the workplace. In terms of gender bias, specifically, organizations and HR partners need to guide managers to avoid attributing women's contributions to external factors or luck. This is where becoming mindful of language becomes utmost important! Involving more people in the review process with 360-degree reviews, offers a holistic picture of an employee's performance and helps to identify and prevent possible biases.

Creating employee resource groups

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) also have a

A key repercussion of unconscious bias is that talented individuals may be overlooked or not recognized due to a manager's bias, negatively affecting their morale, engagement, and innovation

key role to play in mitigating unconscious bias. In addition to offering a platform wherein employees can discuss such issues they encounter, ERGs also bring in speakers and host events to discuss the subject in a broad forum. Having ERGs also highlight organization's commitment to this cause.

Building a diverse talent pipeline, encouraging a culture of respect and belonging, and increasing inclusion of under-represented groups, makes every organization stronger. By encouraging others to bring their whole selves to work, we elevate our talent and improve business outcomes. For instance, we drive the 'Multi Voice' initiative to build a diverse, inclusive workforce that embraces different perspectives and experiences. It helps us foster innovation, challenge the status quo, and drive business performance. Employees learn from each other and come up with newer ways of doing things. It is a foundational philosophy that has helped us drive innovation and be recognized as one the best places to work. **Pm**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

ADRIENNE ANDERSON, Senior Manager, Organization Development at AMD. With over 24 years of experience, she is responsible for developing and implementing programs that promote diversity and inclusion at AMD. She also oversees AMD's leadership development initiatives globally.

'Skills gap is one of the mega trends affecting the workforce'

Aarti Thapar, Director of Customer Success for the APAC region for LinkedIn, sheds light on the latest trends shaping the workforce and the skill gaps that need to be addressed for emerging jobs

By **Shweta Modgil**

Aarti Thapar is an experienced Talent and Business leader, currently based in Singapore as the Director of Customer Success for the APAC region for LinkedIn. In this role, she leads a team that helps customers to be successful in using LinkedIn's products to create economic opportunity.

In this exclusive interaction with People Matters, Aarti, sheds light on the latest trends shaping the workforce and the skill gaps that need to be addressed for emerging jobs.

Q What are some of the latest trends shaping the workforce?

A The world of work is going through a period of arguably unprecedented change at the hands of machines; automation, and Artificial Intelligence (AI) are the new kids on the employment block. Changing technologies, market structures, and consumer preferences have kept all the industry leaders on their toes, and managers are in a constant hustle to stay updated with the changes. Four very important trends which will transform the way employers hire, develop and retain talent, include the following:

AI and Automation: Artificial intelligence technologies are more ubiquitous than many people realize. As per McKinsey's 2017 Global Institute Report, it's estimated that by 2030, as many as 375 million people globally, may need to switch occupational cate-

Against India's rapidly evolving economic landscape, new jobs are emerging faster than ever before. With nearly 5 million people expected to join the workforce every year, India's adaptability to change is key today

gories and learn new skills. That's because AI and automation are predicted to displace millions of jobs and create millions of new ones. Our findings suggest that while changes driven by AI technologies may still be in their infancy, we are already seeing their impact across the global labor market. As automation and AI continue to reshape entire industries, companies, and jobs, strong soft skills are becoming absolutely vital. Soft skills can make or break a hire, and they can also make or break a company: 92% of talent professionals say they matter as much or more than hard skills when they hire, and 80% say they're increasingly important to company success.

Skills Gaps: We believe that the leaders of a future-facing organization must capitalize on real-time insights and make talent a boardroom conversation - and use insights to drive business decisions to identify, assess, and close the skills gap and to develop talent. Reskilling is key as companies may not always need to hire new talent for those new skills - but simply retrain existing talent with a well-planned upskilling program.

Independent Workers: The rise of independent workers, defined as freelancers, short term contractors, and gig economy, will have a large role to play in defining the workforce of the future. A thriving online marketplace, coupled with a growing millennial population, are important factors leading to the popularity of contractual employment. Millennials are expected to comprise 75% of the global workforce by 2025, and the data shows millennials are hungry for more autonomy "and a good side-hustle"- both of those are possible via independent work. Also, hiring a contractual employee involves far lesser costs as opposed to hiring a full-time head. Cost efficiency is a major factor drawing businesses towards contract workers.

Work Flexibility: Today, work flexibility is no longer a perk, but an expectation. In just the last two years, there's been a 78% increase in job posts on LinkedIn that mention work flexibility. And in the space of only four years, there's been a 24% increase in the number of people who say flexible work arrangements are a very important factor when considering a new job. It's no more just a 'feel good' perk since it can benefit the business as much as the employees. Along with improving retention, talent acquisition, and employee productivity, flexibility can save a bunch of resources and money on real estate.

Q **Technology is rapidly destroying old jobs and creating new ones. What are some of the emerging jobs in the new economy?**

A There are complex feedback loops between new technology, jobs, and skills. New technologies can drive business growth, job creation and demand for specialist skills but they can also displace entire roles when certain tasks become obsolete or automated.

Against India's rapidly evolving economic landscape, new jobs are emerging faster than ever before. With nearly 5 million people expected to join the workforce every year, India's adaptability to change is key today. LinkedIn recently launched the Top 10 Emerging Jobs In India report that identifies the fastest growing and up-and-coming jobs that saw the largest growth in frequency in a five-year-period. Technology roles dominate this list, but the report also finds that these roles are no longer limited to tech companies. Today, tech jobs are in demand across sectors from pharma to banking and retail, and companies in these various industries see a high demand for talent in these roles. For example, the role of Machine Learning Engineer has seen a 43x rate of growth in this five-year-period, and the Application Development Analyst's role has seen a 32x rate of growth.

Soft skills are today seen as one of the most in-demand skills and are increasingly more critical to success in this tech age. With the role of "Customer Success Manager" ranked as the sixth emerging job in India, following the rise of five

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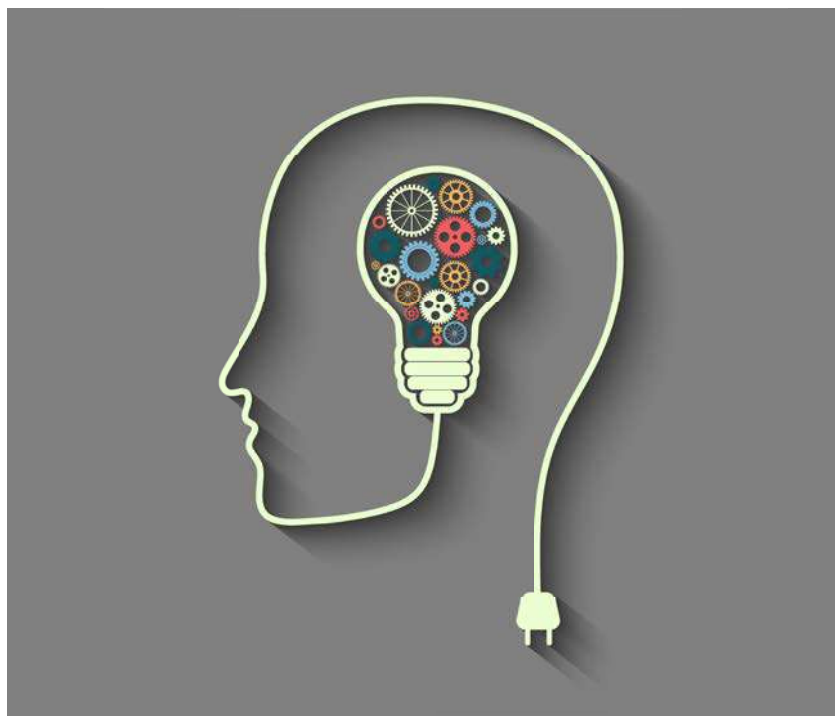
technical jobs, this juxtaposition is symbolic of this trend. CSMs, for both tech firms and non-tech firms, are critical to help onboard, influence, and retain customers. and soft skills such as communications and relationship-building play a key role here in making their customers successful.

Here are the top 10 emerging jobs in India:
- Machine Learning Engineer
- Application Development Analyst
- Back End Developer
- Full Stack Engineer
- Data Scientist
- Customer Success Manager
- Digital Marketing Specialist
- Big Data Developer
- Sales Recruiter
- Python Developer

Q What do you think are some of the skills gaps between the workforce and the skills required for the new jobs being created?

A The LinkedIn "Future of Skills 2019 - APAC" identified "Skills gap" as one of the megatrends affecting the workforce of today and tomorrow. There is an increasing shortage of digital/hard skills in the world right now. The rise of AI,

automation, and robots is rapidly changing the talent and skills market. But it is not just driving demand for technical, hard skills – like coding, cloud-computing, and AI, soft skills are highly sought after in the field. This is mainly because tech is breaking out of its silos, and soft skills are in demand to help expand the application of new technology and will be highly important globally going forward.

Some of the in-demand soft-skills include:
- Critical thinking or problem-solving
- Adaptability and flexibility
- Communication
- Leadership
- Innovation and creativity

LinkedIn's learning & development research that surveyed 4,000 employees and 800 L&D professionals in the Asia Pacific observed that 44% surveyed APAC talent thought higher-level thinking would remain vital in a tech-dominated world. However, the talent needs to feel justified in taking the time to upskill, and companies need to make sure they are incentivizing talent to learn. The top three barriers Indian employees face in taking up L&D programs is Time (60%), Cost (41%) and Accessibility (37%). It is very important for organizations to understand that a consistent culture of learning is now the mainstay of all good workforce planning.

A future-facing organization does not happen by chance. Great companies are built with great people and that requires organizations to move from transactional/by-the-book 'talent management' to a new world of 'people success'

> # Like technology, talent in the new world is agile, real-time, interactive and future-oriented. Thus, investing in talent requires the same detailed attention as investing in new technology

Q **While technology is rapidly shaping the world of work, why do you think the future of work can still be human?**

A The LinkedIn Emerging Jobs Report found that AI skills in the workforce grew 190 percent from 2015 to 2017. AI is everywhere and it is expected to virtually disrupt every industry, but companies should not forget the need for human intervention is at the core of driving all these technologies. There could have been no better time for companies to in fact redefine the need for soft skills such as critical thinking and creativity and find ways to build this within their talent workforce. In fact, hard skills, are at a greater risk of automation. Recruiters will, therefore, need to rethink their hiring strategies to uncover these soft skills and upskill talent in these areas to get them future-ready.

Q **What should be the new approach that organizations should adopt to build a people-core to drive business outcomes?**

A As new jobs emerge and existing jobs transform, the business success of organizations, now more than ever, hinges on its people strategy.

Globally, People Analytics related skills have grown more than 80% in the last year. And this is because the use cases for talent analytics are exploding. While companies historically used analytics to benchmark compensation and benefits and productivity, new use cases like workforce planning, culture, and diversity, employer branding, geo-location expansion, competition benchmarking have emerged.

A future-facing organization does not happen by chance. Great companies are built with great people and that requires organizations to move from transactional/by-the-book 'talent management' to a new world of 'people success'. One that shifts organizational mindset and creates organizational habits that allow people to be engaged, happy and doing their best work, automatically driving better productivity and results.
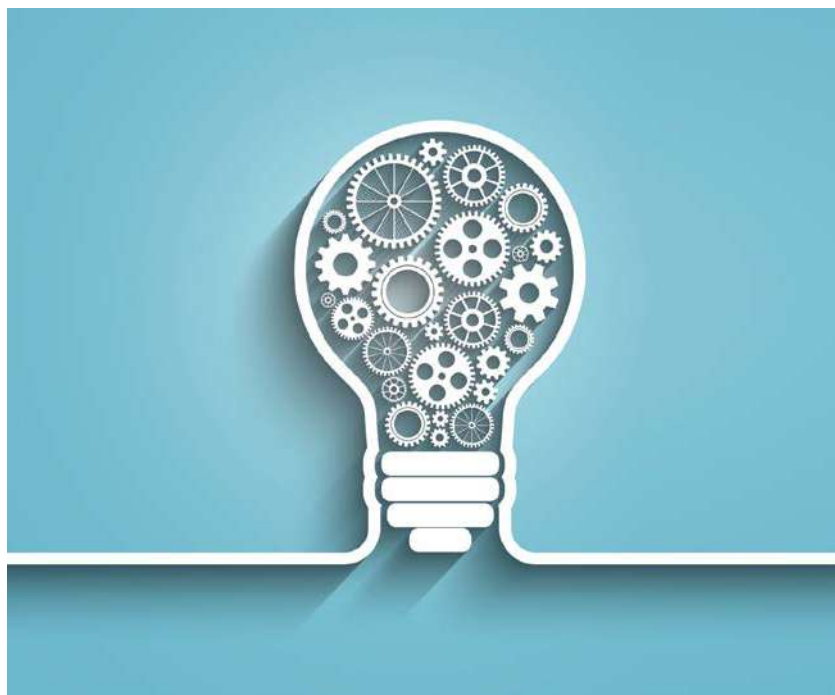
In fact, recent LinkedIn research shows almost two in five APAC employees have left a company due to inadequate learning and development opportunities. Paying attention to this insight, global organizations are rapidly adopting approaches that are focused on the human experience – in 2018, the Estée Lauder Companies became the first beauty company to partner with LinkedIn Learning, giving its employees access to the most in-demand learning content featuring more than 12,000 engaging courses across business, creative and technical categories. As of August 2018, more than 5,800 employees were seen to be actively participating in digital learning initiatives on the LinkedIn Learning platform. Closer home and in the same year, Reliance Industries Limited clocked 70,000 hours of learning in the first six months of partnering with the LinkedIn platform.

Like technology, talent in the new world is agile, real-time, interactive and future-oriented. Thus, investing in talent requires the same detailed attention as investing in new technology.

Q **What is your one advice to employees to grow and not be overwhelmed even as sweeping technology changes take place in the workplace?**

A Even as workplaces grapple with evolving technology, it is the talent that continues to drive business and skills drive talent. At an individual level, always be learning to grow and stay relevant. Keeping abreast with rising skills in your industry and investing in reskilling can take the sting out of disruption. And platforms like LinkedIn, with the power of its network and the consequent actionable insights it delivers, serve as an ideal pit-stop for talent as they prepare themselves to change and evolve. **Pm**

VIPUL SINGH

Reinventing your hiring strategy for the shifting leadership landscape

Diverse and agile teams are pushing the boundaries of leaderships with an expectation that today's leaders must transform organizations to stay relevant, be competitive and should have excellent emotional intelligence competency to influence and guide their people towards opportunity and prosperity

NEW-AGE LEADERSHIP

One trend that will drive the 4th industrial revolution (4IR) will be the reinvention of leadership management. I believe that technology and talent expectations surge together. With advances in Artificial Intelligence (AI), blockchain, robotics, the Internet of Things (IoT) and more, customers expect companies to deliver solutions quickly and promote collaboration across diverse teams, while meeting customer demands in the ever-changing business environment.

There is a shift from hierarchal leadership model to highly engaged teams, but what is driving this change? It is the need to improve organizational performance. Organizations are being forced to disrupt people planning and development due to changing talent and skills demanded by the industry. As we move away from traditional hierarchal leadership structure to highly complex matrix structure, skills required to manage agile teams and client needs are also changing. Today's managers and leaders are expected to have complex problem-solving skills, critical thinking, experience with diverse team management, and most important, a mindset for navigating complexities of today and tomorrow. Diverse and agile teams are pushing the boundaries of leaderships with an expectation that today's leaders must transform organizations to stay relevant, be competitive and should have excellent emotional intelligence (EI) competency to influence and guide their people towards opportunity and prosperity.

The shift in the world of technology is also forcing HR practices to evolve. Traditionally, companies planned their leadership succession on long term basis, where individuals were selected in advance to take on the most important leadership roles. Board of directors and HR members believed that they will develop crucial capabilities in time; hence the cycle of annual appraisals with four to five years of talent development planning for mid-senior leadership roles. However, we see this practice has often failed. By the time these positions reopen, industry needs would have changed, and hence companies find themselves turning towards talent available in the market.

Regardless of what stage of disruption in HR practices your organization is at, I believe that the following three key strategies will help you meet the needs of changing leadership landscape.

As we move away from traditional hierarchal leadership structure to highly complex matrix structure, skills required to manage agile teams and client needs are also changing

Focus on diversity, inclusion & sense of belonging

Diversity is defined differently in different countries, and gender equality is often a low-hanging fruit to track and fix. It is undisputed that higher the percentage of women in leadership roles, higher is the impact on organizational performance. Most firms are closing this gap by keeping gender in spotlight during their hiring drive. In the 21st century, we see companies also focusing on racial and ethnic diversity and commitment towards LGBTQ professional hiring and development. A survey of FTSE-listed board, by 'the insights' indicates that 1 in 16 FTSE 100 board members are from a black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) background.

> Predictive analytics-led solutions are reimagining smarter processes through constant assessment of incoming data and suggesting the right hiring channels and budgets for specific roles

While many companies have found the hack to maintain diversity, the challenge remains progress in developing the female executive pipeline. One way of addressing this can be, prioritizing diversity at C-suite, with the CEO championing the issue and integrating it with the company mission. According to World Economic Forum, based on the current pace of change, the gender gap will not fully close until the year 2186. As senior executives become the owners of this strategy, we see that they reach out to their network for help in finding the right talent or "like-minded" talent for key contributing roles within the organization. Hiring complete strangers may not necessarily work, hence we see CEOs nudging their people to bring like minds from their network to join their workforce.

Use of future technology for targeted hiring

Predictive analytics-led solutions are reimagining smarter processes through constant assessment of incoming data and suggesting the right hiring channels and budgets for specific roles. As recently cited by Forbes in 'Data Driven HR', 52% of talent acquisition leaders say that the hardest part of recruitment is screening candidates from a large applicant pool. New technology can boost candidate assessment and makes talent sourcing efficient and intelligent. This provides recruiters with more time on hand, to spend towards meaningful interactions, which is important while hiring key contributors that impact organizational performance directly.

Cross industry and public-private collaboration

Businesses need to realize that, with increasing complexity and changing management needs, collaboration on talent issues becomes a key strategy. According to World Economic Forum insight report on Disrupting Unemployment: Business Led Solutions for Action 2015, government and industry partners were suggested to work

more closely together and map future skills and employment needs. They can pool-in resources to upskill, train and fill high priority employment gaps together. Such multi-sector partnerships between business, education institutions and accredited providers leverage expertise of each partner and implement scalable solutions for job skill challenges of today and tomorrow.

I believe that these strategies will help organizations untangle complexities, like advances in technology, global competition, changing business partnerships and hiring pressure from stakeholders. While the implementation may differ from one organization to another, those who adopt novel and smarter ways of capturing and processing relevant individual data, especially emotional intelligence (EI) competencies, will certainly stay relevant in these changing times. **Pm**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

VIPUL SINGH is Vice President & Head of HR and Communications, ADP Private Limited

Creating a 'wow' employee experience

In an exclusive interaction with People Matters, **Rajesh Mehrotra,** EVP, HR, Godfrey Phillips India, talks about what employee communication and engagement means in the present-day work context and how are some progressive organizations doing things differently to stay ahead in the curve

By **Yasmin Taj**

Having spent more than 23 years at Godfrey Phillips India, Rajesh Mehrotra, EVP, HR has seen the journey from some very rudimentary manual 'personnel function' kind of processes to today practicing some of the most contemporary HR practices that any organization can have. That's the journey most FMCG companies have under taken, starting times may have been different.

In this interview, Mehrotra talks about how the practices and people processes prevailing in the industry are very different from even ten years ago. Be it use of technology, focusing on employee needs, customization of process to the culture or the business of the organization – it is all very different from the 'set menu' of the days of yore.

Here are the excerpts of the interview.

Q **The workforce is changing. People now have the options to work remotely, or contractually, even for central roles, not just incidental ones. How does this change the way a HR leader must look at employee communications and engagement?**

A Employee communication has undergone a sea-change with the advent of social media and no-holds-barred open forums. Employees today are strong opinion makers and their reflections impact the success, growth, future of an organization. Communication therefore has to be looked at through this new lens that offers freedom of thought on one hand and agility and 'comprehensive solution-ing' on the other hand. The HR leader has to adopt an approach which is preferred by his internal customers, is inspirational, pre-emptive, laden with the organization's purpose and ethos intertwined with expectations from each role holder and teams. Personally, I am not a fan of excessively using technology to communicate since
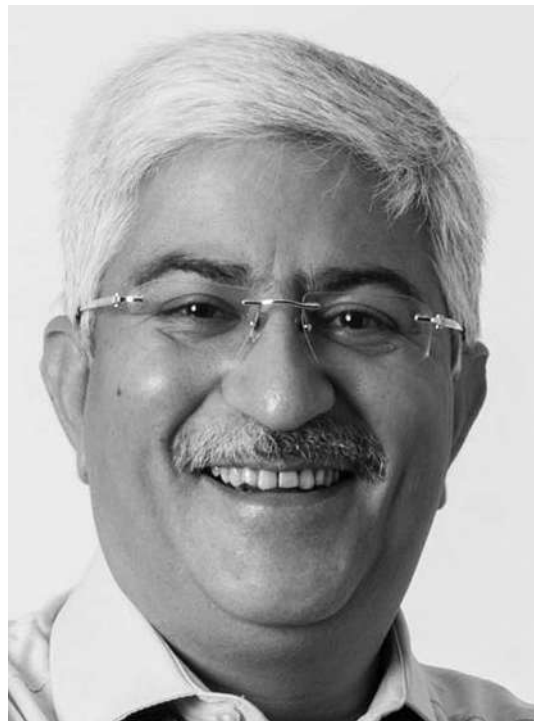
> Agility in learning new trends/technology by being agile in shunning the old will hold the key to success in the learning and development domain

a lot of people today find it impersonal. There needs to be a personal touch in communication.

Q **Do newer generations of workers need new forms or approaches to employee engagement? Your thoughts.**

A Most certainly. Today's generation, the millennials, have different needs from the older generation. They care more about development, fast track growth, work-life balance, employer brand, technology, etc. over financial rewards. Threshold of boredom is low and they need higher levels of

engagement to remain committed. It drives an organization to continuously churn new ideas, initiatives, interactions and be agile in matters of technology and its use. For example, while social interaction outside of the work environment has always been considered as a tool of engagement, the same also needs to be customized for the preferences of the current generation.

Q **Which trends in the employee engagement space are you tracking as we head towards 2020?**

A Having an insight into people analytics, integrating it with business deliveries, offering a positive and inclusive work experience, ensuring employee wellness, purposeful capability development, a decent amount of flexibility and recognizing efforts are some of the trends that we have spotted and are inclined to pursue in order to achieve excellence on people and business front.

Q **What are the key trends for the future in the learning and development space?**

A Like with business and consumers, a generic approach no longer holds true when it comes to being future ready and capability development. The future of L&D will evolve on creating a learning culture that epitomizes personalized learning approaches laced with excitement building; data and proof centricity; blended learning models with practical assignments; deep focus on efficacy of training intervention and flexibility in adapting varied learning approaches; and collaborative peer based learning. Agility in learning new trends/technology by being agile in shunning the old will hold the key to success in this domain.

Q **Any particular skillset that you look for when hiring young talent? What is the process for identifying this skillset?**

A The specifics of the assignment and the applicant experience and knowledge is important, but that is basic hygiene. We prioritize cultural fit. We value team players, learning agility, an open-minded approach to thinking and doing new things, situational awareness, etc. when it comes to acquiring quality talent. In Godfrey Phillips India, we use the technique of BEI (Behavioral Evidence Interview) which helps us to predict the behavior of an individual in various business situations.

Q **How do you ensure a consistent workplace experience for all your employees, irrespective of their role, age, gender, tenure etc. in the organization?**

A By ensuring a culture which is all inclusive, hierarchy less and role-modelled by top management. Our five cultural imperatives are the essence of offering a consistent and satisfying experience to all employees. Interestingly, these imperatives have been carved out and are being owned by employees themselves through

a bottom-up top-down integrative approach. Transparency, passion for winning, collaboration, empowerment and respect are the five driving forces that enable such a positive work experience.

Q **How does positive employee engagement lead to a more productive workforce? Which are the ways in which HR leaders can measure the effects of employee engagement?**

A To measure the effects of employee engagement, one method is to see the correlation of employee engagement with customer satisfaction and business performance of an organization. In case someone wants to go deeper, there is micro analysis of employee engagement data using analytical tools which can help understand the impact created on organization performance and culture.

Our periodic, detailed and neutrally conducted Employee Engagement surveys help present a fair picture of the engagement levels, our rock piles and areas of focus. Our experience of keeping things simple by just listening to the voice of internal customer and addressing aspirations in a transparent manner has created a fair level of

High levels of trust, transparency and commitment towards our human assets would automatically lead to positive engagement. This is best portrayed by empowerment at all levels

trust between us. Over the years, this trust has solidified into an understanding that has led to high levels of employee retention, employees seeking voluntary challenges in their realm of work and a passion for superior delivery that fructifies into better efficiency and business deliveries.

Q **What all is GPI doing to keep a high level of engagement among its employees?**

A We believe that high levels of trust, transparency and commitment towards our human assets would automatically lead to positive engagement. This is best portrayed by empowerment at all levels. For example, all people decisions in GPI are taken by an apex body comprising of the top leadership and not HR alone. The line is empowered and they in turn ensure bottom-up involvement of everyone in carving business strategy, forward map and operational excellence. People are free to envision an organizational culture of their choice with HR supporting from fringes. Ownership of one's role and delivery, an environment that offers a license to fail and recognizing efforts add further credence to employee engagement. **Ⓟ**

The Digital Leader

Prepping up the new breed of younger, agile, and digital-ready heroes

By **Mastufa Ahmed**

Leadership has evolved over the years especially in a world where businesses face unprecedented changes due to the Fourth Industrial Revolution. With changing customer expectations and the influx of new technologies, businesses operate in a new environment altogether. New-age technologies have led to drastic changes in the business world and more so for the leaders who have the mandate now to show the way forward amid disruptions and ambiguity.

Today we have roles such as Chief Customer Officer, Chief Analytics Officer, or Chief Experience Officer. According to World Economic Forum, "what these roles have in common are the new drivers for success – turning data into actionable insight, competing with digital disruptors, connecting disconnected people and systems, improving operational agility, and creating person-centric experiences, while driving greater profitability".

But are we creating enough leaders to lead in the digital age? Only five percent of companies believe they have strong digital leaders in place, according to Deloitte's 2017 Global Human Capital Trends survey. However, in a sign of positive change, 72 percent of survey respondents are developing or starting to develop new leadership programs focused on digital management. In fact, one of the priorities for HR in 2019 is strengthening the leadership bench, according to advisory firm Gartner.

The cover story delves deep into the digital leadership conundrum – including the essentials of digital heroes, producing new breed of digital leaders, role of technologies and innovation, the rising skill gaps, and the way the forward. **Pm**

Leaders need to understand the transformative power of digital

Rachel Neaman, the Director of Neaman Consulting, shares insights on the evolution of leaders in the digital era, role of leaders in digital transformation, and the hype around artificial intelligence

Rachel is a renowned digital leader specializing in digital transformation, leadership, healthtech, skills and inclusion. She has extensive senior leadership experience in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors in the UK and internationally, including at the European Union, as the first Chief Digital Officer for the UK Department of Health, and as a CEO in the not-for-profit sector.

She now runs her own consultancy, Neaman Consulting, specializing in supporting Boards and executive teams with their digital transformation and in coaching and mentoring leaders and teams to succeed in a digital world.

Passionate about harnessing technology for positive social outcomes and ensuring technology works for everyone, Rachel is particularly interested in the impact of technological change

on society. Rachel holds a number of non-executive roles. She is a member of the Board of the Campaign for Social Science, and sits on the Advisory Boards of DigitalHealth.London and Digital Leaders, of which she is a former Chair. A strong advocate of the importance of diversity and gender equality, she mentors and supports girls and women interested in a career in technology.

In an interaction with People Matters, Rachel talks about the evolution of leaders in the digital era, role of leaders in digital transformation, and the hype around artificial intelligence.

Q Given your extensive senior leadership experience in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors in the UK and internationally, you must have seen a lot of change in the arena of the workplace. How do you envision the role of leadership in a world where every facet of work has been influenced by technology? Does digital need a different leader?

A Digital technologies are rapidly disrupting how organizations do business and how consumers and customers choose to interact with them. This is having a significant impact on business strategy and the way organizations function operationally. As a result, all leaders in any organization need to understand the effect technological change has on their specific areas and to understand which digital tools and techniques will improve and support the business and increase its impact. This doesn't mean that all leaders must be technical specialists. But it does mean that they need to understand the transformative power of digital in the business context as well as the ways digital is changing consumer habits. This can range from implementing new cognitive tools to improve internal efficiency and reduce repetitive manual processes, to analyzing revenues and using predictive analytics to forecast success in new markets. Instead of a separate digital strategy, delegated to a back-office IT team, organizations today need a business strategy that's fit for the 21st century with digital at its heart. And,

THE ENTIRE WORKFORCE TODAY NEEDS TO HAVE THE DIGITAL CAPABILITY TO RESPOND TO THE DEMANDS OF THE CHANGING WORKPLACE
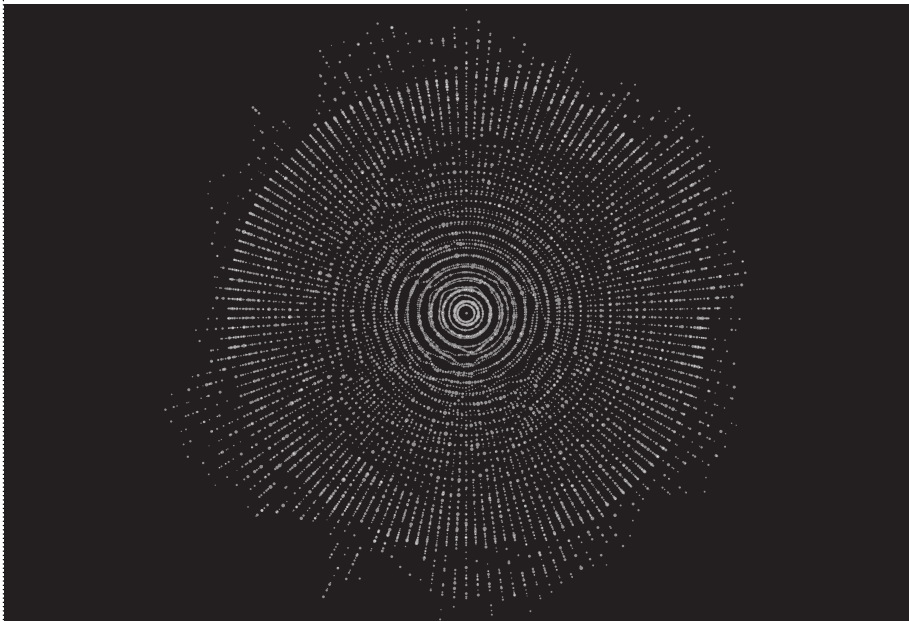
of course, the ubiquity of digital is not just affecting leaders. The entire workforce today needs to have the digital capability to respond to the demands of the changing workplace. The leadership required to engage and support staff through these cultural and operational changes is substantial.

Q Given the hype around artificial intelligence, do you think the next-gen technology will impact decision making for business leaders especially soft skills?

A Artificial Intelligence (AI) is already impacting the business world and will become more central as the technology becomes more advanced. There have been many predictions about the future of the human workforce in an AI-dominated world, but I personally don't believe that AI will ever replace a human workforce. AI is uniquely suited to performing those repetitive, manual tasks that take human workers far longer to complete and that are more prone to human error. For example, in some cases AI can process medical results far quicker and more accurately than human doctors can, improving the life chances of patients and freeing up doctors to do the specialist, human work that machines simply cannot do. In order to complement the superior processing skills of machines, human leaders will need to ensure they have the so-called 'soft' skills such as critical thinking, judgment and empathy that are currently well beyond the capability of AI. In this way, machine and human can work together as a complementary team, delivering a better result together by fulfilling the tasks each does best. This changing relationship between human and technology requires not only a major shift in skills and training programs, but also an ability to adapt quickly to new roles that may not yet exist and resilience to constant change.

Q Do you think organizations today are moving growth and trying to make a societal impact and influence?

A I don't believe that corporate organizations will ever fully move away from economic growth to social impact – they need to be profitable for their shareholders after all. But many more organizations today are embracing 'profit with purpose' and demonstrating that profitability does not have to be at the expense of positive social impact. Interestingly this focus on profit with purpose or responsible business – contributing to healthy communities and a healthy environment as part of the commitment to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals – is no longer confined

THIS CHANGING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HUMAN AND TECHNOLOGY REQUIRES NOT ONLY A MAJOR SHIFT IN SKILLS AND TRAINING PROGRAMS, BUT ALSO AN ABILITY TO ADAPT QUICKLY TO NEW ROLES THAT MAY NOT YET EXIST AND A RESILIENCE TO CONSTANT CHANGE
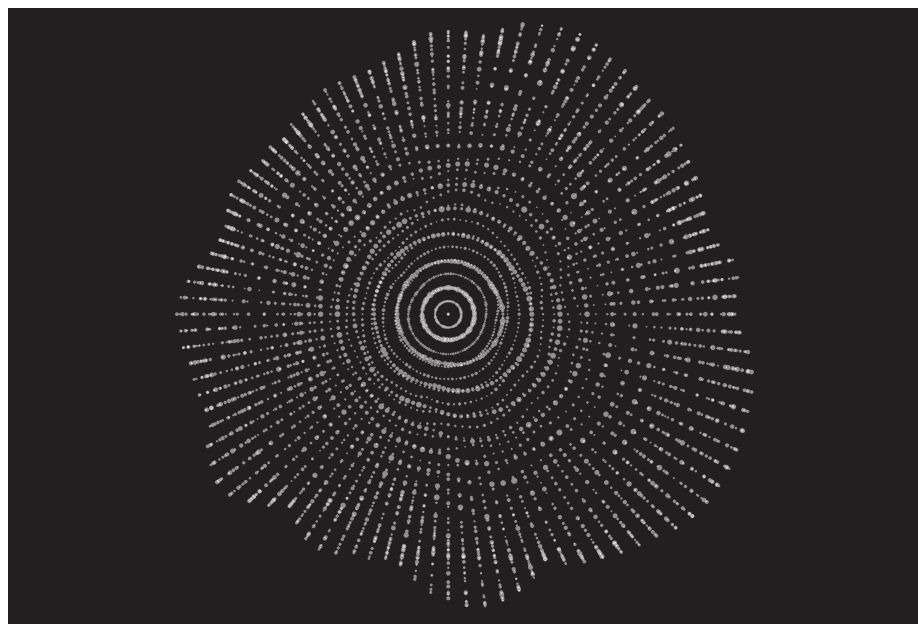
to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) departments, but is becoming an integral part of an organization's core business strategy to achieve long-term financial value. Even in investment banking where shareholder value is treasured above all, new products such as Green and Social Impact Bonds are proving popular and profitable. The view that businesses can be profitable but also have a social purpose stems from the philosophy that the prosperity of business and society is inextricably linked and being a responsible business collaborating with others will benefit society, the economy and the environment. Ironically, at the other end of the spectrum, we have seen a backlash against some large corporates, including many large tech companies, for their apparent negative social impact, which has begun to affect public perceptions of tech. The current focus on ethics and responsible technology is a much-welcomed response to this.

Q Many argue that digital transformation is a cultural shift and not really a tech initiative. How do you see this? What's your advice to business leaders who are undergoing digital transformations?

A Given the pace with which digital is transforming the world around us, digital transformation is one of the top business issues of the day across all sectors. And for me, digital transformation is all about holistic change, not just technology. To be successful it must engage people and shift cultures. Implementing a tech solution with no thought to the impact it will have on the workforce, internal working practices or indeed the customer will simply not succeed. Technology alone cannot be transformative. It's what we as humans do with that technology that dictates a positive or negative outcome. True transformation cannot happen without people, without leadership, without creativity and vision, and without culture change. If leadership, then, is the major driver for digital transformation, we need to support our leaders to gain the mindset, behavioral competency and actionable capability they need to deliver transformation. This new 'digital age leadership' is active and inclusive, and defined by individual profile not by job title. Such a leadership approach encourages others to follow – 'followership' – which in turn builds confidence and reduces vulnerability around change in teams and the wider workforce. My advice to business

leaders going through transformations is to ensure they themselves embody those leadership principles that will ensure a successful change.

Q You have been a votary of inclusion and gender diversity. Several reports show that women's participation in leadership roles is still way behind male across the globe. How can we improve this especially at work?

A There is no excuse in the 21st century for the gender leadership gap or for the gender pay gap. In the UK, just 3.7% of the 350 biggest listed companies are led by a woman and three companies still have all-male boards. Women still make up just 29.8% of personnel on UK company boards in the FTSE 100, and the last all-male board in the S&P 500 only added a woman in July of this year. This is a fundamental business issue. By not encouraging the 50% or so of the population who identify as female into leadership roles we are significantly reducing the talent pool. And this doesn't just apply to gender. It's the same for other under-represented groups.

Studies have shown that hiring a demographically diverse workforce improves a company's financial performance, as well as providing a greater richness of ideas, insight and perspectives. Morgan Stanley recently reported that the stock price of more gender diverse companies do better than male-dominated rivals. Other studies have found that having more women involved in decision making leads to greater innovation, a lower likelihood of going bust, and higher investment returns. It is not rocket science to say that to be a successful business, the workforce needs to be as diverse as the consumers it represents. The creativity and ideas that produce goods and services for the whole population need to be produced by teams that represent the whole population. If we are serious about ensuring a diverse leadership to improve business outcomes, organizations need, at a minimum, to improve their recruitment processes, remove gendered language from job descriptions, provide mentoring and tailored development schemes to under-represented groups, ensure equal compensation, improve flexible working and promotion opportunities for those with caring responsibilities, and provide unconscious bias training.

Q What's your leadership style? What leadership techniques have you found don't work for you?

A I like to be inclusive and collaborative in my leadership style, taking a coaching and mentoring approach to help my staff
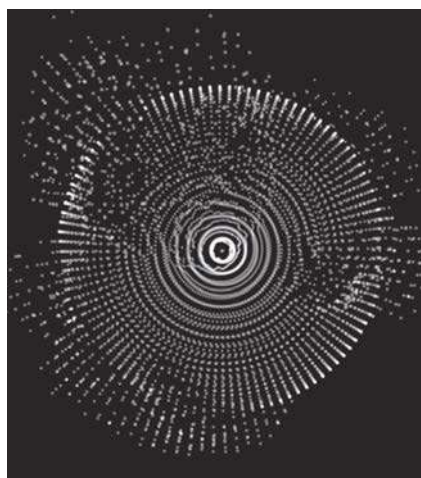
MY ADVICE TO BUSINESS LEADERS GOING THROUGH BUSINESS TRANSFORMATIONS IS TO ENSURE THEY THEMSELVES EMBODY THOSE LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES THAT WILL ENSURE A SUCCESSFUL CHANGE

to do the best they can in their role. Each team member has a unique contribution to make and I believe in celebrating their specific skills. I like to give clear direction and make sure everyone understands what's expected of them and how their role fits with the broader objectives of the organization. I also ensure I understand my team's strengths and weaknesses and help them play to their talents while developing the areas that need more work. This empowers them to do the best they can and ensures everyone is delivering to their capability and understands where they add value. I always make time to talk to and thank my staff because by encouraging them and valuing them for what they have contributed, people perform better. I'm open and honest with my team and I take the time to listen. I like to learn about who they are outside of work and I am supportive of their work/life balance, but I'm just as comfortable having difficult conversations when needed. What I find doesn't work is an autocratic and impersonal style that doesn't take into account people's individual talents and doesn't help them to be the very best they can.

Q What's your advice on how to create the next generation of leaders for organizations to sale through the VUCA world?

A The world we live in is becoming increasingly volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA). This makes qualities like resilience, adaptability and critical judgment more important for leaders than ever. Younger generations entering the workplace have different expectations and motivations to those of previous generations, and this requires executive and non-executive leaders to demonstrate greater flexibility in the way they run their businesses than ever before. Understanding and adapting to these new expectations and motivations is essential if businesses are to get the most from their newest recruits and this challenges accepted norms and ways of working. I believe we are in a transitional period where change is the only constant and the pace of that change, much of it driven by technology, will only accelerate. To return to one of my earlier points, this is why leadership training must now be fit for the digital age and focus on developing the mindset, behavioral competency and actionable capability that will help businesses to in an uncertain world.

Q Tell us something about Neaman Consulting and the kind of mentorship you do? What are some of the top challenges that business face today?

A Neaman Consulting delivers a range of coaching and mentoring interventions aimed at individuals and organizations. We offer packages for individuals at different stages of their careers, often focussing on those looking for progression or the newly promoted, in particular women working at CEO level for the first time.

We also mentor start-up organizations looking to embed themselves within certain industries with healthtech being a key area. At team level we work with Boards, executive teams and other management groups to help them work more effectively together and embrace new technologies and ways of working. Many of the challenges that businesses face today relate to digital transformation and the impact of technological change on the workforce, the business strategy and the market. As a result, Neaman Consulting also partners with Adapt2Digital to provide Board and Executive-level leadership coaching following the unique Dilyn Way model which focuses on inclusive, active leadership for a digital age. **Cm**

Real Time Compliance Management

Avoid non-compliances taking place than a post mortem after the damage is done.

Organizations have to adhere to many compliances under Labour Law , Factories act & similar laws. By implementing Labourworks you not only send advance Email/SMS notice about a possible non-compliance likely to happen & give an opportunity to the contractor to take corrective actions. But if the corrective action is not taken in time then you can simply block the entry of the worker & avoid non-compliances from taking place in a real time mode.

Some of the compliances that can be implemented in real time mode are

- Working without a weekly off
- Maximum work hours exceeded in a week
- Contractor Labour License expired
- Labour License Capacity exceeded
- Medical Check up not done
- Induction training not completed
- Work Order expired
- Work Order Capacity exceeded
- Female worker entry during night shift
- Debarred worker entry

There are many more compliances which can be handled in an offline mode as well.

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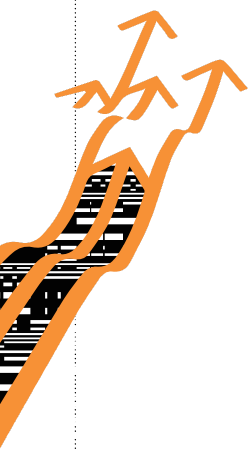
New-age leaders believe in fail fast philosophy

Digital leaders in APAC are newer, and often homegrown companies, that have provided a formidable challenge to international players and also longstanding local businesses, says **Megha Chawla,** partner in Bain & Company, in an interaction with People Matters

Megha Chawla is a partner in Bain & Company and based in the New Delhi office. She is a member of Bain India's Technology, Media and Telecom practices and leads Bain's Capability Sourcing division in Asia. With over 13 years of consulting experience across five global offices of Bain, she has led client engagements globally, including in Southeast Asia, Boston, and the Silicon Valley.

Megha has extensive experience in leading transformation programs with global clients and frequently engages with companies across the globe on India's role in their strategies. Her focus areas include capability sourcing, performance improvement, cost and revenue transformation programs across technology companies.

In addition to running transformation programs, Megha leads Recruitment for Bain India as well as Women@Bain (WAB) - a program designed to support and enhance the experience of women employees and help them grow in the firm. Apart from helping companies thrive in a disruptive world, she is also invested in the

TRADITIONAL JOB DESCRIPTIONS, WHICH DEMANDED YEARS OF EXPERIENCE, PEDIGREE OF SCHOOLS, ETC, CAN BE QUITE RESTRICTIVE IN THE WAR FOR TALENT

firm's next level of growth as a recruitment leader.

Here are the excerpts of the interview:

Q How do you see the current business landscape from the perspective of digital leadership? What does modern leadership look like in our digital age?

A While some sectors are seeing more disruption than the others, our research suggests that across industries more than half of the C-suite believes, Digital is among their top priorities with a significant impact on their business, over the next five years. In this environment, leaders need to not only develop great clarity about how digital impacts their business, but really outpace the competition in both decision making and execution. We recently surveyed over 1,000 global executives and found that the most distinguishing characteristics of modern day leaders is fail fast philosophy, which is a stark difference from prior emblems of success.

Q What's the current state of digital leadership in Asia Pacific? Research shows that there are some front runners in APAC, but like the rest of the world, it's struggling with the scale of change required and looking for a way through the complexity.

A APAC is seeing rapid innovation. Digital leaders here are newer, and often homegrown companies, that have provided a

formidable challenge to international players and also longstanding local businesses. The insurgent and irreverent environment at these next-gen companies provide a fantastic opportunity for nimble, ambitious and often younger talent to accelerate. In India for example, across several sectors, we see that newer digital native companies are attracting talent, by providing non-linear opportunities for growth and leadership. In China, our 2018 Leadership Report found that local companies and rising tech stars have changed the leadership demand-supply dynamic. In our survey of ~66,000 business leaders, we found that 40 percent of leaders in business leaders in local companies had moved over from MNCs, and only seven percent the other way round. This was more pronounced amongst younger professionals, driven largely by competitive career growth opportunities.

Q To be successful and remain effective in today's dynamic global business environment, leaders need to adapt and change fast. But how do organizations go about it?

A Everything starts with the leadership being convinced by the urgency and speed required to address it. We have seen the odds of winning being the highest when a) there's conviction and clarity around the need for change, b) there's a focused and integrated vision of Digital and not a fragmented "spray and pray" approach, c) an agile operating model that enables adaptive execution, i.e. concurrent execution of multiple "micro-battles", quick experimentation, feedback loops and rapid pivoting as necessary. Once these are in place, training programs, accelerated career paths and others are all critical enablers of this change.

Q Do you think business leaders should be more people-centric than tech-centric because business transformation is seen more as cultural than technological shift?

A It isn't either/or. They are both critical. Leadership in a digitally transforming world is different than ever before. A leader may spike on one of these, but there's a threshold capability and interest needed across the business, people and of course technology.

At the heart of any digital transformation is the interaction between people and technology. Technology helps develop innovative and potentially disruptive ways to serve the core needs of customers. Once you can anticipate and understand these needs of your customers, then determining the right interplay of various technologies can enable a meaningful solution.

For example, digital leaders such as Uber and Oyo have indeed deployed technology creatively to arrive at lean, scalable models. But what really drove the disruption was how customers embraced the service, whether it's the comfort of stepping into someone else's car, or the assurance of privacy and comfort based on a brand's promise.

In another very relevant example of IT Services, we see that each service provider has a full range of digital tech capabilities available in their arsenals. However, what their C-suite customers find transformative is when a service provider can weave the various technologies into a cohesive narrative that addresses their burning needs. Not everyone is able to do it effectively, and that is quite revelatory about the required balance of a tech-centric, a people-centric and a business-centric mindset. This was the genesis of the product offering in management roles, which is core to the word of digital.

Q One of the many responsibilities of HR is to make sure their company has the right people in the right leadership roles, and that leaders at all levels of the organization are successful in those roles. How should HR gear up to build a leadership pipeline?

A Question and break down the traditional definitions of the ideal leader. Traditional job descriptions, which demanded years of experience, pedigree of schools, etc, can be quite restrictive in the war for talent. They need to look for non-traditional talent and sharpen ways of identifying future leaders, much more than before. Traditional playbooks aren't

HR NEEDS TO LOOK FOR NON-TRADITIONAL TALENT AND SHARPEN WAYS OF IDENTIFYING FUTURE LEADERS. TRADITIONAL PLAYBOOKS AREN'T SUFFICIENT. THERE IS ALSO A NEED TO STRENGTHEN THE INTERNAL APPRENTICESHIP MUSCLE TO COMPLEMENT THIS

sufficient. Along with this, there is a need to strengthen the internal apprenticeship muscle to complement this. While knowledge in core disciplines is important, the change is so significant and rapid that what you have to solve is the ability to learn and adapt quickly. **pm**
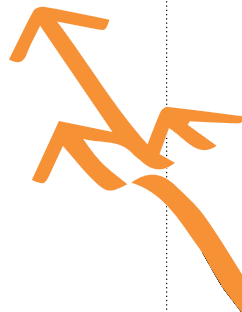
Developing the new-age leadership mindset

Contrary to common belief that great leaders are born and that leadership is about title, position, and power, leadership in the digital era is driven by an attitude of openness and a genuine hunger for knowledge

By **Payal Nanjiani**

As I wrapped up my motivational leadership talk on 'The Unstoppable Leader,' at the head office of a fashion house in Paris, Paul approached me. 'Mam,' he said smilingly, 'may I talk to you on a matter of utmost concern to me. I asked him to give me a few minutes to wrap up, and later we sat at the company's cafeteria for coffee. "I have been working in this company for around eleven years', he said without any excitement though. 'I have been a great worker, and have the skills to get into the leadership role. But I have had no luck,' he said while trying to hide his frustration. Some of my colleagues managed to get into the leadership roles, but they too remain stuck in that position for years now, he said with a heavy sigh and gloomy look. 'Payal, I admire your talk and techniques on unstoppable leadership. I am desperate to change my life and would like to know more about what can I do to get into leadership?

Paul's question reminded me of thousands of people who have similar issues. Despite all the talent and hard work, despite being in an age of information technology where there is a wealth of information on success and leadership, people are struggling to step into leadership roles. And some who are in the leadership role, face fierce competition in keeping up with their position. In my book 'Success Is Within,' I point out that leadership starts and ends with you.

In this age of information technology, purely gathering information about leadership isn't the key. Think about it, like you, millions of people on this globe access the same information, yet how many have become leaders like Mother Teresa, Mahatma Gandhi, Steve Jobs, Bill Gates, Richard Branson or Ambani. Mediocrity is infecting the majority. And average is infusing the herd. We ignore the more profound and subtler elements of leadership that make a great leader. In my work with successful and super successful leaders and entrepreneurs globally, I get to closely associate and observe their life and day. And it is contrary to what we believe about these leaders. Most of us believe that great leaders are born. That leadership is about title, position, and power. That once you get into leadership roles, things are smooth. We get smitten by their life and travel. But it's precisely the opposite. Leadership is about influence and working on yourself. Most literature on leadership comes before the dawn of the digital age. The demands on today's leaders increase in complexity when artificial intelligence (AI) is being considered more as an "employee," rather than, as advanced machines. So, what does it mean to be an effective leader in an environment characterized by increasing digital disruption? I have been able to identify many key competencies and business behaviors of Agile Leaders who thrive in this type of environment. Let me share with you here a day in the life of a leader and five of their habits that each one must develop to lead in this digital era.

Take things personally

In a digital world where people want instant success and provide immediate

LEADERSHIP MUST BE DRIVEN BY AN ATTITUDE OF OPENNESS AND A GENUINE HUNGER FOR KNOWLEDGE. TODAY, LEADERS NEED TO DEAL WITH UNPRECEDENTED CHANGES AND AN UNPREDICTABLE AND CHALLENGING FUTURE. THE ADVENT OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES DRIVES THIS REVOLUTION
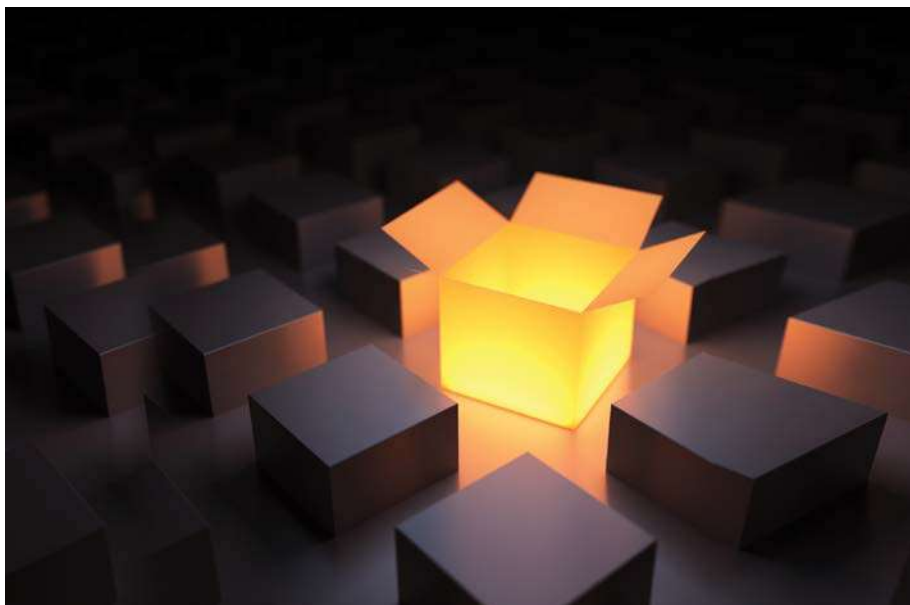
services, exceptional leaders take things personally. They aren't in a rush to simply get the next level. They take their work personally. They focus on the ideal outcome. They care so much about those who are associated with them. They work so hard to help people rise. They are devoted to their craft, and they want everything they release to be their best. You have primal genius and dormant greatness within you. And this greatness cannot be released until you begin to take ownership of your results and actions. Begin to work as if success depends on you. Begin to value relationships and people as if they are your own. Take responsibility for your words and actions. Display a genuine passion for your work.

Have a morning routine

What does your morning look like? Do you wake up to emails and messages on your

and it's increasingly hard to focus on one specific task. Most people feel that successful leaders have "superhuman" ability to concentrate without distractions. In this age of technology, distractions have drained the human mind and made us average thinkers. Successful leaders navigate through distractions by using what I call 'Chunking Time' technique. And one the elements of this technique is pre-planning. Most of my high-end executive client's days are pre-planned the night before. They intentionally plan out their day by chunking it down by every hour for productive and result-oriented tasks. Chunking time is very different from a to-do list that most of us create. Compartmentalization allows them to focus on a particular task without being distracted about what's coming up in the next compartment. It is action-oriented and proven to increase productivity. They

your level of mastery, there is always more to discover.

Disciplined lifestyle

There is one unique quality that you can develop that will guarantee you greater success, accomplishment, and happiness in life. This quality is so essential that, if you don't develop it to a high degree, it is impossible for you ever to achieve what you are truly capable of achieving. It is the quality of Self-discipline. I have studied successful men and women for more 20 years and found the element of a disciplined life in each of them. As Lou Holtz rightly puts it, 'without self-discipline, success is impossible, period.' You can play video games for hours each day or become the undisputed master of your craft. But you can't do both. Checking

> IN A DIGITAL WORLD WHERE PEOPLE WANT INSTANT SUCCESS AND PROVIDE IMMEDIATE SERVICES, EXCEPTIONAL LEADERS TAKE THINGS PERSONALLY. THEY AREN'T IN A RUSH TO SIMPLY GET THE NEXT LEVEL. THEY FOCUS ON THE IDEAL OUTCOME. THEY CARE SO MUCH ABOUT THOSE WHO ARE ASSOCIATED WITH THEM. THEY WORK SO HARD TO HELP PEOPLE RISE

phone? Do you wake up late on weekends and take things easy? I once coached a client who said that the first thing he does as soon as he wakes up is to respond to all emails that come from his India and China team. He admits this pattern of his actions hasn't got him any success in his job, and he remains stuck in the role of a senior manager. Leaders who I have shadowed have a different morning. They have a strict morning routine. Technology isn't on their mind. They start their day with meditation, exercise, and journaling. Your morning can dictate the rest of your workday. Develop a morning routine that will help you to be happy, healthy, and successful. A morning ritual will help you to avoid mental fatigue.

Chunk time

In a constantly connected world, it can seem hard to get anything done. A never-ending stream of emails, notifications, and messages mean there are endless demands on our attention and time,

are time protective. There is a good amount of time allocated for deep thinking and creativity.

Upgrade regularly

Leadership must be driven by an attitude of openness and a genuine hunger for knowledge. Today, leaders need to deal with unprecedented changes and an unpredictable and challenging future. The advent of new technologies drives this revolution. It can be tempting as a leader to get wrapped up in the day to day grind of running a business. Successful leaders are known to think ahead, always searching for opportunity. They have an 'always be learning attitude.' In an age where disruptions in the industry take place almost daily, you've got to keep an open attitude towards being a constant learner. Don't get too comfortable with your knowledge and success. Push yourself to learn continuously and to come up with new ideas. Read voraciously and be curious to know more. No matter how high

your social notifications, watching the news, surfing the web and shopping online steals the self-discipline that could be used for developing a core skill, scaling your business, getting ultra-fit, or strengthening your inner world. Discipline is the gateway to the achievement of your goals. Learn how to use discipline in your life to achieve your dreams. Each day make a conscious choice of what you must absolutely do versus what you want to do.

It's possible to achieve your leadership dream. There are no "lucky coincidences" and the notion that one can "stumble into success" is a myth. Being a leader is more than just skillsets and training. It's got to do a lot with your mindset. Begin to develop a leadership mindset in the age of a digital mindset and see the difference. **Pm**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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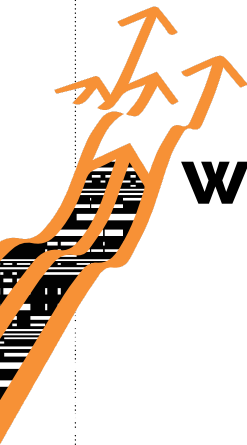
How the digital era will affect leadership responsibilities

Leaders in the digital era need to understand the power of contemporary technology and take the lead on such automation

By **Clinton Wingrove**

Last year, I asked the question, "Is Agile Leadership what we really need?" My conclusion was that Leadership is complex and a wide range of skills is needed – agility may be one of those. What is clear is that the significant differentiator of sustainably successful organizations is the caliber of their management and leadership. For the purposes of this article, I am going to use the term, "Leadership" in its populist form to mean, "Ensuring that the right things are done right by the right people at the right time" i.e., including "Management."

What do we expect of leaders... in any era?

Each Leader should ensure that their organization:

- Is resourced with motivated and talented individuals who share a common vision, mission, strategy, and set of values;
- Focuses on satisfying stakeholder expectations to achieve its vision;
- Implements solutions, adjustments, and corrections at the earliest opportunity;
- Promptly elicits, responds to, and incorporates feedback;
- Monitors, measures and tracks the extent to which it is meeting stakeholder expectations;
- At all times, actively engages those best equipped to handle decisions, moving final decision making as close as possible to each issue.

How will the digital era affect leadership responsibilities?

So, what is the digital era doing to affect those requirements or how they can be best met? The digital era is presenting us concurrently with four revolutions in how we work:

1. Automating processes

We are seeing an expansion of process-support functionality in the major ERP systems, continuing growth in Best of Breed software applications, and an explosion in the number of SaaS solutions. These go way beyond automating former manual processes and often focus on enhancing the quality of data and the decisions made with it. We have seen this, for example in recruitment, performance related pay, time and absence management, etc. Leaders in the digital era need to understand the power of contemporary technology and take the lead on such automation. All too often, tools are created by immensely talented IT experts … who often do not know or understand the semantics of the processes they are automating, or the ripple effects of what they design. Some of the challenges to the power of the large internet organizations, especially social media, are testament to this.

Leaders need to understand that use of technology typically goes through three phases:

- Using new technology to replicate existing processes. This rarely works as existing processes always have
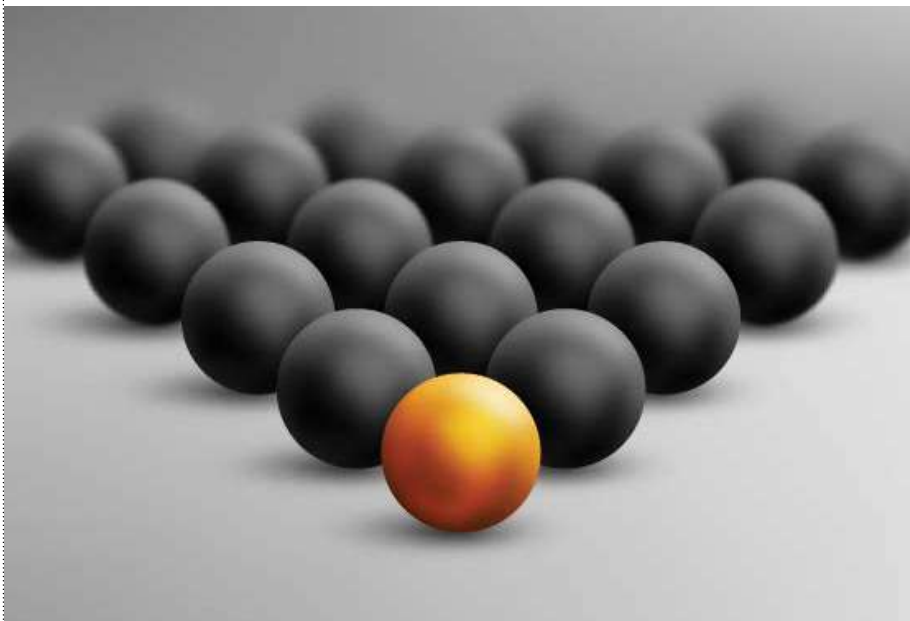
LEADERS IN THE DIGITAL ERA NEED TO KEEP UP TO DATE ON ADVANCES IN ANALYTICS. ANALYTICS TOOLS CAN TAKE APPARENTLY DISPARATE DATA AND RAPIDLY TURN THEM INTO INTELLIGENCE THAT CAN INFORM LEADERS AND THEIR DECISION MAKING ABILITIES

compromises forced on them by being manual.

- Using new technology to do what it does best (using its naked power). This rarely works as those who created the new technology often do not have our goals in mind. So, we end up with technology that does things that we don't need doing, or don't need doing how it does them.
- Using the power of the new technology to achieve the goals of the process. Leaders in the digital era are going to have to learn how to skip those first two cycles. They need to be advising IT and/or Procurement on what they need, rather than accepting the most popular or cheapest solution.

So, leaders in the digital era will need to keep up to date on the power of contemporary technology so that they can identify where and how best to deploy it e.g.,

- Use of sensors, transducers, and positioning (e.g., GPS) devices to identify routings, connections, and equip individuals to interact with and intervene in processes;
- Data validation to prevent poor quality data entering a system;
- Process routing to ensure that the correct steps are followed by the right people at the right time;
- Adaptive routing, modifying routing based on new data and even escalating processes by exception;
- Analyzing, interpreting and reporting, including using visualisation to "bring data alive."

2. Engineering Behaviour

The use of behavioral triggers, reinforcers and inhibitors through gamification, user interfaces, and data validation, etc. is now equipping organizations to drive particular patterns of behavior e.g., through Performance Management, Engagement, Talent Management processes and systems.

This is one of the most exciting and potentially rewarding areas of research and one that leaders in the digital era must keep up with. If they don't, then a wholly undesirable set of behaviours may be triggered … or, perhaps, already has been!

3. Social Networking

Social media tools for networking, communications, collaboration, ideation, decision making, etc are now equipping virtual groups to connect, interact and complete tasks without ever meeting or even seeing each other.

Social media has unlocked communication. However, whilst that has great benefits, it also has serious limitations. Leaders in the digital era need to be well informed on the latest trends and how these are impacting their areas of their organizations.

Some of the benefits of these tools are:

- Ability to connect and communicate quickly and easily with multiple people, across time zones, geography, etc;
- Ease with which to locate and connect with other people when you need them;
- Increased knowledge and understanding of a much wider range of people and roles than face to face communication would ever facilitate.

LEADERS IN THE DIGITAL ERA NEED TO UNDERSTAND THE EFFECTS THAT NEW TECHNOLOGY IS HAVING ON THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THEIR STAFF, HOW THOSE STAFF WORK, AND ULTIMATELY ON THE QUALITY OF THEIR AREA'S OPERATIONS

Some of the downsides include:

- Distractions and disruptions to work in hand;
- These tools enable extensive connections. But, early indications are that they do not help to build strong relationships;
- Attention spans are rapidly declining and you can never be sure if the other person/people is paying attention to you;
- It appears that it is much easier to be critical, harsh, even rude, when using social media rather than face-to-face communications;
- Many of these tools do not enable users to convey emotions or emphasis. Consequently, the volume of data being exchanged has increased exponentially but there is a question mark over whether the sharing of understanding has increased.

4. Artificial Intelligence (AI)

This is actually a misnomer - the term AI has now been redefined by popular usage to encompass a wide range of analytical functions, most of which are not AI. The most likely to affect day-to-day work is "Predictive Analytics." In simple terms, this is analyzing existing data to identify potential causal relationships and then to develop algorithms that can be applied to data (existing and/or new) to predict outcomes.

Leaders in the digital era need to keep up to date on advances in analytics. These tools can take apparently disparate data and rapidly turn them into intelligence that can inform leaders; decisions.

e.g., analyzing 360 degree feedback assessments and correlating them with performance, attrition, absence, turnover, etc in the feedback recipients' areas - to identify the leadership and management behaviors that appear to lead to positive outcomes;

For instance, analyzing the correlations between short term absences, delayed connection to routine tools, growing InBoxes, etc. can help predict potential attrition and poor performance.

In summary

Is the digital era going to make leadership easier or even redundant? I very much doubt it! New technologies bring exciting opportunities. But all of these have potential side-effects. So, in summary, Leaders in the Digital Era, need to:

- Keep abreast of the power of contemporary technology;
- Identify how best to exploit that power, and avoid any negative side effects;
- Understand the effects that new technology is having on the relationships between their staff; how those staff work; and ultimately on the quality of their area's operations;
- Actively engage with contemporary data analysis, interpretation, reporting and visualization tools;
- Work actively with their staff to ensure that robust working relationships are still created, sustained and called upon for support.

Who was it that said that computers would put us all out of work? It looks as though that day will be a long time coming. ⓟⓜ

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Leadership is about people

In an interaction with People Matters, **Sharad Goyal,** the Executive Regional Director, Talent, APAC, R/GA, talks about digital leaders and the competencies that businesses will need to drive change in coming times and digital transformation in APAC

Sharad Goyal is the Executive Regional Director, Talent, APAC, R/GA. He is responsible for crafting and leading the talent agenda for R/GA in the APAC region. In partnering closely with the regional and global leadership at R/GA, Sharad is responsible for creating a leading employer brand, growing and scaling R/GA teams, driving employee satisfaction and retention strategies and helping R/GA'ers meet their professional and personal goals.

Before moving to Singapore with R/GA, Sharad was VP and Global Head of Human Resources at Zomato, responsible for the food-tech start-up's global people strategy and execution. He oversaw the company enter numerous international markets, grow over three times in employee strength and helped build global, regional and in-country leadership teams and capability. Prior to Zomato, Sharad was the Head of Human Resources at Google, in India and China. Over his seven years at Google, he built and supported teams and businesses in China, South-East Asia, and India. Sharad also has experience across food retail, consulting, information technology and consumer packaged goods across a wide spectrum of HR functions. Sharad cares about bridging the burgeoning divide between the different socio-economic strata in India and believes that education and providing equal opportunity are the means to do it. He is closely associated with a few organizations working in this space.

In an interaction with People Matters, Sharad talks about digital leaders and the competencies that businesses will need to drive change in coming times and digital transformation in APAC.

Q Leadership has changed, arguably --amid the rise of technologies such as AI and robotics, and big data. Do you think we have enough digital leaders with requisite leadership capabilities to drive the change that businesses need today?

A Arguably. In my view, core leadership
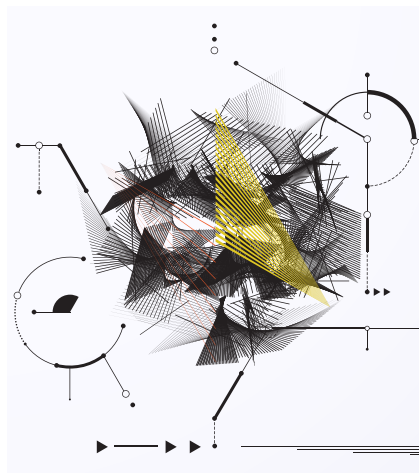
IT IS A WELL ESTABLISHED BELIEF BASED ON RESEARCH, THAT THE SINGLE BIGGEST BARRIER TO CHANGE OR TRANSFORMATION OF ANY KIND, IS THE LACK OF UNDERSTANDING AND BUY IN FROM THOSE WHO THE CHANGE IS GOING TO IMPACT THE MOST

capabilities have not changed. Leadership is about people and that will never change. What has changed and will continue to evolve, is technology and how it plays a role in our work and lives. That said, in my view technology is less of a disruptor today than it was 10 years ago. Information is ubiquitous and so expertise is overrated (unless you're a Doctor!).

From a Leadership perspective, one's ability to keep an open mind, to acknowledge lack of experience (in an emerging technology, for example), to unlearn and to learn will become increasingly more important.

I agree that we don't have enough leaders with the requisite amount of experience in many emerging technologies. This situation, however, is no different from when (example) online ad sales were picking up. There weren't enough folks with expertise in that area either, but businesses seem to have adapted, learned and done fine.

The landscape today is rife with opportunity for those who embrace change and have the intellectual and emotional capacity to develop/ hone these new skills to take themselves and their organizations forward.

Q With business going through a massive digital transformation drives all across the APAC, culture remains the biggest barrier in the APAC digital transformation discourse! Do you think business leaders should be more people-centric than tech-centric?

A Short answer, yes. Culture eats strategy for breakfast, right? It is a well established belief based on research, that the single biggest barrier to change or transformation of any kind, is the lack of understanding and buy in from those who the change is going to impact the most. Needless to say, a deep understanding of digital/ tech is important, even critical, but the more important questions for Leaders to answer are 'what are we trying to solve for?' and 'how do we plan to take people along on this journey?'.

Q With artificial intelligence permeating nearly every aspect of business and industry, do you think AI will impact soft elements of leadership — personality traits, attitudes, and behaviors while it's given that AI will supplant many hard elements of leadership?

A I don't claim to be an expert in the field and so my answer is limited to what I have read/ discussed with industry peers and how that has informed my point of view.

AI (and machine learning, etc.) will impact anything and everything that is repetitive and can be quantitatively measured and hence can be predicted. Think of your browsing patterns on social media. However, AI has probably not yet even skimmed the surface of understanding human behavior—aspects like emotions, motivation/ drive, personal connect/ bond, the warmth and comfort of relationships and human contact, camaraderie. These are the things that bring me to work every day (as I'm sure a lot of other people). I'm not sure they can be codified or that machines can do a good job of substituting for this understanding.

Let's go back to the browsing pattern example. AI/ ML can serve up ads for golfing equipment all they want, knowing I follow a few golf focused handles on social media. That is pattern recognition and prediction at work. But they cannot make me buy! That's an emotional decision.

Q How do you think business leaders need to drive the change coming in the VUCA world? How is the HR world preparing to meet the needs of changing business dynamics?

A "When was the last time the world was not falling apart?" I believe there's always been volatility which leads to uncertainty, complexity and hence ambiguity. That's what 'management professionals' have always been tasked with understanding and solving for! Yes, the pace of change today is definitely faster (that before) and that creates new, different challenges.

HR as a field has continued to evolve and I predict that evolution to continue. HR is more analytical and measurement focused today than it used to be. It is more Technology savvy today than it used to be. It responds faster today than it used to. And we will continue to evolve in that direction, to support and guide the businesses and leaders that rely on us for support and guidance. In my view, embracing technology and analytics, challenging convention and having a firm belief in 'doing the right thing' are the way to go.

Q One of the many responsibilities of HR is to make sure their company has the right people in the right leadership roles, and that leaders at all levels of the organization are successful in those roles. How should HR gear up to build a leadership pipeline? Are you taking any specific initiative around leadership development?

A In today's time of rapid and exponential
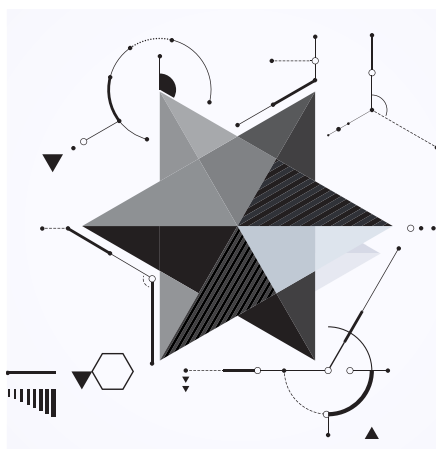
AI HAS PROBABLY NOT YET EVEN SKIMMED THE SURFACE OF UNDERSTANDING HUMAN BEHAVIOR - INCLUDING ASPECTS LIKE EMOTIONS, MOTIVATION/ DRIVE, PERSONAL CONNECT/ BOND, THE WARMTH AND COMFORT OF RELATIONSHIPS AND HUMAN CONTACT, CAMARADERIE

change, HR needs to be especially careful in selecting and developing leaders who are ready and if not, at least capable of dealing with the omnipresent ambiguity and complexity. Growing Leaders from within the organization needs to be balanced with identifying and hiring leaders from the outside to ensure an appropriate mix of focus on preserving an organization's culture but also helping it become future-ready. We are deliberate about identifying and growing people from within into management/ people leadership and also individual contributor/ specialist roles. At the same time, we are always scouting for talent externally that may augment our internal capability as and when the need arises.

Q What are your talent acquisition and reskilling mantra? How are they different?

A Talent acquisition mantra: Hire for aptitude more than attitude. Skills can be taught and learned, attitude and cultural fit in an organization, cannot.

Reskilling mantra: If you get Talent acquisition right, this takes care of itself. If your employees are empowered, all that an organization has to do is provide the resources (time, money, etc.) for employees to keep themselves relevant and updated.

Q What experiences, people, or philosophies have most influenced the way you view and practice leadership? Can you share some insights on what have you learned from them?

A I am extremely fortunate to have worked with some of the world's finest organizations – R/GA, Google, Accenture, Yum! – all of the leaders in their areas and with exceptional leadership talent and practices. I have worked closely with local and global leadership of each of these organizations during my tenures and all have them have influenced me significantly. Some of my lifelong learning/ insights have been:
- ALWAYS do the right thing. Especially when in doubt.
- Communicate, communicate, communicate. It's never enough.
- There could be 2 right answers. Keep an open mind.
- Treat people exactly how you would like to be treated.
- Behaviors that get rewarded, get repeated.
- Be a Coach to your team. Not a Captain.

Q You drive employee satisfaction and retention strategies and help R/GAers meet their professional and personal goals. Can you share some examples of how you ensure this on a daily/monthly/yearly basis? Any specific initiative?

A We communicate very, very frequently. Managers and their team members talk weekly, if not daily. HR and employees have ongoing conversations and we operate a very high-touch HR environment. We have internal tools where all our employees can update their skills/ experience profiles, put up their hand for a different opportunity, access development materials, and training, etc. Performance Management is a continuous process at R/GA and not a once or twice a year conversation. We have tools that enable an ongoing dialogue between managers and team members and cross-functional and cross-geography peers.

We run an annual engagement survey which forms the basis of our Talent strategy and initiatives for the year. We study the results very carefully and take specific and concrete actions to make improvements in our employees' experience. **Pm**

What makes leaders lead and contribute the digital way

Leaders must be astutely self-aware –of one's strengths, aspirations, values, and motives that can help them leverage their own natural inclinations and those of their team

By **Swatee Sarangi**

The digital landscape today is dominated by the 4 Vs of volume, velocity, variety, and vibrancy. For dealing and leading in these times, we need a new crop of leaders. Leaders who can lead with both the head, heart, and hand. Those who are inward, outward and forward-looking. Those who have the matter and mettle to make a difference to the people and businesses. I have seen them operate from growth and abundance mindset exploring possibilities for multiplying value.

For me, leadership is not about positions, control, and power emanating from formal power and hierarchy. We can spot leaders in action when they know what to do, how to do and when to align strategy, processes, people, and technology. Leaders make things happen and make changes possible. We seem them across positions, levels, functions, and businesses. Their inextricable integration of knowing, being and doing shapes their 'self-concept' as a true leader. The Digital Revolution needs leaders who make the needle move and bring about a significant difference in the context. They think strategically, engage persuasively and impact business tangibly. As I reflect the following competencies stand out as being critical for leaders to lead and contribute the digital way:

Heightened self-awareness

The digital flux is very incessant and intense. It can leave processes chaotic and people confused. Leaders must be astutely self-aware. Awareness of one's strengths, aspirations, values, and motives helps them leverage their own natural inclinations and those of their team. Being high on self-monitoring, they are sensitive to their own behavior patterns and needs of the group. Knowledge of one's derailers helps in identifying their developmental needs. Being high on emotional and social intelligence, they have a range of adaptive

LEADERS TODAY NEED TO BE HIGHLY ADAPTABLE TO CHOOSE FROM A WIDE ARRAY OF OPTIONS WHILE DEALING WITH SITUATIONAL DEMANDS

behaviors that help in making the right choices. Knowing the kind of climates, they create helps them configure priorities and actions with the socio-technical and business context. Through Presencing, a combination of sensing and presence leaders reap the digital advantage. They look at possibilities of future using digital in the present. Mindfulness and reflection facilitate sharper focus and better sensing. Coaching helps nurture authentic leadership style where leaders are secure about themselves, more accepting of others and are open to the external challenges. Through self-awareness leaders address critical questions of, "what could I change to evolve better' and "how can I add

more value" by interpreting cognitions, emotions, and reactions.

Cognitive flexibility

Leaders today need to be highly adaptable to choose from a wide array of options while dealing with situational demands. Being open to navigate through a wide array of 'cognitive mental maps' and "behavioral responses" without clinging to their dominant logic is desirable. Complexities and ambiguities of the digital world herald for seamless switching between different tasks and multitasking of diverse tasks at the same time. Easier switches enable them to battle new and unexpected situations. Leaders high on cognitive flexibility focus more on the situation rather than the stressors. I have witnessed leaders who let go of the status quo and have positive self-efficacy driving change with great momentum. When organizations encourage people to try something new, experiment and be creative people develop the confidence to be flexible in their perspectives and styles. Role rotations, stretch, and developmental assignments and participating in diverse teams accentuates cognitive flexibility.

Transformative agility

Leaders must transform businesses by having the strategic foresight to achieve long-term, sustained growth for their business. When it comes to efforts and outcomes those who demonstrate speed, ease and precision stand out. Being alert and aware, they proactively seize opportunities. They set directions of business rather than being directed by it. Their razor-sharp logic helps in deriving insights. At the same time, being intuitive enables them to take decisions in the absence of compelling data and evidence. I have observed that sometimes leaders can be great at crafting strategies but stumble

at executing them. They do not have the passion and power to convert dreams into reality with speed, scale, and quality imperatives. Digital transformation needs Plan Bs and course corrections based on dynamic feedback. Agility helps in comfortably dealing with sudden changes and uncertainty that digital brings. When originality is celebrated, agility thrives. Organizations can hone agility by pushing people out of their comfort zones and grow from their mistakes. They can encourage risk-taking and experimentation targeted at enhanced customer satisfaction. Business simulations and gamification can help leaders shift gears and rise to diverse real-life challenges.

WHEN ORGANIZATIONS ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO TRY SOMETHING NEW, EXPERIMENT AND BE CREATIVE PEOPLE DEVELOP THE CONFIDENCE TO BE FLEXIBLE IN THEIR PERSPECTIVES AND STYLES

Perpetual learning
Leaders in the digital age must have the burning desire and ability to learn and grow. The intellectual restlessness to learn a new skill or experience something new helps them stay relevant. This manifests in learning which is deep, wide and different. Having the curiosity to explore helps leaders unlearn, learn and relearn. When they feel psychologically safe, they question and probe. Openness and objectivity to skim and scan relevant information and data for insights are also crucial. The technology revolution brings with it distractions that may confuse more than convince. When people work in empowered teams they learn from and with others. Leaders today learn on the go and in the flow. They seize learning in every waking and working moment from their colleagues, clients, bosses and even subordinates. In fact, leaders who are perpetual learners make the way for organization as a collective to learn and renew in both formal and informal ways. Organizations should encourage leaders to set aside time for learning and encourage them to sharpen their saws.

Mentoring and peer learning can play a critical role in perpetuating learning of leaders.

Connectional intelligence
I strongly endorse Connectional Intelligence as a key differentiator to success in the digital world. It's beyond increasing the number of personal contacts. Digital has enhanced accessibility and provided immense social connectivity. Garnering support from community to mobilize pursuit of goals is incredibly useful. When leaders connect with internal and external stakeholders, they become more inclusive of divergent ideas and perspectives. They are conscious of using a wide range of tools to forge lasting connections and express themselves with authentic intentions. When human centeredness is at the heart of building alliances, purposeful synergies and collaborations result. Erica Dhawan in her book *Get Big Things Done: The Power of Connectional Intelligence* has highlighted that connectional intelligence helps "to drive innovation and breakthrough results ". Organizations can propel people to build and optimize networks using digital links. Social media skills are indispensable for the new age leader and boost individual and collective performance. Hyperconnectivity beyond organizational confines helps create a boundary-less community involving consumers, industries, regulatory agencies, suppliers and even competitors alike.

Growth mindset
A growth mindset will make leaders triumph. Digital transformations require new ways of working not just technology. Leaders manage business accelera-

tions, innovations and disruptions owing to technology. They depart from the fixed mindset and start dreaming big. They try new possibilities even at the risk of failing. I admire the way Satya Nadella went about changing Microsoft's culture and fortunes by emphasizing that people shift from "I know -it- all" to "I will learn-it-all". Learning from inside and outside the organization are both profound. I have seen leaders with growth mindset obsess about customers. They deeply listen to the stated and unstated customer needs with empathy. Growth mindset can be instilled by empowering leaders to explore and work with accountability and passion. Helping them find their own purpose and internalize the mission and values of the organization augers well.

As leaders sense the dynamic context, set the vision, stretch the cultural boundaries and strive to achieve stupendous sustainable success, they can use digital as their midas touch. At times, digital journeys can be incessant and unrelenting, leaders need balance. They need to juggle demands, manage surprises, smoothen imperfections and prioritize imperatives along the way. Embracing new possibilities with a strong compass will help their organizations realize digital transformation agendas. We need strategists, innovators, and multipliers who are also open, humble, intuitive and inclusive leaders. To lead the digital way, the leaders need to dream more, learn more, do more and become more. **Pm**

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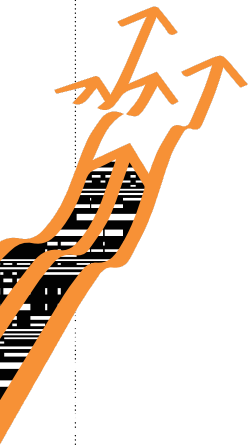
Authentic leadership in the digital age

Artificial intelligence algorithms are actively assessing our personality and behaviour based on our social media footprint with amazing accuracy – even after we have retired or died

By **Richard Smith**

If you are looking for insight on leadership and do a quick search on leadership books, you will suddenly find that there are not hundreds of books… but thousands of titles on leadership from historic accounts, modern business heroes, individual perspectives, and researched theories! While we do not lack for perspectives on leadership, we do seem to lack clarity on what is expected of leaders -especially as the complexities of leading organizations has increased due to the impact of our digital world.

The digital tools available (especially the social media platforms) have made it easier to share messages, communicate ideas, and openly showcase our interests, accomplishments, and milestones. However, as we consider the transparency created by digital platforms as our tweets, posts, photos, videos, and messages can all be viewed by others, the stakes of leadership have somehow been raised in recent years. In addition, the footprint of our early years and mistakes are somehow now quite discoverable – imagine a hot-headed message you wrote in your 20's being reviewed as a character question when you are being considered for a top executive job in your 40's! To top it off, artificial intelligence algorithms are actively assessing our personality and behavior based on our social media footprint with amazing accuracy – even after our we have retired or died!

Gone are the days of having a "Public Face" of leadership and a "Private Life" that is inconsistent with our leadership brand. In fact, our leadership brand is already being formed at a young age thanks to our digital footprint and image that we may (or may not) have intended to create. This is perhaps a bit unnerving if you're wondering about those Facebook posts from your university years or how your friends tagged you in their posts or photos that are now inconsistent with your more mature and business executive self. After all, we cannot easily "un-post" items that have been captured by others or shared around the world. The images, videos, posts, comments, and innocent replies have been captured on servers, replicated on various accounts, and even downloaded to private spaces making difficult to have a fresh start in creating your leadership brand and image.

What do we do in this digital age?

Should we avoid the digital world? Of course not, we must embrace the power of social media, leverage the convenience of digital, and be prepared to lead in today's context. As we consider leading in the age of AI, machine learning, and an increasingly connected world, it seems even more important that we embrace the idea of being an authentic leader. Bill George popularised the idea of authentic leadership with his 2003 book, *Authentic Leadership: Rediscovering the Secrets to Creating Lasting Value*. George outlines five clear principles that can be revisited in light of our digital reality today.

AS WE CONSIDER LEADING IN THE AGE OF AI, MACHINE LEARNING, AND AN INCREASINGLY CONNECTED WORLD, IT SEEMS EVEN MORE IMPORTANT THAT WE EMBRACE THE IDEA OF BEING AN AUTHENTIC LEADER
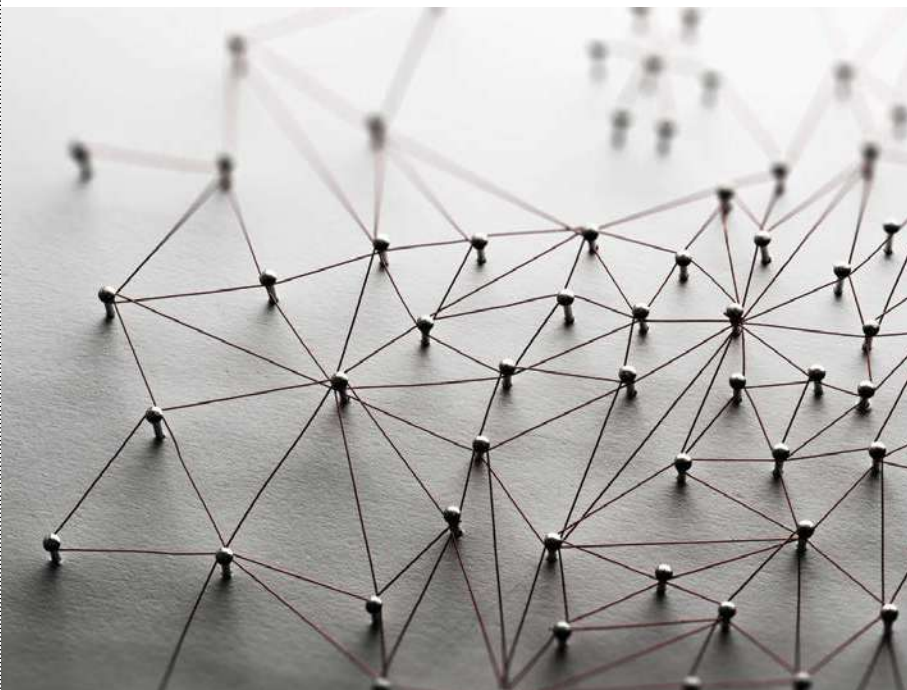
1. Values – The idea operating with good values is not new or innovative, clearly showing the values through behavior, words, and ideas. While many organizations have clear stated values, how many of us have defined values that we choose to live by? The challenge of course, is it is easy to say that we agree with the idea of operating with integrity, but perhaps more difficult to practice integrity in the complexity of our business environment today. In our modern digital world, it is not only important to define our values, but equally important to consider what values we are actively building in our leadership brand. If you examine your digital footprint, how does it reflect on your values? What would others say about what you stand for? As leaders in the digital era, it is critical that we think about how we communicate and relate to the world around us.

2. Purpose – Bill George suggests that we should understand and demonstrate our purpose through our passion for what we do. In social media there are a variety of topics that we are all bombarded with and a variety of business, family, and personal interactions. What are the topics that we choose to focus on or use to engage others. If we take a step back from our digital footprint, would others recognize our purpose? Is our digital image consistent with the actions of our physical self? Authentic leaders have a clear sense of purpose and it is clear from their actions and their interactions.

3. Trusting Relationships – We may not think about trusting relationships when it comes to digital connections, but the quality of our relationships to others can be seen. As we think about our how we show and create relationships with others as a part of our digital brand, it may be important to reinforce others and build a sense of community on line. It is also important to note that we must also put away our digital life when we want to be truly present with someone else. How many times are important conversations interrupted by a ring, ping, or buzz? Being present on-line as well as off line can help build the trusting relationships we need as leaders.

4. Self-Discipline – Demonstrating consistency in our behaviors, actions, and decisions can be a challenge given the complexity of situations and varying context of business around the world. With demands on our time from all aspects of our lives, the digital world can make self-discipline more difficult – after all, we cannot turn off the constant

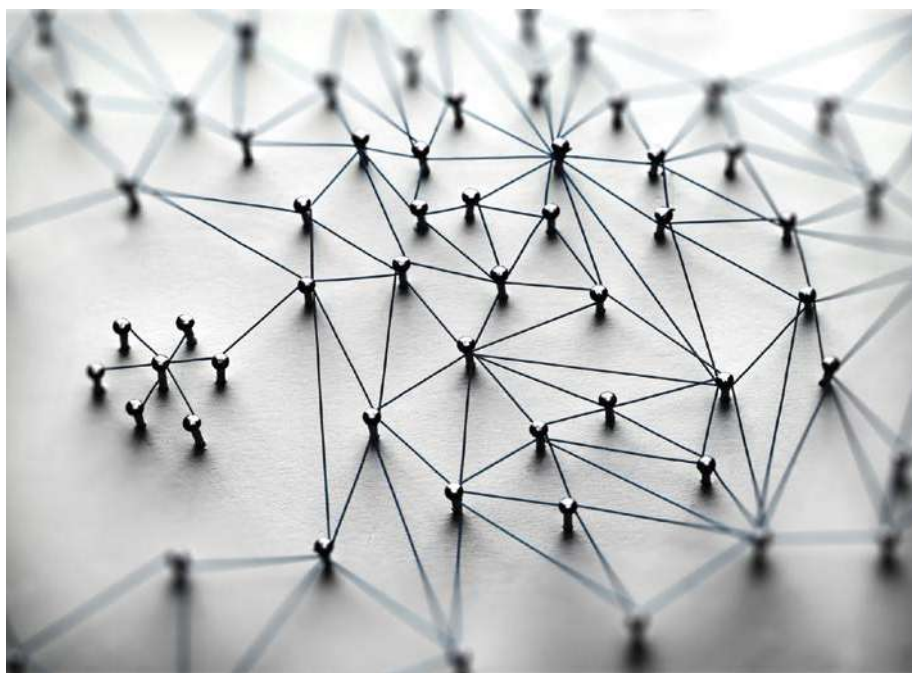## DEMONSTRATING CONSISTENCY IN OUR BEHAVIOURS, ACTIONS, AND DECISIONS CAN BE A CHALLENGE GIVEN THE COMPLEXITY OF SITUATIONS AND VARYING CONTEXT OF BUSINESS AROUND THE WORLD

stream of information coming at us and the increasing expectation that we will provide instant responses to others. What is your self-discipline when it comes to digital interaction? Are you a slave to your mobile device or do you keep it in check with a defined place in your life? Authentic leaders in the digital age will demonstrate their self-discipline both on-line and off-line.

5. Heart – Too often, we see professionals using social media to broadcast their accomplishments. While it is great to share successes, how much of what we communicate shows a genuine caring of others? Do we demonstrate compassion for others and the world around us? Authentic leaders gain the respect of others as they demonstrate caring of others… in other words, their digital footprint is not a "Show about me." Supporting others, highlighting the accomplishments of others, and giving of our own talents (without expecting anything in return) can eventually build a sense of heart. But trying to create an image of compassion without actually having it can clearly backfire in this age of transparency. Authentic leaders lead with a sharing heart.

There are many interesting ideas on leadership to explore and several different theories about how to be effective. Before you pick up the next leadership book or start searching for leadership techniques and ideas, you may want to reflect on your current leadership brand. What does your digital footprint say about your values, purpose, relationships, self-discipline and heart? To be an authentic leader in the digital age, you will need to be authentic in both the physical world as well as the digital world. 🅟🅜

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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PAVAN SONI

Why the best of the Indian IT industry is truly behind us

The Indian IT industry, which is close to 40-year-old, has had its time. Read on to know about the current predicament of the middle managers in most large and mid-sized IT firms in India and how they can reinvent themselves

Every industry has its run. The big machines of the past gave way to smaller electronics and then computers of recent times, and now autonomous devices and embedded intelligence, not just in machines but also in living organisms, of course beyond humans. The Indian IT industry, which is close to 40-year-old, has had its time. In terms of employment generation, forex reserves and soaring aspiration levels, the industry contributed to more than its share of bargain. It pushed a wide cross-section of Indians westwards and upwards, made Indian cities accrue respect and, sometimes, dislike in most of the developed world, and made thousands of Indian millionaires fuelling their own dreams and that of the Indian startup ecosystem.

Full marks to the IT services industry for its contribution to the economic, cultural, social and demographic dividends, so much that the counterfactual is hard to imagine on any of these dimensions. Our government would have struggled to employ those many skilled, semi-skilled and un-skilled Indians, maintain a healthy foreign reserve, and get a respectable audience but for this over $140 billion industry. But with this growth and proliferation came the misery of the management class, especially the middle management which grew amid a make-believe reality and now faces a harsher one. One which is threatening not only the fate of their beloved industry but also of their careers and expansive lifestyles. This piece is on the current predicament of the middle managers in most large and mid-sized IT firms in India and how they can save themselves from the misery.

For the ones who aren't well versed with the working of a typical IT firm, here's a short primer. Thanks to the massive network of optical fibre cables and satellite communication, data and work started flowing cheaply and efficiently

Remember, graduation of your thinking is not a natural consequence of your career progression

from the west to India in late 80s and early 90s. The timely and at-scale resolution of the Y2K problem offered Indian tech talent the much-needed credibility, and then the enterprise applications software market picked up with Indian tech firms mostly busy doing plumbing work. Doing stuff cheaper, faster and, sometimes, better was the value proposition of the entire industry and a lucky few travelled and settled in far west. English became the language of choice, people started addressing senior on first name basis, airports and road became busy, and work-life balance soon became an oxymoron. The hidden cost only went up.

Growth without development

All this while, thousands of early starters, mostly engineers from almost any discipline, rose up the ranks owing to the bloating headcount-based business and assumed managerial roles. They grew but not necessarily their thinking. It was all about securing large deals from the Fortune 500 companies and even the long tail, breaking the work down into manageable chunks, rallying troops for an on-time, in-budget closure, assembling the elements and shipping it back. Adoption of Lean principles, Six Sigma, and other quality tools ensured some reliability and scalability of opera-

tions, and most developed market firms now had a affordable, reliable, and exploitable alternate.

The managers, in the meanwhile, laughed their way to the bank and the reality market, in turn choking the city and making life unaffordable for most urban dwellers. The real skills in question – handling stress, talking smooth, managing churn, and making Power Point presentations!

The good engineers of the 90s became first-time managers in 2000s – in bargain we lost useful talent and got stuck with not-so-good managers. The titles came in cheap. The ranks of General Managers, Directors, Vice Presidents, and even Presidents became dangerously low-balled, both at the IT and the Indian banking industry. No one was preparing our head-held-high middle managers for what's coming towards the late 2000s (not even their favourite Gartner's Hype Cycle). With the onslaught of the SMAC technologies and rapid strides in AI and Machine Learning, suddenly, the nakedness of this bloated middle layer became evident. Couple this with the proliferation of talent to start-ups, new business models of crowd-sourcing and crowd-funding, and more intuitive technologies made available to the consumer class; the real value of middle manager gets questioned. Unlike the talent at the entry level, which is still fissile,

cerebrally mouldable and less complacent, most middle managers, even in mid-sized firms, are quite rigid in their work habits, farther away from the fast morphing technology landscape, and highly complacent. The mounting EMIs and bloated lifestyles don't help either. It might read like a way too gloomy picture portrayed here, but for those in midsts of the transformation wouldn't agree more. And if they still disagree, either they are still deluded, or better still have managed the crisis very well. So, what's the panacea?

I deem that the time is prime to do some soul-searching, asking some hard questions, and putting the act together to play another innings, albeit on a different pitch. Two resorts come to mind here. One is entrepreneurship, and another is mentoring. The best is rather doing both.

Best time to be an entrepreneur in India is now

Regardless of the access to new learning and technological advancements, getting a hang of such developments isn't always trivial, especially if one hasn't been in prime learning shape. Entrepreneurship offers a neat resort, especially while looking at India as a market, and some domestic problems to be addressed. Scores of startup founders have sprung from the ranks of Wipro for several years now. Being a part of the institution for

over half-a-decade, the reason is certainly beyond Wipro being in the IT industry, for the wellspring of entrepreneurship is more fundamental.

With so much of experience under the belt, it would be foolhardy to toss it away on adopting another uncertain path with ever shrinking shelf life of new knowledge. The managers, especially the seasoned ones, must try their hands on starting something new. Their discipline of managing work, rallying talent, engaging with clients, and work ethics would be a great resort to the rather restless youth dotting the Indian startup scene. The ideas needn't be original or proprietary, the discipline of execution matters and the experience of delivering at scale can be brought to bearing here.

Mentor, fund and teach the next generation

If the risk appetite isn't high but the desperation to still make bucks is, mentoring is the advisable alternate. By no means a second best; albeit mentoring, coupled with funding and teaching, can't be over-valued in present times. The managers in their heydays of the IT industry had a rare peep into the western world and an access to their thinking and work ethics, which have an urgent utility in the Indian startup context. Being a sounding board, angel investor, or a coach can be of immense self-satisfaction and an ominous help to the aspiring ones who have gotten (thankfully) disillusioned from the IT industry.

With blessing from the government, positive social perception, investment availability, talent mobility, lower information asymmetry, and access to technology and infrastructure, the time to set out on a self-employment course can't be better. Cities like Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Mumbai, National Capital Region and Chennai are just the tip of the proverbial iceberg of the ensuing entrepreneurship wave about to push our economy up and forward.

Being an entrepreneur, agglomerating talent, capital and ideas, and putting a discipline to scale and improve can be the biggest contribution the middle management at most IT firms can envisage to make as they move forward, and not necessarily upward. The question is of timing. And it's always better to have a slow start now, without risking it big before one is left with no option. No one wants the Indian IT industry to meet the fate of the Big Three of Detroit. The saving grace is our youth and the middle manager can be the much-needed guardian. ⓟ

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Human mind is not infinitely plastic, and hence unlearning and relearning don't come easy

Working in the era of the dark triads

What to do when your boss is a star performer and a tyrant?

Everyone loves to work for a good boss – someone who understands you, challenges you, guides you, supports you. I know you're rolling your eyes, you've never had one like that, ok one, 7 years ago and all you can do is wonder why others can't be like him/her.

I don't know if it would have been easier if the boss wasn't smart, sharp and hardworking, but more often than not these are the toughest ones to work with. They're delivering results, the world is going gaga over them, and no is looking at their methods. Mostly their bosses or peers don't know and even if they do, they willfully turn a blind eye, after all results are king.

I didn't have a name for this till last year, that's what happens when your reading habit tapers. But this article in HBR last year, "Why do Toxic People Get Promoted[1]" introduced me to the concept of "Dark Triads". The trio of 3.

• **Narcissism:** characterized by excessive vanity, feelings of superiority and arrogance, as well as a strong need for admiration and entitlement. Think about the type of person who loves to be recognized for achievement even if they didn't contribute to making it happen.

• **Machiavellianism** using manipulative strategies to achieve their goals without considering morality. Often described as immoral, cynical, and highly calculative; the type of person who thinks that the ends justify the means.

• **Psychopathy** primarily characterized by high impulsivity, low empathy or interpersonal coldness, as well as by exploitative and antisocial behavior.

An impressive 15-year longitudinal study[2] found that individuals with psychopathic and narcissistic characteristics gravitated towards the top of the organizational hierarchy and had higher levels of financial attainment. In line with those findings, according to some estimates, the base rate for clinical levels of psychopathy is three times higher among corporate boards than in the overall population. This is also consistent with earlier conceptualizations of psychopathy among businessmen.

Now that we have a name to our problem, the question still remains…how do we work with such a boss, someone who is a star performer but also essentially a tyrant! In all such scenarios, there's no cookie cutter solution, but there are a few things we could try:

1. **Pet peeves:** A boss of mine was a real stickler for time, nothing irked him more than someone being 1 min late. Try and identify those things that your boss really doesn't like, then don't do them (lessons hard learned)

> An impressive 15-year longitudinal study found that individuals with psychopathic and narcissistic characteristics gravitated towards the top of the organizational hierarchy and had higher levels of financial attainment

2. **Listen:** Your boss is all the time giving you inputs, even when they aren't speaking or speaking to you. Each has their own particular style of working, some like synopsis, others like details, some like numbers and tables and others like graphs. Some like their team to be independent, others want to be checked with for every decision. What are the things they talk about when they are not talking about work? In an ideal scenario, both you and your boss would work towards adapting to each other's styles but with a boss with dark triad traits, more often than not you'll be the one needing to do the adapting. A good way to do this is to observe those who are favorites of your boss. Identify the common aspects and find ones you can work with.

3. **Learn the art of political maneuvering:** If you thought that those dark triads were all dark, well you're right but wrong. The dark triads do help people especially leaders to deliver results. Some of those facets that help them succeed are worth learning. One such facet is Political skill, which is defined as a positive social competence that helps people network, influence others, demonstrate social astuteness, and appear sincere in their dealings with others.

4. **Deliver results:** A key weapon in your arsenal will always be delivering on work, preferably more than what is stated or expected. It will help build your credibility in the system and work against implicit or explicitly created false impressions.

5. **Build allies:** It's always good to have more friends, guides, mentors in the system who will vouch for you, and possibly even stand by you so that the only voice being heard about you is not from your boss.

There's one additional thing that all of us need to do:

Introspect: If most successful people show signs of these dark triads, then there's a reason-

It's time to be honest with ourselves, what have we been guilty of? While we can't work on others, we definitely can be masters of our own selves

able possibility we also have these traits in varying degrees. It's time to be honest with ourselves, what have we been guilty of? While we can't work on others, we definitely can be masters of our own selves.

- **Seek feedback** (best way of that, is whenever someone gives you some, even if you disagree with it, don't justify, thank them and try and see if that feedback is corroborated by others)
- **Act on one aspect:** Behavioral changes aren't easy, they are heavily ingrained in us. If you've been able to identify one aspect, give it due focus and time.
- **Seek feedback again:** The truth about us, is only known to the people who have to tolerate us, hence if you feel you've changed, let others tell you that, before you believe it for yourself.

As one very senior person, I met sometime back said, "Why are you so worried about who your boss is. Most often than not life will not give you the opportunity to decide that. If you're smart and hardworking, you'll figure out how to get along with any boss."

Golden words, I agree! Sometimes though despite all your best efforts the situation may become unmanageable and since we spend a lot of daily time on work both in and outside office it can start affecting your mental health and peace of mind. In such cases it might be worthwhile to try and seek newer shores in the hope that they may turn out to be at least slightly better than current. These could possibly be within the organization or even outside. 🅟🅜

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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FARZANA SURI

How to hold on to the great people at the workplace

As a manager or promoter, you could look at ways to build human experience into the search and appointment process. Look for what makes people get excited and match them with the roles and their managers

RETENTION STRATEGY

There are people whom organizations need to hold onto so the tribe of enthusiasts that are driven by effective engagement of a humane experience increases

I was coaching with the Head of HR of a Rs 560crs organization and her biggest challenge was retention. What was more alarming was the best talent in the organization was moving away and the new ones did not seem to want to stay longer than one year. She was perplexed. The organization was ranked number three in the sector and was perceived as the great place to work in. So, what went wrong?

Some soul-searching and objective analysis drew up interesting revelations.

The key factor being, looking for people who fit based on parameters of the past rather than the future. It's like seeking a relationship match based on a previous marriage or relationship. People, intrinsically look for workplaces that are aligned to their life purpose, and provide a deeper connect to the community. How equipped are organizations to cut through this belief and create a workplace fit for the future than that which is chained to the past? As a manager or promoter, you could look at ways to build human experience into the search

and appointment process. Look for what makes people get excited and match them with the roles and their managers. Because people inspire people. People look for connections and a frequency that is sustainable and progressive.

So, how do you identify the 'great people' in the workplace?

Here's how.

The 'great people' to work within an organization are those who:

- Take pride in being associated with your organization
- Do not need prodding to get things done, they are driven by the need to keep moving.
- Step forward, courageously and accept challenges with grace.
- Ask questions to seek clarity.
- Make mistakes, seek the learning.
- Ignore gossip and steer clear of blaming people.
- Are problem-solvers and lateral thinkers.
- Do not depend on luck to change things, they seize each day as an opportunity to strive ahead.
- Create sunshine with their optimism and light-heartedness.
- Are looking for ways to help and display genuine care
- Are collaborative in their approach

They are people whom organizations need to hold onto so the tribe of enthusiasts that are

driven by effective engagement of a humane experience increases.

As managers, you may need to bridge the gap by bringing in more clarity and transparency because retention is the foundation for sustainable growth of a brand.

Tips to retain the great people in the workplace

1. Clarity on expectation versus delivery. Moving the bar, mid-way without communicating it to your people can cause unrest and unhappiness.

2. Quality Management is critical to retention because people do not leave organizations as much as they leave due to abrasive or incompetent managers and supervisors. It's a relationship that requires a feedback mechanism to measure success/correction, periodically.

3. Lack of clarity on career growth and earning potential can lead to dissonance. Work in all probability is about financial independence to support an evolving lifestyle and ambitions. With little or no dialogue on this front, people may mistake the organization as uncaring and feel short-changed.

4. Insufficient or sporadic feedback mechanism. Effective feedback is timely, specific, constructive and consistent and provides people the opportunity to course-correct and grow.

5. Inequitable treatment or even a perception of being treated with bias is the biggest cause of good people leaving. Setting the culture of fairness that cuts across segments and strata will create respect and inculcate a culture of trust and a level playing field.

6. Appreciation and recognition are the food of the soul. Provide opportunities to reward and celebrate people and their accomplishments. People thrive in a culture that breeds acknowledgment of efforts. Provide a motivating environment where people are encouraged, thanked, frequently.

7. Opportunities to grow and learn. Repetitive work can get monotonous and boring. When people are in the same position, with no change or hope for change, it will eventually demotivate even the most inspired and ambitious people. Where learning and development are incentivized, people thrive in the workplace. Motivated people look for challenges to stay ahead of the curve. Learning gives them the ammunition to feed their ambition with a challenge that facilitates growth.

8. Feeling acknowledged, individually. People feel isolated or unrecognized in an ocean of workers and desire to be noticed. They want their work to be acknowledged and praised. When senior management looks to them as individual contributors instead of just a part of a team, it elevates their sense of belonging.

9. Allow people to speak their mind, freely.

People feel isolated or unrecognized in an ocean of workers and desire to be noticed, acknowledged and praised. When senior management looks to them as individual contributors instead of just a part of a team, it elevates their sense of belonging

Open door policy with transparency in communication builds trust and stops the water cooler chatter and brings down politics.

Business growth depends on the quality of the people you employ and retain. And, how you shape the work environment can affect the mentality of people in the workplace. Be warned, people are unpredictable and unique therefore, no single strategy can be the panacea; so choose what works best for the majority.

Suffice to state, the great people, by far are the brand endorsers of your organization. Their retention feeds productivity, creates a community of superstars and drives client growth. **Pm**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

FARZANA SURI is a victory coach and an entrepreneur.

THE ARE YOU IN THE LIST AWARD WINNERS 2019

On August 2nd 2019, the HR fraternity in India got its next set of emerging HR leaders as the winners of "People Matters Are You In The List Awards 2019" were revealed. In its 8th Edition, the awards dedicated to recognize emerging HR leaders got 17 winners from a long list of 32 finalists and 2,500 applications

By **People Matters Editorial**

The ever-changing global business ecosystem has created a fiercely competitive business landscape. The way we work and live is transforming. From the growing adoption of artificial intelligence in the workplace to the expansion of the workforce to include both on-and off-balance-sheet talent, there are many changes in store for the workplace, the workforce, and the nature of work itself. Tomorrow holds an exciting opportunity for young and emerging HR leaders of today, to usher in a new era of work and design the framework of the future of work.

The HR leaders of tomorrow have to learn to thrive in an unfamiliar business environment and embody skills and traits that are much discussed today. They have to be innovative, agile, creative and collaborative. But where and how can these HR leaders of the future be identified?

People Matters, in partnership with DDI, recognized and celebrated the journeys of few such emerging HR leaders, who are all set to reimagine and redefine the scope of the function and take it to new heights. In its 8th year, "People Matters Are You In The List", involved an intense qualifying application process; a series of assessments and face-offs with the panel. This year, Mercer Mettl also came on board as partner for the video interview stage. After going through six stages, 17 young HR leaders emerged as winners and were given away their awards on August 2nd, 2019, on day two of People Matters TechHR India Conference 2019.

AN INTENSE SELECTION PROCESS

STAGE
1

APPLICATION & SCREENING
Over 2,500 applications were received and were screened based on eligibility criteria. Eligible candidates then took an online application test to qualify for the next stage.

STAGE
2

COGNITIVE ABILITY TEST
All the eligible candidates then took DDI's Cognitive ability test which is a tool for online assessment of one's cognitive ability to succeed on the job. Their ability to reason, articulate challenges, deduce conclusions, and make decisions was tested through this tool.

STAGE
3

LEADERSHIP ASSESSMENT
The shortlisted candidates then undertook DDI's online Leadership Assessment, which is a tool to identify the candidate's readiness to take managerial roles. Some of the aspects for which they were evaluated included, 'manage relationships', 'facilitate change', 'analyze a problem or opportunity' and 'plan and organize'.

STAGE
4

VIDEO INTERVIEW
The shortlisted candidates from the 'Stage 3', then recorded their videos and answered a few pre-determined questions on Mercer Mettl video platform.

STAGE
5

BUSINESS CASE STUDY
In order to further assess if the candidates possess the skills required to be a successful HR Leaders or not, DDI evaluated selected individuals on their business acumen by conducting a mini-assessment using a business case study method. This stage also included a personality inventory which measured attributes or tendencies that can either enhance or derail one's leadership effectiveness.

STAGE
6

THE FINAL INTERVIEW WITH THE JURY
The 32 finalists who made it to this last round met the jury panel spread across various locations. The jury interviewed these finalists one by one and judged them on the critical competencies identified during the course of the process.

... AND THE BEST MADE IT TO THE LIST

You are the answer to our success

Thank you for being there at Are You In The List 2019.

people matters | DDI

are **you** *in the list* **'19**

You are the answer

2500+ applications

1100+ nominations

17 winners

See you next year at
Are You In The List 2020.

AASTHA BHATIA
Senior Manager HR - Bharti Infratel

"HR as a function has immense untapped potential, the key lies in understanding the business and its people deeply and making thumping difference in the growth of organizations," believes Aastha.

Biggest talent priority

For Aastha, the biggest priority in today's time is identifying and cultivating the critical two percent of the talent. This is the percentage of talent who is truly accelerating the organization's growth. However, organizations fail to identify these employees. Aastha's focus shall thus be on helping her organization and the entire community build a mechanism that enables them to identify this top layer of talent.

The one thing I will pursue

Change in HR: It is time to be agile and embrace technology to take more sound people decisions. Digitization and predictive analytics doesn't replace and rather supplements and improves our judgment. It can help us find the right fit for the job, forecast skills for future, anticipate attrition and help set talent priorities in far less time and with much higher success rate.

Retain in HR: The employees indeed, fuel the growth of the company. The talent deci-

IT IS TIME TO BE AGILE AND EMBRACE TECHNOLOGY TO TAKE MORE SOUND PEOPLE DECISIONS

sions taken today go a long way in shaping the future of the organization. As a function, I would like to retain that talent strategy has to go hand in hand with the organization strategy, so utmost care needs to be taken in defining the vision for the business and its people.

Vision for HR's future growth

There is a strong need to personalize our approach to employee experience as rigorously as we would personalize our offerings to our customers. One size doesn't fit all, and we need to curate employee experience across all touchpoints. The traditional job descriptions need to be fluidic to align to help the employees play to their strengths. The career paths designed should accommodate personal priorities and align with business goals. The learning experience needs to be personalized as well. 🅿ⓜ

While studying Development Communication and Extension and working with people during her honors course in graduation, human behaviors and emotions began to intrigue Ankita. Back then she wasn't very sure about working in the HR domain but she wanted to work with people and had a desire to make an impact in their lives.

Biggest talent priority

"While much has been written, said and done for high potentials across organizations, we somehow miss the contribution of lifers and loyalists that don't switch jobs as frequently," says Ankita. She feels it is imperative to contribute to their development and growth.

The one thing I will pursue

Change in HR: Unconscious bias which has been plaguing organizations for a long time must change. It is imperative if we would like to see organizations becoming more diverse and inclusive in their culture. It is not enough to just talk about diversity and inclusion because it sounds like "Cool" it is because it is the right thing to do. I see HR playing a critical role in changing this by educating managers, bringing policies and focusing on culture building interventions.

THE FUTURE OF WORKPLACE WILL BE DYNAMIC, UNCONVENTIONAL AND DRIVEN BY DIVERSE DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS WORKING TO FIND SOLUTIONS THAT WILL DELIGHT CUSTOMERS EVERY SINGLE DAY

Retain in HR: HR is evolving with every passing year and has earned a seat at the table by being a trusted business partner that caters to the most important asset class of the organization, i.e people. I believe the business partnership mindset which has got HR a seat at the table still has a lot of scope to further transform the workplace.

Vision for HR's future growth

The future of workplace will be dynamic, unconventional and driven by diverse demographic groups working to find solutions that will delight customers every single day. The vision for HR's future growth will largely depend on HR fraternity's ability to run alongside the business, keeping employees and customers at the center of everything we plan and do. 🅿ⓜ

ANKITA GAUBA
DGM - Human Resources - Glenmark Pharmaceuticals

CHAVI JAIN
HR Business Partner - Citi

For Chavi Jain, one of the "Are You In The List 2019" winners, "Connecting without prejudice, listening with intent, and building genuine trustful relationships is the bedrock on which bigger goals are met." From childhood, Chavi enjoyed being part of teams to design and develop solutions that make life better. After completing her engineering, she thought of bringing together her logical thinking, solutions-orientation, empathy, and drive to work for people in a business environment together and decided to take up HR. And as Chavi shared, she has loved every minute of it.

Biggest talent priority
Chavi's biggest talent priority currently is to have an abundance of talent when the organization requires it. Whether it is the slate for a business leader, or hiring someone for a managerial or technical role, one is always challenged with finding the right talent for the right role in the right amount of time. Chavi's focus will therefore, be on helping her organization grapple with this challenge.

The one thing I will
Change in HR: I would like to change the "mind" of HR. I like the way HR is becoming more strategic and data-driven and would like to further create mechanisms to ensure

I AM PROUD THAT OUR FUNCTION HAS IMMENSE COURAGE, EMPATHY, AND DRIVE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN PEOPLE'S LIVES

we are able to have tangible measures to gauge the effectiveness of HR.

Retain in HR: I would like to retain the "heart" of HR. I am proud that our function has immense courage, empathy, and drive to make a difference in people's lives.

Vision for HR's future growth
The way HR is experienced by organizations in the future will be fundamentally different from today. We will see technology and AI take over transactional activities. HR teams will also focus on curation rather than the creation of resources for skill development. Finally, HR professionals would need to develop the ability to see around corners and evaluate emerging trends to develop policies that support new-age work arrangements. **Pm**

Malavika enters the field of HR to help organizations in their journey of becoming great. She can contribute by carving out that journey by hiring, engaging and retaining great talent. She has made a conscious attempt to develop deep business acumen in order to take better people decisions and design the right people priorities for the organization.

Biggest talent priority
Malavika believes that the biggest talent priority today is Diversity & Inclusion and we are far from solving that problem.

The one thing I will pursue
Change in HR: I would like us as HR to be as agile in adaptive to changes in technology and digitization as the business functions. If we are able to apply and use technology in our processes, I feel there are a lot of paradigm shifts that we will be able to make in the org success.

Retain in HR: Our focus on talent is something I would like to retain. To continue to build people practices and take decisions from a talent management perspective helps in an efficient and engaged workforce.

THE BIGGEST TALENT PRIORITY TODAY IS DIVERSITY & INCLUSION AND WE ARE FAR FROM SOLVING THAT PROBLEM

Vision for HR's future growth
Malavika has a two-fold vision for HR:
- **Expanding Focus:** From just thinking about employee performance and engagement we need to start focusing on balanced employee experience.
- **Greater Agility:** We are already seeing new trends and technologies shaping the future world of work, and we need to start putting these into practice now. The future may not be wholly predictable, but by assessing the current challenges and looking at the emerging trends, we can make sure that our businesses and employees are prepared and ready to seize what the future world of work holds. **Pm**

MALAVIKA SAHOO
Senior Manager - Flipkart

One of the key reasons Mehak pursued her post-graduation and subsequently a career in HR is the immense untapped potential of this function to make a difference in the growth of organizations. Also, what she found immensely interesting in HR, was the combination of allied disciplines of sociology, psychology, economics, and engineering to solve complex problems that could have a lasting positive impact on the organization.

Biggest talent priority

Rapid advancements in technology, changes in human expectations and the need for instant gratification are a few trends that are disrupting how we live and work. It is creating an impetus for the organizations to rapidly adapt. In such times, HR will have to take the lead with agility and sustain exponential value for the future of the organization.

The one thing I will pursue

Change in HR: The digital age has introduced new technologies, and in doing so, has dramatically changed the organization's and employees' expectations, which are more customized to an employee. Therefore, HR will have to make a shift in

HR WILL HAVE TO TAKE THE LEAD WITH AGILITY AND SUSTAIN EXPONENTIAL VALUE FOR THE FUTURE OF THE ORGANIZATION

terms of delivering experiences, from one size fits all approach to creating a tailored experience.

Retain in HR: There are good leaders who will get the best results for an organization and then there are great leaders who will go beyond that. They will inspire you, encourage you and enable you to be the best version of yourself. We should therefore, continue to focus our efforts and energies into creating such great leaders with whom we can build a meaningful, impactful and inclusive culture for the future of the organization.

Vision for HR's future growth

I can envision a future where we will see a massive shift in talent – where work will revolve around portfolios of diversified

MEHAK SYAL
Regional HR Manager - GSK

roles performed in teams that dynamically resize and reform and technology – where new business value would be created that outpaces the value of automating existing tasks. ◉

Nikita's vision is to be an HR Influencer contributing to the cause of enabling career opportunities for people 50+ years of age. Always interested to learn more about human behavior, Nikita believes that talent strategy is the primary contributor to organizational success.

Biggest talent priority

Ageism in the workplace and biases against people above 50 have been prevalent for a long time.

"I remember 4 years back when I proposed an idea at an entrepreneurship forum that would help provide career opportunities to people above 50, there were few takers," recalls Nikita.

People want to work till at least 70 - 75 years to keep themselves physically fit, mentally engaged and financially secure. And given the recent trends and many reports, the life span is further increasing, making it all the more important for companies to create opportunities for this aging workforce.

The one thing I will pursue

Change in HR: I would want to add more science to our talent practices. The shift from 'Know it All' to 'Learn it All' among

NIKITA DOSHI
Manager - Learning, Talent & Culture - Publicis Sapient

HR NEEDS TO INVEST IN BUILDING ITS CAPABILITY AND TRANSFORM

HR professionals is important. Science with Simplicity is the key and that is what I want to bring to HR.

Retain in HR: Human touch and values, which are even more important to have in the age of automation. There is enough and more research to emphasize the need for humility, empathy, and compassion amongst today's workforce.

Vision for HR's future growth

HR's future growth will depend on creating value not just for the business but for the society at large. For that:

- HR needs to invest in building its capability and transform.
- HR needs to build its connectional intelligence (develop skills to enable and leverage the connections you already have for creating value).
- In today's era of fourth Industrial Revolution, HR needs to focus on its digital strategy. ◉

According to Purnoor, the HR domain has the strength to get to know the true pulse of the organization. By offering insights and solutions that connect ideas and people, by strengthening the foundation culturally, and by complementing the organization's strengths with new external perspectives, HR teams can play a key role in achieving business priorities and help organizations stay relevant and agile.

Purnoor says, "Challenges may be variable, but people potential – enabled by new trends, will keep the organization going."

Biggest talent priority

Given the evolving demand for skills, the talent landscape is increasingly becoming more and more diverse. From skillsets to experience levels, we see multiple talent segments co-existing across teams.

Purnoor feels that organizations must therefore embrace data, technology, and digital enablers. While many large organizations have implemented AI-powered tools, virtual learning platforms and have adopted flexible workplace practices, there has not yet been a tangible impact. Purnoor's focus will be on helping her organization imbibe these practices and build a future-ready culture.

PURNOOR BAINS
Senior Manager,
Total Rewards - Philips India

The one thing I will pursue

Change in HR: It is important to question existing precedence and current practices to evolve with changing times. It is time to

IT IS TIME TO REMOVE BIAS AND PERCEPTIONS AND SIMPLIFY PROCESSES AND INCREASE TRANSPARENCY

remove bias and perceptions and simplify processes and increase transparency.

Retain in HR: Build and maintain trust within the organization by opening channels of communication and feedback, fostering collaboration, and building a strong culture through "intent to action".

Vision for HR's future growth

In the future, our focus will be on being more agile and innovative in the way we approach and solve people and business challenges. Design thinking, market intelligence, analytics and change management skills in HR will enable organizations to stay ahead of the curve. Further, customer focus will be a key ask for HR as well, where customers are not only internal employees and prospective candidates but also end consumers. 🅿ᵐ

Sankalp Naswa always wanted to learn more about how people can shape a company's success. He was inclined towards understanding how people decisions in companies are taken. The curiosity to learn more about the people processes and the passion to be able to influence them is what brought him to the HR domain. Sankalp strongly believes that it is people who make a company and not brands.

Biggest talent priority

From identifying the right talent to recognizing it and appraising it, "Are you in the list 2019" winner, Sankalp wants to implement data science at every stage of the employee life cycle. Currently, he is even investing in his own skills to learn how he can help his company's HR organization maximize the benefits of data science.

As Sankalp seeks to make HR more data driven function, let's see what key actions and plans does he have in mind for the HR function.

The one thing I will pursue

Change in HR: HR needs to understand that they are a part of business and thus there is no need to keep on self-validating and looking for opportunities to make

HR NEEDS TO BECOME MORE COMFORTABLE WITH HANDLING DATA AND ENSURING DATA QUALITY AT SOURCE

their presence felt. Getting the basics right will ensure that place for HR in the business itself.

Retain in HR: The approach that people are ahead of costs is required while taking key decisions, from restructuring exercises to compensation decisions. Many changes and trends shall keep on shaping the HR function, but they shall always remain the employees' champion.

Vision for HR's future growth

The future lies in data. HR needs to become more comfortable with handling data and ensuring data quality at source. HR's future growth would come from accepting the fact that all people insights can be utilized to make better and more relevant decisions. 🅿ᵐ

SANKALP NASWA
Manager, Rewards - Nestlé India

While preparing to become a CA, Satyamvada realized that she wanted to pursue a career where she could bring difference in the lives of people, understand what makes us the way we are. She shares, "I have a firm belief that everyone out there is up for excellence, and no one wants to fail. All we have to do is create the right ecosystem for everyone to flourish."

The two biggest talent priorities

For Satyamvada, the two focus areas as an HR professional are development and retention of women leaders and helping organizations overcome unconscious bias at the workplace.

- Development and retention of women leaders: There is a war for talent when it comes to women leaders, while every organization aims to invest in development, we lose sight of retention and assume that individual is not at risk.
- Ability to deal with unconscious bias at the workplace: Satyamvada aspires to make inclusion part of every conversation at workplace and bring it to the mainstream.

The one thing I will pursue

Change in HR: The perception of HR is

SATYAMVADA SHARMA
Manager People Strategy -
Publicis Sapient

what I would like to change. To rebrand HR, professionals in the domain must put metrics around key people processes, create tailor-made solutions for the workforce rather than generic, and start taking

THE WORLD IS CHANGING AND WE HAVE TO KEEP ON REDEFINING OURSELVES AS SUCCESSFUL HR PARTNERS

joint accountability of people's happiness at workplace along with business.

Retain in HR: In the age of technology, the X factor of HR teams is "Empathy". Along with that, a key differentiator is the business acumen that HR has built to co-create solutions with business stakeholders. It has helped us elevate our role and gain respect as credible business partners.

Vision for HR's future growth

We are the keepers of the humane aspect of HR. However, simultaneously we need to embrace the latest technologies with an agile mindset. The world is changing and we have to keep on redefining ourselves as successful HR partners.

Shilpa chose to be in the HR domain as she realized that being an HR professional shall enable her to make an impact in people's lives. The HR community has the opportunity to help people develop their skills and shape their futures.

Biggest talent priority

Shilpa looks forward to enabling the talent with skills and competencies that will help them be more ready for the dynamic future. As the focus of businesses across sector currently is on identifying and developing future-ready talent, she would also like to work towards solving this challenge.

The one thing I will pursue

Change in HR: HR has to stop being just a business partner and evolve as an 'influencer'. HR professionals must be developed to 'influence' and have the acumen to act accordingly basis situations.

Retain in HR: While we drive artificial intelligence and technology for predictive data analytics, we must not forget the "human touch", which forms the core of People Business. To this day, we rely on human touch and emotional intelligence, which should drive HR in the future, and

HR PROFESSIONALS MUST BE DEVELOPED TO 'INFLUENCE' AND HAVE THE ACUMEN TO ACT ACCORDINGLY BASIS SITUATIONS

work simultaneously along with technology.

Vision for HR's future growth

HR is evolving constantly by the day. The Human Resources function of the future will resonate with the themes such as being the curator of people experiences, destroying all status quo, shaping and leading strategy to business, anticipator, and influencer to ever-changing situations. HR will be an enabler, taking a key seat on the table and driving innovation and change, to unlock human potential and impact great results.

SHILPA NARAYAN
HR Manager - Courtyard by Marriott
Chennai (Marriott International)

Fascinated by great kings and queens who ran empires spanning thousands of miles, in a just and inclusive manner, Shrusti decided to be in a career that allows her to find and develop more such leaders. Shrusti is excited to be in a profession which enables her to live this dream of creating a force of inclusive leaders along with an inclusive culture.

Biggest talent priority

The focus for Shrusti will be on learning more about the different elements shaping the current talent landscape and preparing for the trends that might image in the future. For her, the biggest priority will be educating herself and her organization about various aspects impacting the world of work and their business. For instance, identifying how compensation and performance decisions will be taken for the freelance workers. On the basis of this knowledge and research then she can help business leaders make better talent decisions.

The one thing I will pursue

Change in HR: The priorities of our business stakeholders, in response to changes in the market, are constantly evolving, yet we are often unable to keep up. Too often

we only rely on established processes and there is a reluctance to experiment, to adapt. This resistance to change has to be worked on. In fact, HR professionals should be the one suggesting new solutions and be an ambassador of innovation in their company.

Retain in HR: Ability to add a method to the madness! HR brings in governance and a mechanism to sustain ideas, initiatives, and programs.

Vision for HR's future growth

Transforming the HR workforce into being multi-skilled - technically, emotionally and socially. A workforce that invests in its own upskilling to grow and be capable of handling and assuming leadership positions across the board, including business roles. 🄿ⓜ

SHRUSTI MOHANTY
HR Business Partner - Capgemini

SHRUTI JOSHI
Manager-HR (Talent Management and Organization Development) - Asian Paints

Being part of the HR team of the company allows Shruti to understand the levers that drive humans to create organizations that are larger than life. By being in this function she can learn what inspires diverse individuals to achieve extraordinary feats and strive for breakthrough disruptions.

Shruti shares, "I have always believed that humans are the magic formula for the unexplained success of several things and decoding that magic formula is an exciting journey, I am on currently."

Biggest talent priority

As the entire world of work deals with the challenges of multiple generations working together, Shruti's focus will be on decoding how HR can be the guardian of culture and create more inclusivity. Further, as any trends such as the emerging gig workforce impact the workplace, the priority for Shruti will be to decode

how companies can retain their soul and anchor everything else around it without limiting the diversity of thought and actions. Let's see what key actions and plans does Shruti have in mind for the HR function.

The one thing I will pursue

Change in HR: The notion that structure limits creativity and that processes are barriers to agility. I firmly believe that discipline eliminates unnecessary decision making and hence frees up time for the things that matter. I think HR can benefit from strong processes where they don't exist.

Retain in HR: The respect for human discretion and informed intuition. Digital is not here to substitute humans, instead it creates a need and an opportunity to help HR function evolve. Hence, what I would like to retain is the human touch in the increasing tech-enabled world.

Vision for HR's future growth

My vision is that HR balances the touch and tech aspects of its offerings and takes the best of both these worlds to offer to its customers a service that is valued and indispensable. 🄿ⓜ

A research student of psychology, Soniya Dabak has always loved thinking and hypothesizing about the human behavior. Fundamental questions like, "What drives people to find meaning in their work?" or "How do teams form and how do leaders emerge?" drove her to the world of HR. And as the business ecosystem becomes more complex and the ambiguity of people problem increases, working in HR has become more exciting for Soniya.

Biggest talent priority

For Soniya the focus will be on designing structures, systems, and cultures that enable 'ambidexterity' or the ability to flexibly switch between ideation and action. While businesses become busy in exploring the new, paying attention to delivering and retaining the old will also be crucial.

The one thing I will pursue

Change in HR: Stop looking at HR from the lens of processes or practices and focus on organization development and employee experience as the core outcome. I would also like to bring a more evidence-based approach to HR and increase the use of data and technology particularly to drive "personalization" of experience at scale.

AS THE BUSINESS ECOSYSTEM BECOMES MORE COMPLEX AND THE AMBIGUITY OF PEOPLE PROBLEM INCREASES, WORKING IN HR HAS BECOME MORE EXCITING FOR SONIYA

Retain in HR: The opportunity to influence key levers of change - structure, talent, and culture at multiple levels - employee, leader and organization.

Vision for HR's future growth

As the concepts of work and career are rapidly evolving with the integration of people and technology, a multi-generational workforce, increasing attractiveness of gigs/side hustles and fluid workforce models, an important focus area for HR professionals is creating "meaning" in work by redesigning roles and defining careers as a series of experiences, rather than a series of jobs. **Pm**

SONIYA DABAK
Organization & Talent Development Leader and Senior HRBP - GE India Technology

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Surbhi believes that helping people reach their potential will help businesses achieve their potential. During college when Surbhi also got the experience of managing organizations and events, she realized that it's people who form the core of any organization and only their motivation, skills and efforts can lead organizations and communities to success.

Biggest talent priority

For Surbhi, enabling the key talent of the organization to effectively manage any transitions and changes as part of their jobs is the biggest talent priority which she would like to solve and influence.

The one thing I will pursue

Change in HR: The one thing that I will want more HR people to demonstrate is higher business acumen, agility, and empathy.

Retain in HR: The one thing I will keep in HR is having a face to the function and physically being there for employees.

Vision for HR's future growth

HR in the future is the engine that drives organizations by completely understanding business needs and market

FOR SURBHI, ENABLING THE KEY TALENT OF THE ORGANIZATION TO EFFECTIVELY MANAGE ANY TRANSITIONS AND CHANGES AS PART OF THEIR JOBS IS THE BIGGEST TALENT PRIORITY WHICH SHE WOULD LIKE TO SOLVE AND INFLUENCE

landscapes. The function is extremely experiential with a mix of human and digital touch-points with employees. It is standardized in operations but customized experiences. **Pm**

SURBHI BAJAJ
Manager, People Advisory Services - Ernst & Young

SURMA GUHA
HR Manager - General Electric

WE ARE AS INTEGRAL A PART OF THE BUSINESS TEAM AND WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO SPEND MORE TIME WITH BUSINESS LEADERS, UNDERSTAND THEIR CHALLENGES & GOALS

When Surma was pursuing her MBA she realized that unlike finance, marketing, operations and other business functions where professionals often work with limited resources to maximize business outcomes, in HR there is an opportunity to tap into people's talent and create business value.

"I realized that as HR professionals, we have the power to design and drive an optimal ecosystem where people can bring their best selves to work and grow themselves and the organization to new heights of success and well-being," Surma shares.

Biggest talent priority
Business leaders often hoard talent within their immediate teams or businesses. They don't realize the strategic value of releasing their talent to other parts of the organization, and are not open to taking on new talent from other teams who come with less domain knowledge but a fresher perspective and energy. She wants to enable business leaders to not just rely on their immediate teams but view their entire organization as a talent marketplace and strategically create conditions for free flow of talent across teams.

The one thing I will pursue
Change in HR: The tendency or the desire for us to become surrogate managers. To appear useful or approachable, we often end up creating a parallel channel for employees to reach out to us with their queries, concerns and suggestions.

Retain in HR: The increased focus on business understanding and partnership that the function in India has embraced in the last decade. We are as integral a part of the business team and we should continue to spend more time with business leaders, understand their challenges and goals.

Vision for HR's future growth
HR professionals in every company will become a critical part of the organization's business success and business leaders will rely on their HR partners to solve hardcore business problems by strategically leveraging talent - to create not just short-term but long term sustainable business value. **Pm**

Trichi believes that just like in sport, businesses succeed when the best players play as a winning team. It is the HR function that helps this team perform to the best of its ability – from hiring the best talent, developing them, building the right culture, motivating, rewarding and retaining the right talent. HR professionals add value not only to business but also to the individuals themselves by bringing out the best in them.

Biggest talent priority
In the face of shifting social, political, regulatory and technological paradigms, as well as changing demographics, consumer preferences and evolving business models, it is imperative for organizations as well as individuals to have high adaptability in order to stay relevant and be future-ready.

The one thing I will pursue
Change in HR: I believe there is a large opportunity to create a more data-driven HR function by effectively using the vast amount of data being generated in real-time to get insights about business needs, convert these insights into practical solutions, and measure the impact of these decisions through business-relevant metrics.

TRICHI CHAWLA
Sr. HR Manager (Change Management Lead) - PepsiCo India

Retain in HR: I would like to retain the human touch and the ability to strike a balance between the mind and the heart in every interaction and every decision.

Vision for HR's future growth
I believe that the HR function would focus on three key elements:

IT IS IMPERATIVE FOR ORGANIZATIONS AS WELL AS INDIVIDUALS TO HAVE HIGH ADAPTABILITY IN ORDER TO STAY RELEVANT AND BE FUTURE-READY

- Adaptability to the external environment and changes – aligning HR strategy in line with business strategy to manage the disruption as a result of the shifting social, political, regulatory and technological paradigms, as well as changing demographics, consumer preferences and evolving business models.
- Managing talent in the context of the changing landscape – availability, leadership capability, productivity, engagement, development, and retention.
- Building a winning culture – that is purpose-driven, consumer-centric, collaborative, with growth and winning mindset, and more diverse and inclusive. **Pm**

VINEETA RAGHUWANSHI
Senior Manager - HR Ernst & Young

Vineeta's desire to impact the lives of people, coupled with the natural knack to engage and enable others, morphed into a career in HR. This field has not only given her the opportunity to live her aspirations but also allowed her to make an impact on the most important asset of an organization – its people.

Biggest talent priority
The workplace of the future will be very different from what it is now; Artificial Intelligence, Robotics; Analytics, Automation is pervasive across industries and are driving organizations to re-look at their business models. With the transformation in the business models, there is a greater need to have a workforce which is future-ready. The new world of work has implications on how we will attract, retain and develop our talent. Therefore, HR has a critical role to play in enabling our workforce to meet the requirements of the future workplace and start preparing ourselves accordingly.

One thing I will pursue
Change in HR: Transformation has become the new normal and we must disrupt today to be agile and to be ahead tomorrow. I strongly believe that to bring

HR HAS TO DISRUPT AND LEVERAGE ADVANCED TECHNOLOGIES TO ENHANCE THE OVERALL EXPERIENCE

real value to the organization and its people, HR has to disrupt and leverage advanced technologies (Automation & Robotics) to enhance the overall experience.

Retain in HR: Emotional intelligence and empathy is becoming increasingly vital to an organization's success in the increasingly digital future of work.

Vision for HR's future growth
We are at a crossroads. The alliance between humans and machines is ushering in a new era of work and the future of talent is unconstrained, connected, omnichannel and cognitive. Therefore, HR's future growth will rest upon our ability to impact intangible talent factors such as culture, leadership, Innovation, employee experiences, creativity and create economic value for employees and organizations. 🄿🄼

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Managing Director, Thoughtworks

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DR. NS RAJAN
GROUP CHRO, GROUP CMO & CEO, IDFC Foundation

MEENAL JADHAV
Director Global Leadership Academy, Schneider Electric

RAJKAMAL VEMPATI
Head HR, Axis Bank

VARADARAJAN SRINIVASAN
Talent & Strategy Enabler, Life & Leadership Coach

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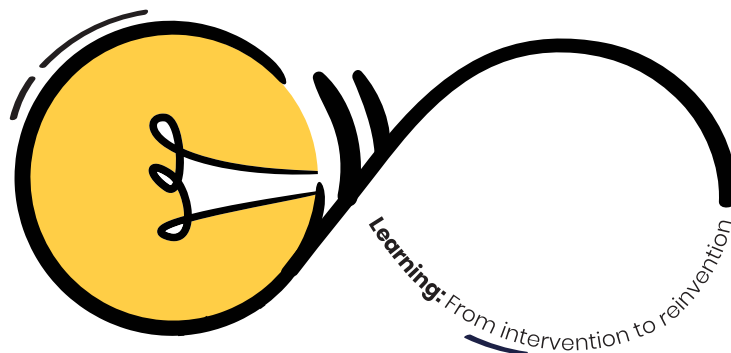
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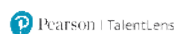
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SUMITHRA MATHEW

The future of HR

The unprecedented alteration in the HR landscape has led to conventional HR being replaced by a new skill-driven system ready to revolutionize the future of work itself

The Human Resource Function appears to be at a crossroad. In an era driven by Industry 4.0 breakthroughs, the power is shifting from organizations to individuals. While presenting formidable challenges, it also posits HR gurus with a unique opportunity; how can HR transform itself from a business and strategic enabler to a crystal-ball reading genie, who can predict business scenarios, workforce trends, competency mandates and prime the organization towards the future.

The unprecedented alteration in the HR landscape has led to conventional HR being replaced by a new skill-driven system ready to revolutionize the future of work itself. Everything from technology enabled frameworks to social media platforms, flexible and dynamic workspaces will be the major drivers of change in the way people are hired, trained, compensated, engaged, retained and re-hired.

Global megatrends reshaping HR

Events around the world shape the economic and political synergies of countries leading to shifts in consumer needs and thereby industrial trends, production outputs, new ways of working and seamlessly influences skill building and availability of a talent pool in new geographies. People will begin to trust engagement more than experience in terms of work with gig-culture dominating the resource stream, even among conglomerates. Digitally enabled enterprises will see global knowledge networks being the de-facto means of connecting with employees, vendor partners, stakeholders and end customers.

All human resource professionals will require to prepare for a future where work will differ substantially from the present state and these differences will be determined by global changes affecting workers, talent pipelines, global mobility and the nature of work itself. These global factors will not be about the scope of work or technology advancements but also the issues that fundamentally impact day-to-day life. An interesting approach to determine these aspects is to analyze and capitalize on the demographic, economic, social, technological and environmental issues impacting an organization's performance and individual preferences. HR professionals will require to be on top of their game and become trend-watchers of global metrices. Are we reading, enquiring and making ourselves relevant in a global market that extends beyond our geographical borders?

The 'Here-and-Now' workforce

It is essential to understand how a company can challenge their traditional approach to managing and retaining talent, especially the entrant employees. The modern-day workforce can be easily compared to customers looking for best or optimum product in the market; this means that their decisions are based on the most lucrative offer available in a 24/7 scenario. In a recent survey by Censuswide, almost half of the respondents said that they would consider switching jobs simply because it provided for greater flexibility. Recruiters have understood that it is not just a company's brand appeal or its clientele but factors such as compensation structuring, wellbeing initiatives, work-life balance, flexible policies and rewards systems that have become equally important.

The professionals of tomorrow will demand to be part of an always-thriving community. This tendency will also be reflected in revamping of the mentoring system within the company wherein, rather than it being a one-way communication, the relationship will be driven by exchange of perspectives and constant but honest feedback. Cross-generational inclusion into a reverse mentoring and performance dialogue mechanism of engagement, will yield wonders in terms of stickiness, ownership of change and will transform the dynamics of the workplace.

Portals and referrals will lose their importance as major entry points and to conjure excitement among the workforce, enterprises will require usage of

Everything from technology enabled frameworks to social media platforms, flexible and dynamic workspaces will be the major drivers of change in the way people are hired, trained, compensated, engaged, retained and re-hired

more dynamic-response driven platforms such as LinkedIn and company specific apps to further the connect. This strategy becomes extremely effective given that both youngsters and experienced professionals are likely to mainly rely on their smartphone to search for jobs opportunities. Transition to interactive HR frameworks would be crucial in engaging the job seekers and aligning them with an organization's ethos. Are we listening to a generation that is constantly on the move, wants systems that are fair, transparent and has access to instant feedback, peer reviews and make quick decisions based on these?

In Agility we trust

Agility has become the go-to mantra for big and small enterprises to succeed across industries and sectors. HR will continue to play a crucial role in maintaining the nimbleness of a company to facilitate improved productivity and efficiency.

An agile talent pool can only be built if the HR team efficiently leverages functional and reliable insights using technology and analytics. For HR, predictive analytics has emerged as a useful tool due to its functionality of balancing historical employee data with predictions associated with their future efficiency. HR analytics can predict if the current or potential employee will be a good fit in the company culture as well as their longevity. Predictive analytics can also be used to identify areas of improvement for teams and individuals using quantitative indices and identify employees who could be high performers alongside those who need assistance from the management as well as flag non-performers.

But it's not just data alone. An agile HR team would also need to master the art of leveraging social media. Perception, especially online through portals such as Glassdoor and Indeed go a long way in establishing an organization as a favoured employer, and organizations have little or no control over what is published there. It thus becomes critical for HR teams to access the feedback received on these sites and take corrective measures on the relevant suggestions. How quickly can we leverage technology to become an employer of choice for a vast majority of the talent pool?

Diversity

Inclusivity will transcend beyond a check-in-the-box parameter to becoming a vital strategy for a company's HR to stay competitive. Global diversity not only enables access to a larger pool of

Every organization that aims to become a truly global entity will require shifting their focus from revenue parameters and considering expanding their footprint to a variety of geographies to tap a latent talent pool that can work from anywhere, anytime

skilled employees but also promotes a cross-company culture of mutual learning and development as well as trust. Every organization that aims to become a truly global entity will require shifting their focus from revenue parameters and considering expanding their footprint to a variety of geographies to tap a latent talent pool that can work from anywhere, anytime. HR will require to weave in technology to integrate several focus areas related to talent acquisition, culture integration, employee relations and workforce mobility.

The other important aspect of diversity would involve effectively bringing together multi-generational team members. Experience and novelty will be key to propelling a company to their goal and greater heights thereon. HR teams would need to engage, balance, and leverage these different styles and skills throughout the teams so that the company would sustain a culture of mutual development, respect, camaraderie and uninterrupted growth.

HR professionals view dynamic changes in the world of work as challenges, mainly driven by the rise in remote working, freelancing, and a generational shift. However, once they tap into the mindset of the workforce of the future, they will see a plethora of opportunities that will help them to contextualize the change in the way people will view their roles in organizations. Human Resources is evolving from people-enablers to asset-builders. They play several integrating roles and will be pivotal in creating significant impact on enhancing employee experiences and the future of work and the workplace. **pm**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

SUMITHRA MATHEW is the Head of Human Resources (India), L&T Technology Services

Right teams for the right culture

Arthur Carmazzi, the Founder of The Directive Communication Psychology, Indonesia, shares his insights on building a cohesive organizational culture and identifying the right team members to create productive and efficient teams

By **Vallari Gupte**

> As a leader, you need two things as a motivator, not as a skill. A high emotional drive for significance, which basically means that you want to be recognized and the second one is the emotional drive for achievement

Arthur Carmazzi, the Founder of Indonesia-based Directive Communication Psychology and a renowned expert in the space of building a strong and cohesive organizational leadership talked about his journey, method of leadership development and the importance of building the right culture, in an exclusive interaction with People Matters.

An avid international speaker and author, Carmazzi brings with him an experience of more than 25 years and expertise in conducting in-depth research into psychological approaches towards leadership, behavioral changes and how these changes can help in creating high-performing teams.

Here we take a look at some of the poignant insights that Carmazzi shared with us.

Q You started out your career as an HR professional and transitioned into the role of a leadership coach. Now, HR and business leaders look up to you for advice on how to identify the right leaders. Please do share your personal journey with us!

A I used to be a managing director of a consulting company, after which I become a Department Head in a major multinational organization. However, in the corporate world, I started to observe that there is this consistent culture of blaming each other or

other team members for any failure or anything that goes wrong. And, believe it or not, the culture that you work in starts rubbing off on you and inadvertently you start behaving in a similar manner. However, I definitely learned about the potential that each team has and if tapped in the right way, we can all realize an employee's true potential.

When I realized that the teams around me could do much better than they are used to performing at this point, I started diving deep into the environment and group dynamics that play a part in creating misunderstandings within teams. I started doing research on environment and group dynamics life why do people misunderstand each other, why do some motivators excite you but they won't excite other people? Why is that you take a high performer and put him in another high performing group and the entire team falls apart? Why is it that you can't take a medium or average level performer and put him into an average performing group and suddenly you have got a super high performing team?

So, I started doing all these researches and essentially almost more than a year later, started developing the framework which came to be known as Directive Communication Psychology. And I started trying this here and there in the organization with people from other departments. At the end of it, we were able to improve the productivity of the teams in such a way that we were able to save the company about $17,000 a week.

After that, I started researching, writing articles and talking about directive communication psychology on radio and TV.

Q Now that you are helping other organizations identify the right leaders for the right role, what would you say are the top three new-age skills that the hiring manager can keep in mind in order to hire the best leader?
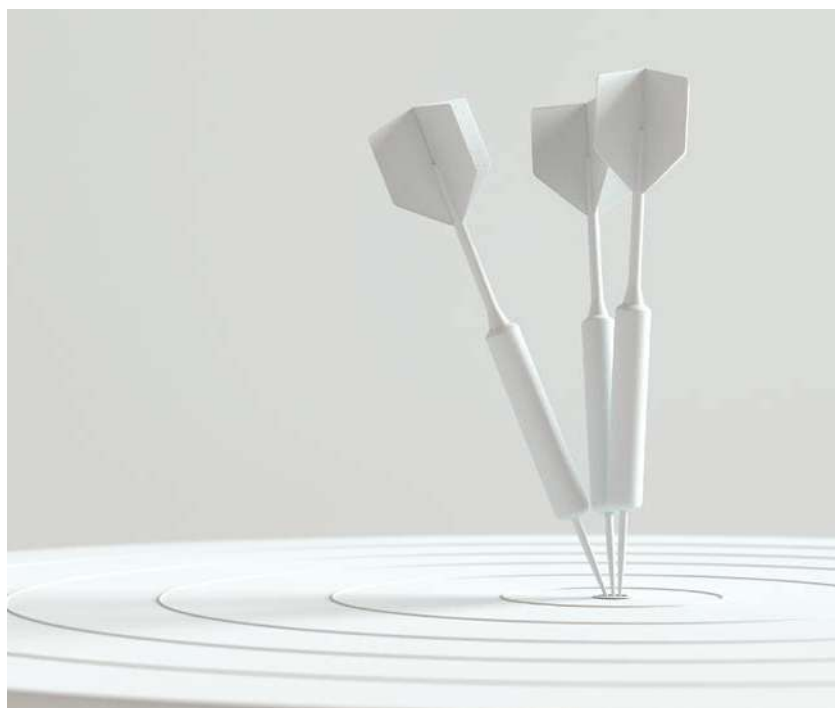
A At present, most hiring managers are looking at the number of degrees you have, how smart you are and they are trying to identify those factors that indicate competency in specific areas. However, if they end up putting this exceptionally talented person in the wrong team, then their expectations are not met. This is the start of dysfunctional teams.

That's why, the first thing that I would suggest HR leaders to look for is the cultural fit. What kind of culture do you currently have and what culture do you want to have? It is called the culture evolution benchmarking tool. If you identify where the culture is and essentially what are the different areas that you can tap into to evolve your culture. Therefore, to know the culture is the first step towards identifying the right skills that would fit in your organization.

To bring about innovation in any field, an emotional drive is essential. Tools such as colored brain communication cards help in understanding the emotional gratifications behind the cards they chose and why they chose them, makes it easy to identify a person's primary motivators. If you match the motivators to the type of culture you want to create, then you are on the right track. As a leader, you need two things as a motivator, not as a skill. A high emotional drive for significance, which basically means that you want to be recognized and the second one is the emotional drive for achievement. Another one is the emotional drive to be supportive. These emotional drivers are a must-have for a leader. At the end of the day, creating a high performing team is all about getting the recipe right. Because team performance is predictable--it is about understanding the different personalities and knowing what drives them.

Q Let's talk about the tech skills that play a crucial role in identifying the right leader. How do you think HR leaders can leverage the right technology in order to identify the right leaders and enable them to form high-performing teams?

A Gamification has become a part of our lives partly because the whole social media culture has made it an integral part of our personal and work lives. The question is how can we leverage this culture of gamification and tap into the emotional motives of the leaders and employees in order to create an efficient and goal-focused team. In order to create a consistent and sustainable drive among employees, receiving helpful and regular feedback is essential. Setting up a leaderboard of sorts and monitoring the KPIs regularly along with realtime feedback can create teams that are in-tune with the organizational goals and team objectives. At the same time, with the help of instantaneous feedback, they can be attuned to what they need to do in order to become better--it is a constructive way to keep track of the team members' strengths and weaknesses. The idea is not to reward people for nothing but to identify areas where people can be rewarded so that they maintain that level of motivation.

Q What is the major challenge that you have seen people managers and HR leaders are facing when it comes to creating a strong leadership base?

A The biggest challenge is the culture. If the people do not understand their culture, and if they are not focusing on building or creating that culture, then it becomes a challenge. Workplace as an environment brings out specific facets of people. You can get the most perfect people who are going to make a huge impact in your organization and put them in a dysfunctional culture. Or you can identify their key strengths and motivators and put them in the right teams. Slight behavior modifications can go a long way in empowering teams to become more productive. Making one modification in behavior affects the entire group dynamics. And that's what essentially Directive Communication Psychology does. It helps you to understand which little modifications should be made to change group dynamics. Once you understand how and why people do what they do, then you will be able to understand the small elements that an individual can change, a leader can change. These changes can create a huge impact on the overall environment of the organization and it will improve the organizational culture.

And the same goes for technology! Even though HR leaders are leveraging technology, they are still dealing with the emotional human elements and the need for measurable results. **pm**

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Startup Program Participants

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SEE YOU AT PEOPLE MATTERS TechHR 2020.

PEOPLE MATTERS
TECHHR STARTUP PROGRAM 2019
THE OPPORTUNITY AND THE CHALLENGES IN HR TECH

People Matters TechHR Startup Program 2019 aimed at identifying and recognizing upcoming HR technology startups in India and providing them with a platform to broaden their reach

By **Shweta Modgil**

India ranks 3rd among the most attractive investment destinations for technology transactions in the world. In the past five years, hundreds of HR and Work Tech startups have emerged to provide solutions to the growing needs of India's large and mid-sized corporations. Some of these start-ups are VC & PE funded, which has in turn led to mounting investor interest in this space. As the investor interest in the HR tech sector grows steadily globally and the $400 Bn marketplace grows further, it is no wonder that interest in the space will continue to grow.

The People Matters TechHR startup Program is yet another platform which has been championing the cause of startups in the HR and Work tech space. Ever since its inception, People Matters TechHR Startup Program has been building a bridge between early-stage startups and investors and buyers. The program gives these startups the opportunity to showcase their products to the decision-makers in these domains. The program has not just been a great branding opportunity for startups, but also a place where you will be able to get first-hand feedback from your potential customers or fast track your way for next funding round.

This year also was no exception. A bevy of 34 startups which ranged from a HRIS dedicated to MSME industry to Payroll & Workflow Automation to social hiring networking platform to a curated marketplace of recruiters, participated in the 2019 startup program, pitching their products to a seasoned set of investors in the two day event.

Investors who participated in this year's startup program which happens to be in

its sixth year now included names such as Arpit Agarwal, Principal Partner, Blume Ventures, Nayrhit Bhattacharya, who is part of the investment team at Chiratae Ventures, Aniket Lila, early stage investor at Nexus Venture Partners, Saurav Banerjee, Venture Partner, Kalaari Capital; Manu Rikhye, Managing Director, GrowX Ventures; Sandeep Sinha, Managing Partner, Lumis Partners; Digvijay Singh, COO, Indian Angel Network, and Avnish Sabharwal, Managing Director, Accenture Ventures and Open Innovation.

The startups were allotted 6 min (2 mins to introduce unique features of your product & 4 mins for Q&A). The mentors then evaluated the elevator pitches of the startups and their HR tech products on three major parameters:

1. How well the company is solving the industry problem
2. Is their product/service unique and scalable
3. Is the company making an impact on the business/industry that they are claiming

Speaking about the experience, Nayrhit Bhattacharya, of Chiratae Ventures stated, "The experience was great. The foot-fall was significant and it was extremely well managed. I came across a great mix of innovative HR Tech startups across different events. It was indeed an enriching experience and I hope to be a part of it the next year as well."

Arpit Agarwal, Principal Partner, Blume Ventures reiterated the same thought as well. Arpit stated, "TechHR is easily the biggest and best HRTech in India. Like last year, this year too, everyone who matters in HRTech was present in some shape and form. Several of our portcos were present as usual - Mettl, GreyHR, HealthAssure and others. Given it is a big conference, it is a good place to get quickly abreast with the latest trends in HR Technology landscape. This time too, I was able to update myself with the new ways of managing talent. From an investor's perspective, it helps to also hear from people who are in HR functions as to how they are looking at the same. Overall, I had a fabulous experience at the conference."

When it comes to the future potential of HR Tech, Arpit believes that HR Tech is a dynamic field and a lot of new technology, especially Machine Learning is being applied to various aspects of HR.

"I expect to see a higher prevalence of ML/AI in HR functions helping reduce the manual work that is required to run these processes in favor of both speed and quality. The challenges will be an absence of readily referenced data that startups can build their ML models on. It could help if a larger customer opens their data sources so that a startup can build their initial models," averred Arpit.

Divijay Singh, COO, Indian Angel Network aptly added, "I met quite a number of ready to be invested on startups giving real time solutions to Indian and many to global HR issues of various kinds. The space remains the bird of the eye for Angel investors, having said that scalability of models is a challenge which we have seen in the past and still needs to be addressed at the startup level. But loads of innovation can be seen already in this space and huge space still for more in India alone."

What do startups want-from investor interest to awareness

We spoke to some of the startups which participated in the program to understand what are the challenges they face in this space and how does participating in the TechHR startup program helps them.

Sandeep Khomne, co-founder of Pune based JobPin, an Employee-Employer-Training Partner ecosystem helping Blue Collar Workers in India create a digital profile, find jobs, and access learning solutions stated, "The key challenge as an HR Tech startup that we face is getting an opportunity to connect with relevant industry mentors who could help and guide us in our journey."

Sandeep feels that as a startup, and especially during the product initiation phase, it is always difficult to get in touch with investors and potential clients to pitch and promote our product. And this is where the TechHR startup program

People Matters TechHR program is one of the best things that can happen to any HR startup. An enriching experience that every startup longs for-unparalleled learning and connects, mentoring and business opportunities

helped by providing it them the perfect platform to connect with relevant investors, mentors, and potential customers. The insights, networking, and feedback received from them were invaluable.

Dwaipayan Som, Co-founder of Fusionhiring, an intelligent and auto scalable hiring solution for faster and more efficient hiring shared that that HR Tech startups face the challenge of adaptability issues due to the lack of transparency and clear measured benefits. Also, the expectation is to get a complete HR suite becomes a challenge for a startup that goes with one specialized feature into the market. Reluctance on acceptance of technology into the HR due to the fear of losing jobs due to technology automations is another roadblock.

On the relevance of the TechHR Startup program, he stated, "People Matters TechHR program is one of the best things that can happen to any HR startup. An enriching experience that

every startup longs for-unparalleled learning and connects, mentoring and business opportunities. I wish every startup gets an experience of a similar platform in their domains."

This is something which also led the founders of Enguru app, a mobile app that teaches English in regional languages, who visited the conference as delegates in 2018 to see value in putting up a stall and taking part in the startup program in 2019. Udit Hunduja, co-founder of the startup adds, "We got to meet HR professionals across a variety of industries and explore ways we can collaborate with their organizations. Additionally, the elevator pitch and one-on-one mentor sessions were a perfect fit for a startup at our stage looking to raise a series A. The elevator pitch even gave our stall additional visibility, which resulted in delegates coming up to us and inquiring about our product."

In addition, the startup was also chosen as the one lucky startup to get complimentary passes and a stall for the TechHR Singapore Conference in February 2020.

Udayaraj, co-founder of Igauge, an AI based SaaS platform that helps small and large enterprises makes informed decisions also found the conference to be well organized, a thought concurred by Vinay Dalal, co-founder of Talbrum, which provides a low cost yet complete feature HRIS and productivity tracker for MSME industry. Vinay also found the presentation feedback system to be appropriate.

When it comes to the challenges, Vinay stated that startups in general face one constant challenge: we need to hire at 40-50 percent higher cost than market median as the candidate feels he is at a higher risk. They need to be told that even at Reliance Communication or at Jet Airways or at Aircel or Samsung, your job is at equal risk if not more! Another challenge he faced was that Talbrum being an HRMS product company, mostly ends up as project implementation mode as HR policies are unique for most organization. So off the shelf HR product is a myth, believes Vinay.

Interestingly, Vinay pointed out another challenge peculiar to HR Tech startups-post implementation at client site, many MSME employees

> With 30+ startups exhibiting for two days at the TechHR 2019 conference, the HR industry got a great flavor of what's brewing in the HR tech ecosystem of the world's third biggest startup nation

think of the product as an extension of excel sheet where rows can be added or deleted at will. As a startup, they feel it is our duty to do it the 'MS Excel' way. However if it is say a SAP product, the same set of users may want to learn the "process" to implement unlike what they do with startups. Thus adaptability and acceptance still remain a challenge for HR Tech startups in India.

In conclusion

With 30+ startups exhibiting for two days at the TechHR 2019 conference, the HR industry got a great flavor of what's brewing in the HR tech ecosystem of the world's third biggest startup nation. As India marches towards its goal of 10,000 startups by 2023, it will be interesting to see how far the share of HR tech startups grows in the coming years.

With funding pouring in regularly in this space and investors not shying away from investing in HR tech startups, the overall air is of excitement and possibility in this space. What will make it more vibrant is the evolution of bigger home grown names in the HR Tech space which are able to scale rapidly, something which has still eluded the HR tech space in India till now. Pm

STARTUPS THAT ARE REINVENTING HUMAN RESOURCES

With changes in the workforce expectations and the way business is done, TechHR Startups are working to keep up with new-age workforce management. From advanced AI applications to recruiter bots, these startups are doing things in the HR world a little differently! Here are the 34 promising startups who participated in the People Matters TechHR'19 Startup Program

Smartoffice Payroll and Biometrics Solutions

Elevator Pitch: Attendance and payroll solutions, allowing device integration and providing complete solution on a single platform
Founder: Chetan Jain
Year Founded: 2016
Headquarters: Bengaluru

Flytta Innovations

Elevator Pitch: Flytta is a mobility platform that offers comprehensive employee relocation management by using ML and VI and helps businesses achieve higher employee satisfaction
Founder: Rahul Kanuganti
Year Founded: 2016
Headquarters: Hyderabad

XOPA

Elevator Pitch: XOPA AI is a transformative, deep tech talent management and hiring platform that uses AI, RPA and predictive analytics to identify, recruit and manage best talents across the globe
Founder: Nina Alag Suri
Year Founded: 2017
Headquarters: Singapore

PayReview

Elevator Pitch: A digital on cloud solutions for compensation and benefits, providing salary benchmarking, increment modeling and cascading feedback from managers
Founder: Anuraag Srivastav
Year Founded: 2017
Headquarters: Gurugram

Hiringplug

Elevator Pitch: A curated marketplace of recruiters that enables employers to acquire quality talent, faster through several integrated tools such as intelligent matching, resume parsing, ATS, interview scheduler, and communication modules, among others.
Founder: Vikramjit Singh Sahaye
Year Founded: 2016
Headquarters: New Delhi

Minemarks

Elevator Pitch: Offering automatic creation of short-list of resumes, automated level 1 technical screening, video and audio based proctoring of candidates
Founder: Ravindra Kulkarni
Year Founded: 2018
Headquarters: Pune

Nira Finance

Elevator Pitch: Building technology products and offering services to improve financial wellbeing of individuals
Founder: Rohit Sen
Year Founded: 2017
Headquarters: Bangalore

Mobcast

Elevator Pitch: Mobile technology partner helping businesses with onboarding, corporate communication, learning and engagement
Founder: Ashwin Roy Choudhary
Year Founded: 2014
Headquarters: Mumbai

Office Kit HR

Elevator Pitch: Cloud based HCM which supports from hire to retire functions
Founder: Mohammed Faizan Lanka
Year Founded: 2016
Headquarters: Kozhikode

SysMates Technologies

Elevator Pitch: HR, Payroll & Workflow automation to help organizations increase efficiency, save cost and their development
Founder: R P Singh
Year Founded: 2016
Headquarters: Gurgaon

ReferHire
Elevator Pitch: The global peer-to-peer social hiring network
Founder: Rohit Tewari
Year Founded: 2016
Headquarters: New Delhi

Panalyt
Elevator Pitch: Panalyt is a people analytics platform that allows business leaders to have fast access to practical and actionable people data and analytics.
Founders: Daniel J West, Yusuf Raza, Pratyum Jagannath, and Iwani Zoë Mawocha
Year Founded: 2017
Headquarters: Singapore

Talscale
Elevator Pitch: Creates first pool of pre-assessed software developers through their assessment platform and helps companies build technology teams right talent
Founders: Raghu Bharat, Shubhanshu Srivastava, Dheeraj Lalchandani, and Nirmaan Agrawal
Year Founded: 2018
Headquarters: Bangalore

Visume
Elevator Pitch: From smart evaluation, video engagement to collaborative board, Visume's next generation tracking system provides recruiters and hiring managers many services to streamline the entire recruitment process.
Founders: Parag Grover, Ritu Agarwal, and Manish Minocha
Year Founded: 2019
Headquarters: New York

Needyin
Elevator Pitch: An AI visioned mind mapping platform to make hiring smart, precise and fail-safe to all hiring woes
Founders: Ramesh Garikamokkala, Aditya
Year Founded: 2017
Headquarters: Hyderabad

Enguru
Elevator Pitch: Enguru is a mobile app that teaches English in regional languages, all the way from the basics to more complex job-specific functional English.
Founders: Arshan Vakil (CEO), Udit Hunduja (COO)
Year Founded: 2014
Headquarters: Bengaluru

Antrepriz
Elevator Pitch: An integrated travel, expense & payment ecosystem that empowers the employees on-the-go, and help companies save time & cost
Founder: Prashant Kushwah
Year Founded: 2018
Headquarters: Gurgaon

Asterial Technologies LLP
Elevator Pitch: JobPin, an Asterial product, is an Employee-Employer-Training partner ecosystem helping blue-collar workers in India create a digital profile, find jobs, and access learning solutions.
Founders: Sandeep Khomne, Saurabh Pangarkar
Year Founded: 2019
Headquarters: Pune

Igauge
Elevator Pitch: Igauge is an AI-based SaaS platform that helps small and large enterprise make instant, informed hiring decisions
Founders: Udayaraj Punnorth (Founder & CEO), Bhushan Kumar (Co-founder & CBO)
Year Founded: 2017
Headquarters: Mumbai

Acumetric Global/CRUX
Elevator Pitch: Mixes HR deep domain understanding together with data science insight & deployment capability with AI, deep learning & natural language processing to create value for the business and manage key risks, enabling people and business managers to take agile decisions in real time.
Founders: Rahul Ghatak, Sarajit Mitra, & Govind Sandhu (Board Member)
Year Founded: 2019
Headquarters: Mumbai

Hyrefox
Elevator Pitch: Aggregates recruitment services on a revenue sharing model to engage with head-hunters and aims to be UBER of recruitment industry.
Founder: Aditya Kedia
Year Founded: 2018
Headquarters: Jaipur

Hands on
Elevator Pitch: Web and Mobile app platform for connecting contingent workforce and small businesses, get a job or hire staff in less than 24 hrs, job-seekers and employers connect instantly via in-built chat, mini ATS & electronic document collection for medium sized enterprises.
Founder: Shankar Gaur
Year Founded: 2018
Headquarters: El Dorado Hills, CA USA

Talbrum (Merahunnar)

Elevator Pitch: Provides a low cost yet complete feature HRIS and productivity tracker as well skills recruitment for MSME industry.
Founders: Vinay Dalal, P Praveen, and Bijay Sahoo
Year Founded: 2017
Headquarters: Gurugram

Centre4posh

Elevator Pitch: A 360 degree holistic solution which covers all the three aspect of sexual harassment at workplace i.e. compliance, redressal and prevention.
Founder: Kanishk Agarwal
Year Founded: 2017
Headquarters: New Delhi

Telslabs

Elevator Pitch: Through end to end interview solutions like tailor made online assessments, interview bot platform and live video interview solutions, Telslabs help organizations hire the right talent in less time and with low effort.
Founders: Rajasekhar Reddy, Bhairy
Year Founded: 2019
Headquarters: Hyderabad

Offeritright

Elevator Pitch: We are a smart on-boarding platform for offer management candidate engagement during the pre-boarding & on-boarding stage, recruiters can send out 100% digital offers and receive e-signatures from candidates as acceptance.
Founders: Gopi Krishna Lakkepuram, Santosh Banpur
Year Founded: 2018
Headquarters: Hyderabad

CultureCord

Elevator Pitch: Holistic web application for instilling winning growth culture. Also, gives index to measure the impact of work culture on business growth.
Founders: Bhakti Rawool, Umesh Rawool
Year Founded: 2016
Headquarters: Mumbai

Zappyhire

Elevator Pitch: Autonomous recruitment using data science and AI based assessments
Founders: Deepu Xavier, Jyothis KS
Year Founded: 2018
Headquarters: Cochin

Fusion Hiring

Elevator Pitch: An intelligent & auto scalable hiring solution – for faster & more efficient hiring & incremental hiring targets
Founders: Sonia Uppal, Dwaipayan Som
Year Founded: 2016
Headquarters: Bengaluru

Koach.AI

Elevator Pitch: AI-enabled digital coaching platform, providing intelligent insights for individual and organisational growth
Founder: Tamal Bhatia
Year Founded: 2018
Headquarters: Bengaluru

Spotmentor

Elevator Pitch: Integrated skills, learning and careers platform built on patented AI-technology to help organisations generate success profiles, identify skill gaps, and create hyper-personalised learning
Elevator Pitch: Deepak Singh, Shekhar Suman, Arpit Goyal, & Yash Pal Mittal
Year Founded: 2018
Headquarters: Gurgaon

HackerTrail

Elevator Pitch: Cloud-based recruitment solution exclusively for the IT industry, uses a combination of social recruitment and gamification to connect top talent with the right job opportunity.
Founder: Tushar Tejuja
Year Founded: 2014
Headquarters: Singapore

TIENET

Elevator Pitch: Cloud based mobile and web app enabled platform solving business, internal – communication, collaboration, training, feedback and engagement related issues, along with smart employee analytics
Founders: Mitesh M, Bhuva, Kalpesh Kotadiya, and Divyesh Kachrola
Year Founded: 2018
Headquarters: Ahmedabad

SalaryFits

Elevator Pitch: A new way to promote financial wellbeing at workplace. Fair finance and sustainable benefits offerings while empowering individuals through their salaries.
Founder: Renato Araújo
Year Founded: 2016
Headquarters: London

Build an ecosystem to nurture digital talent with a human face: Raymond's President for HR

In a conversation with People Matters, **KA Narayan,** President, HR, Raymond shares his views on how organizations can create careers and not just jobs, and how crucial it is for organizations to become digitally driven and still remain inherently human

By **Yasmin Taj**

With over 35 years of experience in the field of Human Resources, KA Narayan is presently the President – Human Resources for Raymond Group. Raymond is a Rs.7000 crore conglomerate having diverse businesses including textiles and apparel, employing more than 25000 employees. Prior to Raymond, he was President – Corporate Human Resources and Legal for Wockhardt, a global pharmaceutical company. He worked with Wockhardt for 19 years joining the company as Manager – Personnel and rose to become the President for Global HR. He has been a recipient of several industry awards including the RASBIC Award for Talent Management, Amity Award for Outstanding HR Contribution, and Indira School Award for outstanding work in HR.

Here are the excerpts from this exclusive interaction.

Q Companies want people who will come and create magic. What does magic mean in the context of today's workplaces? And how can organizations enable people to create this magic?

A I think such expectations are unrealistic. No one has a magic wand. The challenge today is that companies let damage happen slowly and don't act on time and then expect someone to redeem it. For this to happen, organizations need to understand the effort required and provide the right resources as well as have tolerance. This is a huge task of transformation for which organizations need to re-invent the skills.

> Organizations should first define the larger purpose and help employees realize their own purpose through a discovery process of appreciative inquiry

Q In the present context of work, the workforce is looking for meaning and purpose in their work. What can organizations do to create this purpose for their people?

A Every individual performs at his best when there is full congruence between his abilities and his self-identity. Very often employees bring skills which are different from their identity. Helping people connect with their identity is what gives meaning to what they do. Not all employees connect with 'purpose' as a concept. However, organizations should first define the larger purpose and help employees realize their own purpose.

Q As innovation is an attribute every organization must possess in today's workplace, how can organizations inculcate an entrepreneurial mindset in their people?

A Organizations need to create a culture of innovation by encouraging risk taking and learning from failure. Typically, we simulate a controlled environment to let people think out of the box and experiment with lateral thinking. The other side of encouraging innovation is to have reward and recognition systems. Intrapreuners are created by putting a separate kitty for incubating ideas and seed funding the same.

Q Talking about change and the constant need to reinvent, what did HR transformation mean to an organization that is almost a century old, with thousands of employees across different units?

A In our case, HR helped in organizational restructuring, getting leaders with a completely new skill set of transformation as compared to the erstwhile organic growth & risk averse mindset, introducing several initiatives around changing the culture, strengthening the performance management system, and creating an institutionalized reward program and linking pay for performance.

Q When did this transformation begin and what were the core focus areas the organization chose to begin with?

A The transformation journey began in 2010 and the key focus areas were leadership, talent management processes, reward systems, pay for performance and re-engineering the performance management system.

Q As the world is talking about AI and how automation will replace many jobs, what is your take on it? What role will AI play in a mature organization like yours?

A It is correct that AI will take away jobs which are done either manually and intellectually. However, jobs which require a combination of head and heart will remain. Mechanical jobs which can be replaced by robotics will go away and some other jobs which can be automated digitally will also disappear. Having said so, in our case, there are many jobs which are highly human skill oriented which is our proprietary know how. **Q m**

VISTY BANAJI

HR's business should be happiness raising

Rewarding HR on financial measures is a big mistake

There is a lot of wishful thinking about CHROs becoming Chief Happiness Officers but, in reality, there are very few ways in which most HR departments today hook up with happiness

It is a good sign that compensation for star HR performers is reaching astronomical levels and the better CHROs take home no less than any other CXO. The worry arises because a substantial part of the variable and long term remuneration that stellar HR performers enjoy is linked primarily to the financial and share performance of the company and this dangerously contaminates the goals HR should be pursuing for people. By making these financial goals excessively incentivized, we are burdening our HR leaders with an Andvaranaut ring[1], which does not promise a happy end to its owners. Rewards that can be earned without serving the purpose for which HR should exist are likely to cause a Buridanian paralysis at best and a virtual neglect of non-financial goals at worst. Frequent and demoralizing downsizings, diminishment of durable employment and neglect of the long-term development of internal people can all be traced to the curse of the Andvaranaut. However well paid the HR leaders who take these calls, they cannot be considered to have made the profession proud or, more importantly, made a difference to a lot of the people in their organizations. As Issac Watts put it:

…, forbear to call him blest
That only boasts a large estate,
Should all the treasures of the west
Meet, and conspire to make him great …
Let a broad stream, with golden sands,
Through all his meadows roll,
He's but a wretch, with all his lands,
That wears a narrow soul.[2]

There is a simple but radical way to avoid such dilemmas and that is by making HR responsible primarily, if not solely, for the preservation and increase of aggregate happiness in the organization. It is important to note that the measure must be of the absolute quantum of happiness enjoyed by all the people employed (permanently or contingently) by the company and not some derived average. Another clarification that is worth providing at this stage is that by happiness we mean not just "what makes experiences and life pleasant and unpleasant"[3] in a Hedonistic sense but also the Aristotelian view of true happiness consisting in doing what is worth doing and "striving for perfection that represents the realization of one's true potential."[4] While there are academics who would have preferred a focus simply on the latter category (which they term Eudaimonic well-being[5]) I will stick to using the more familiar word 'happiness' in its wider sense covering both the Hedonistic and the Eudaimonic senses.

A fellow of infinite jest
Isn't HR already involved with raising employee happiness? There is a lot of wishful thinking about

CHROs becoming Chief Happiness Officers[6] but, in reality, there are very few ways in which most HR departments today hook up with happiness and none of them even begin to approach the transformational fashion in which this column proposes people happiness be made central to HR's raison d'être. There are several highly tense management environments where HR plays the role of the pressure relieving valve. At very senior levels this is done personally. Unkind people call this the role of the court jester but there is a general expectation that a CHRO will calm ruffled prima donna feathers, mediate conflicts and restore fraught tempers. Whether this relief from tension can be equated to happiness is a moot point.

Far more visible is the role which HR plays as event manager (or as liaison to one) for arranging picnics, sports and social gatherings of limitless varieties. These are considered important for giving employees – especially millennials – fun at work and supposed to absolve the organization from any effort to make the actual work fun. Of course, 'Bread and circuses' (from the Latin: 'panem et circenses'[7]) have been used to distract people from their day-to-day woes and powerlessness at least from the time of the Roman Empire. They didn't work too well then and, if the attrition rates and discontent in our software majors are anything to go by, they don't work any better now.

Some HR leaders place great store by their ability to put the executive team in touch with their inner selves or to contract various spiritual advisors to achieve the same blissful objective. My views on the advisability of mixing business with the infinite or the divine deserve a column of their own. Suffice it to say that the broadest smiles (presumably reflecting the greatest happiness) arising from such transactions are on the faces of the godmen on their way to the bank. There is one HR intervention, though, that does add genuinely to the stock of happiness in a corporation, provided it is conducted seriously, comprehensively and in the right spirit. I am referring to the studies of organization commitment or engagement and the detailed action plans some organizations adopt to raise commitment thereafter. Gain in happiness is a frequent by-product. My quarrel here is with the lack of extensity and integrality in these exercises. Few organizations extend these surveys to cover their contingent workforces and fewer still take their action planning seriously below the bottom of the permanent employee pyramid. Also, it is the rare organization that makes commitment and engagement improvement central to its HR strategy and integrates it with all key policies and processes. More often than not, it is a standalone exercise, done and dusted every year or two.

When happiness becomes the paramount goal

If increases in happiness were to become the touchstone by which to judge HR decisions, programs, and progress, a lot of the conflicts and confusions besetting the direction of the function would be resolved. In fact, I would go so far as to state that this single change would do more to prepare organizations for

the future of work than all the techno-fixes doing the rounds. This is because the future of work poses several threats and challenges[8] (most of which have been highlighted in this column at one time or another). Using happiness as a lodestar can help HR chart a safe path through many of these uncertain waters. Here are some significant changes the new paradigm would bring.

Perhaps the most telling change in mindset that should accompany the new paradigm will be in the attitude to employment of people and the type of employment they are offered. If the greatest aggregate of absolute happiness is to be maximized, the reluctance to augment the workforce by capital-intensive automation should diminish. There should also be less enthusiasm for converting durable employment into the contingent variety[9], given that a certain degree of job security and a sense of belongingness are prerequisites for feeling content, leave aside happy. I do not believe this change of goals for HR would lead to heedless addition of people without concern for their costs or efficiencies. After all, once an enterprise becomes uncompetitive it is not in a position to generate any happiness at all, much less increase it! Instead, what HR should be doing at the top table is to demand that a fair share of the company's growth should be supported by durable jobs in return for which HR

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would take on the responsibility of delivering people with the requisite, productivity, skill and consequential cost-effectiveness. In other words, HR should have a joint interest in harvesting sufficient profits for the organization's survival and growth needs but should not sacrifice its happiness goals to satisfy anyone's greed.

Another set of seemingly intractable issues that the happiness maximizing formula would make more manageable are those arising from the large and increasingly difficult to justify differentials between levels. This applies both when unhappiness inducing and happiness causing measures have to be doled out. For instance, when organizations downsize (hopefully only as a last resort), instead of terminating all contingent staff and then wreaking havoc at the bottom of the pyramid, the pain should be evenly distributed, as an earlier column has already argued[10]. Our new happiness calculus would back up this essentially fair recommendation.

Gains too should be more equitably distributed if our objective function is aggregate happiness. This is certainly not an argument for parity in payments. After all expertise, innovation, additional effort, and

> Perhaps the most worrisome concern is the feared lack of alignment between the people happiness goal we want HR to follow and the profit targets pursued by the rest of the organization

market value must all have a role in determining compensation if we don't want to be left without the managerial and expert talent essential for success. But there is general agreement that the mantra of market comparison, in its present form, is an unchecked license for taking top-level compensation to unsustainable levels[11]. Until CXOs can run organizations with the help of just robots and drones, fairness and the need for building team spirit and a sense of belongingness demand more justifiable patterns of gain distribution across levels. In this context, I can do no better than re-quote the message Peter Drucker left us: 'I have often advised managers that a[20] to 1 salary ratio is the limit beyond which they cannot go if they don't want resentment and falling morale to hit their companies.'[12]

Many of us bemoan the fact that HR pays such little attention to job design and enrichment. Under the new evaluation schema that would be a worry of the past. After all, what better way to multiply happiness than to provide it as an outcome of the very activities people are engaged in day in and day out? When jobs are intrinsically interesting, the process or acquiring even difficult skills to carry them out and the pains and repetitions involved in striving for perfect output (and not just one that will

pass muster) becomes pleasurable. This indeed is at the heart of craftsmanship, a near-sacred flame that eludes us all too often in the modern corporation.[13]

I could keep multiplying instances but I think I have provided enough to show the Alexandrine slice with which our new evaluation metric would cut through the Gordian knots of conflicting priorities and doubtful fairness in which HR is tied up today.

Hold-ups in happiness

Nobody said such a major transformation in mindsets and goal focus was going to be easy. Apart from the general reluctance to step into the relatively unknown, there can be three, increasingly serious, objections to these ideas.

One obvious concern can be that if our prime criterion for judgment is the greatest quantum of aggregate happiness, we may ride roughshod over a few individuals and cause them unhappiness in the process. The obvious but essential guard against this would have to be a strong Code of Fairness that prevents discrimination, ad-hocism or any other form of unfairness to the individual. Incidentally, the same dangers lurk and similar preventive measures are demanded with the adoption of any super-ordinate goals, be they financial, market-based or people-focused.

A more serious objection relates to measuring happiness, particularly in comparison to the rule-bound and repeatedly audited figures for profits and sales. While there is considerable research and much progress has been made in quantifying group happiness[14], I will readily admit these measures come nowhere close to the precision with which, say, a Profit & Loss Account is toted up. But is that degree of precision really needed for our purposes? Is it really so difficult to figure out what the balance of happiness will be if we start running a substantial part of our operations using contract labor? Or if we have level-wise segregation in our cafeterias? For that matter, are we really able to trace HR's contribution to stock price or even profits (based on which so much variable compensation depends today) with any more certainty than we would be able to do for happiness? As William Bruce Cameron pointed out: "… not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted."[15]

Perhaps the most worrisome concern is the feared lack of alignment between the people happiness goal we want HR to follow and the profit targets pursued by the rest of the organization. There can be three ways to assuage this concern. In the first place, it can reasonably be argued that the best way HR can contribute to financial performance is through the agency of employees acting on customers.[16] In other words, delighted employees are a prerequisite to delighted customers who in turn generate returns that delight shareholders. Under this logic, there is no essential contradiction between employee happiness and shareholder returns – the former is essential for and leads ultimately to the latter. Secondly, even if we accept, for the sake of argument, that there is a degree of misalignment between the happiness constellation for which HR aims and the financial returns on which shareholders are focused,

> Just as countries have progressed to focusing on the welfare and needs of their citizens, corporations too will one day have to make the happiness and well-being of customers and the people within the organization, their prime purpose

is that necessarily a bad thing? Isn't a degree of tension between functional priorities necessary for all-round excellence? Take, for instance the major emphasis on customer centricity in recent years with its implicit premise that, if there is to be a trade-off between the interests of customers and of others, the customer champion will espouse the former cause. And this is not just a recent phenomenon. In the time of the 'license-permit raj' when companies could sell pretty much anything they made without too much concern for quality or cost, I was fortunate to work under a Chairman who chose to be the missing voice of the customer within the company and insisted on service complaints being systemically resolved regardless of the cost and fought every Rupee increase in product price with a fierceness that turned pleaders for price increases to putty. That was the kind of constructive tension that drove Telco (now Tata Motors) under Sumant Moolgaokar to be India's largest private sector corporation and the undisputed leader of its automobile industry. Conversely, when all voices are silenced in the pursuit of quick returns you have alignment, no doubt, but then run the risk of a situation like Boeing's, where a century's reputation is tarred because, in its desperate desire to beat the competition, the company broke "the one unbreakable law of project management: that a development cycle can't be fast, cheap, and good."[17]

Happiness as a corporate purpose

There is, of course, a third way to align the happiness focus of HR with organizational priorities and that is to make the entire organization happiness focused, whether in its dealings with customers, vendors, investors or, of course, employees. We already do this, in a fragmented, piecemeal fashion, when we measure customer or supplier satisfaction. The question is whether it can be done as an all-encompassing goal for the company as a whole. To me it is no more fanciful and potentially more wholesome that the financial metrics we singularly follow presently. After all, corporations were created for serving the needs of society and not the other

way around. Providing plentiful and satisfying jobs as well as supplying valued products and services at prices that leave customers feeling they have gained, are at least as important as yielding returns to investors. As Malcolm Salter of the Harvard Business School argues: "… narrowing the compatibility gap between capitalism and justice and reversing declining public trust in contemporary capitalism requires a very different conception of corporate purpose – one reflecting established moral and economic principles that challenge those underlying the shareholder value maximization doctrine."[18] Corporations are stuck at the stage nations were several centuries ago when everyone was expected to strive for the glory and prosperity of the monarch (promoter/shareholder in today's terms). Just as countries have progressed to focusing on the welfare and needs of their citizens, corporations too will one day have to make the happiness and well-being of customers and the people within the organization, their prime purpose.

One cannot but admire the pioneering effort made by Bhutan to measure its Gross National Happiness (GNH) Index. A closer look at the robust methodology they have used[19] should lay to rest some of the concerns about happiness measurement for corporates. Will the happiness metrics be as precise as Rupee figures of sales and profits? Clearly not. But, year after year, there is growing precision in quantifying country-wise happiness. 20 Measurements at the company level should be infinitely simpler. Incidentally, by showing the kind of factors that are conducive to generating societal happiness both the GNH and the World Happiness Report referenced earlier go a long way to convincing us that happiness is not purely an internal search for bliss, unaffected by outside factors (try telling someone who can't pay his child's school fees, because his contingent employment is suddenly terminated, to rely on inner peace!).

Which company will take the kind of lead Bhutan took as a country? I hope it is one from India. 🅿m

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Values based recruitment for the future generations at work

Read on to know more about a new conceptual framework based on contrasting the corporate culture of the employing organization and skills deficit with the evolving value systems of current and potential employees

Organizations find it increasingly difficult to recruit and retain employees and secure their full potential through engagement. Too often recruitment is seen by employers as cloning existing staff with little regard to the changing needs of their organization and even less on the differing aspirations and motivations of younger job seekers.

Ultimately, job seekers need to be seen as attractive candidates for possible employment but it is equally important that employers need to be seen as attractive to unemployed.

A new conceptual framework is based on contrasting the corporate culture of the employing organization and skills deficit with the evolving value systems of current and potential employees.

Failure of existing practice

We continue to witness the further development of the autonomous and reflective individual. It is an individual that has a full set of needs, internal and external to the organization. Power is diffused and shared. "In contrast with traditional management, where structures and systems are derived from a pre-defined strategy, the new workplace is seeking to balance what matters for the company (its strategy) and what matters for the individuals (their life strategies)."[1] This is revealed dramatically in the changing dynamics of the war for talent.

We have written many times before[2] that in addition to these generic changes (especially in the Western Hemisphere), the world has recognised increasing shifts due to the internationalization of business. Yet we still observe that the major instruments and methods used by HR professionals owe their origin to an Anglo-Saxon philosophy and are still dominated by an Anglo-Saxon signature. Typical are the instruments used for recruitment and selection. Although its original conceptual father C.G. Jung was a Swiss, the MBTI and JTI (Myers-Briggs and Jung Type Indicators) are the most used Americanised instruments in business to assess personality type. And lately we see the enormously popular Balanced Scorecard developed by Kaplan and Norton that initially helped many North American firms to measure important perspectives of business beyond the financial. But what have these (often Americanised) perspectives done for (and 'to') non-American organizations? Obviously there was an era when globalisation was taken literary. "It works in the US, so let's export it to the rest of the world", was the main principle.

The response many organizations are now using in the 'needle in the haystack' approach. By using the internet, to tease thousands of job seekers to submit their CV, and using AI algorithms to search for keywords and indicative phrases, hope to find the few needles they might hope to entice to the next round of selection.

Confusion over skills, competences and competencies

A number of confusions within the area of performance assessment with regard to the use of terminology, and differing interpretations, regarding competence assessment are existing. A significant difference between the US and more European

> Because of the new challenges that digitalization, agile working and globalization have posed to us, we see an obvious shift from attention from the what to the how

> The leader defines what an organization views as excellent and develops an appropriate environment in which the culture of the workforce is reconciled with the needs of the organization
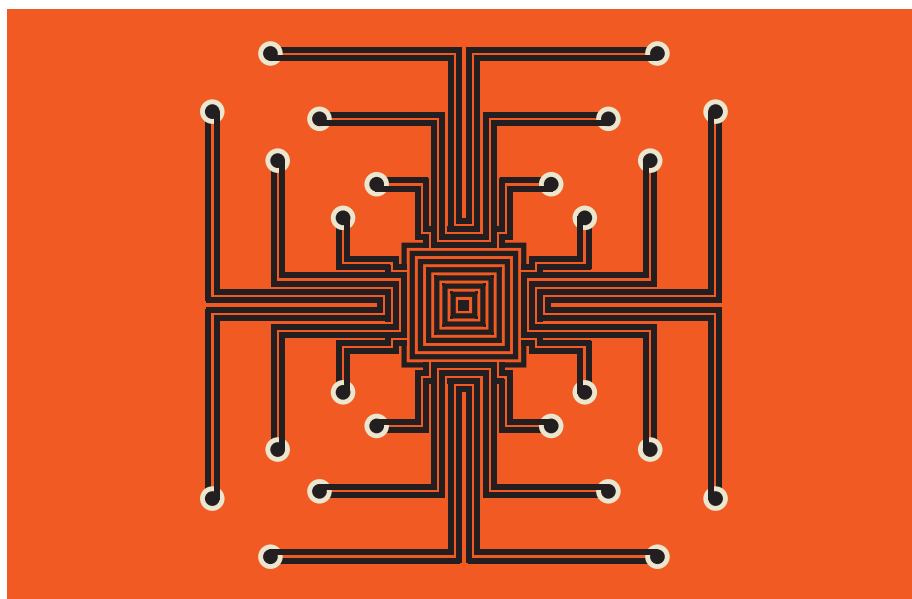
approaches to performance assessment is identified. A particular aspect of this is its relevance to assessment based on behaviors and attitudes rather than simply on the results of functional analysis concerning a particular job. This has implications for the future direction of performance assessment, particularly with regard to identifying performance.[3]

A definition of competence is the capability to carry out a defined function effectively. Whilst a definition of competency is the description of the knowledge, skills, experience and attributes necessary to carry out a defined function effectively.

Competence	>	Competency
Skill-based	>	Behaviour-based
Standard attained	>	Manner of behaviour
What is measured	>	How the standard is achieved

It becomes clear from above table that competence describes what people can do while competency focuses on how they do it. In other words, the former means a skill and the standard of performance reached, while the latter refers to the behaviour by which it is achieved.

A gradual shift in attention from competence to competency towards inter-cultural competence.

Because of the new challenges that digitalization, agile working and globalization have posed to us, we see an obvious shift from attention from the what to the how. We remember vividly a client that asked us to see whether we could develop an App that measured the values of the participants and the values of the

organization and see whether they would match. This value based recruitment approach was inspired by the fact that this organization experienced much more trouble in the how than in 'the what' in making the organization more innovative. And skills are much easier to assess than the behaviors we need to build a culture we need.

Too often it is assumed that competences and competencies are the same and just differences in USA/International English and English.

However, we need to avoid seeing these as extremes and integrate them together and conceptualize what we can call inter-cultural competence.

Thus we know for example that US, UK or Australian managers tend to be more individualistic and Japanese more team-work oriented, so as long American managers remain in the US managing all Americans and the Japanese stay in Japan, then presumably there is no problem. However, in today's multi-cultural world, an American manager could be running a team overseas with Korean, Japanese and French members. So does the manager focus on leading the individual or the team?

We have found that this inter-cultural competence in reconciling dilemmas is the most discriminating feature that differentiates successful from less successful leaders and thereby the performance of their organizations. These dilemmas which derive from value (i.e. cultural) differences also mean, increasingly, that the culture leads the organization. The leader defines what an organization views as excellent and develops an appropriate environment in which the (ideographic) culture of the workforce is reconciled with the (nomo-thetic) needs of the organization.

Proposed new conceptual framework

So what might make a large organization attractive to a young, ambitious and talented employee now? It is apparent that established organizations must make an enormous effort to catch up with the attraction of younger businesses. There is a tension between the image of these companies and the ideals that young talented people have in their heads. The power-oriented, "Family" culture and the role-oriented hierarchical structures of the so-called "Eiffel Tower" culture still dominate in both perception and reality.

The dilemma arises from the tension between corporate image and personal vision. Global companies like Heineken or Shell are still looking for people who are global, innovative, team players; people who think in terms of diversity, who want to learn and who value freedom of choice (to continuously maintain their employability profile). This global corporate mindset thinking, appears to be bland ("it's all the same everywhere") and static and not offer the freedom to develop one's own persona. As a consequence, is not attractive to the young generation-X people. Young, talented, recently graduated candidates prefer to work locally and have fun. 🅟🅜

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

FONS TROMPENAARS, PHD is director of Trompenaars Hampden-Turner Consulting, an innovative centre of excellence on intercultural management. He is the world's foremost authority on cross-cultural management and is author of many books and related articles. He is also partner in Culture Factory (part of People and Change KPMG NL) and visiting professor at The Free University of Amsterdam.

Past month's events

From hierarchies to network: How should HR leverage the power of networked teams

ORGANIZER: People Matters and KellyOCG
DATE: 21st August, 2019
VENUE: Online
KEY TAKEAWAYS: As the talent market in India migrates from one that is focused exclusively on scale, to one that is now more focused on leveraging the positive impacts of automation and the demand for higher value talent and opportunities, the need for Human Resources professionals to ditch the script has never been more evident. Now, as design thinking and social networks are becoming core competencies expected to aide in your organization's ability to compete for talent, the time is right to look outside to explore what models other organizations have deployed to improve their organizational effectiveness. To discuss how leading organizations are adapting their businesses on the go, creating an adaptive space and improving their ability to compete for, and engage with, top talent, People Matters and KellyOCG organized this online learning session. John Healy, Vice President, and Managing Director, Office of The Future of Work KellyOCG discussed the changing workplace models. He highlighted some of the top reasons why having "networked teams" is going to be important in the future. In an interactive session, he guided the talent leaders to redesign their strategy and showed case studies of some of the leading organizations.

People Matters TechHR India 2019 Conference & Exhibition

ORGANIZER: People Matters
DATE: 1st, 2nd and 3rd August, 2019
VENUE: The Leela Ambience, Gurgaon
KEY TAKEAWAYS: The 3-day conference witnessed leaders and influencers from across the globe deliberating upon innovative ways of progressing in a world of work that is transforming rapidly due to technological disruption. As Asia's largest HR and work tech conference, it hosted over 3,000 HR & business leaders, 125 HR & work tech solution providers, 153 global speakers, 34 HR & work tech startups, 20 mentors and investors, bringing the best of content covering "Performance and productivity" on Day 1 and "Innovation and growth" on Day 2. Global dignitaries and leaders in their respective fields like Piyush Pandey (Chief Creative Officer Worldwide and Executive Chairman India, Ogilvy), Anil Kumble (Former Cricketer and Padma Shri Recipient), Leena Nair (Chief HR Officer, Unilever), Holger Mueller (Vice President and Principal Analyst, Constellation Research), Hod Lipson (Professor of Engineering & Data Science, Columbia University), CP Gurnani (Managing Director & CEO, Tech Mahindra), Aruna Jayanthi (Managing Director, Asia Pacific and Latin America Business Unit, Capgemini), Josh Bersin (Global Industry Analyst, Dean of the Josh Bersin Academy), Neelam Dhawan (Head, India Advisory Board, IBM Former MD), David Green (Managing Director - The People Analytics Program, Insight222, Arvind Gupta (Co-Founder and Head, Digital India Foundation) and Devdutt Pattnaik (Author, Mythologist Leadership Coach) were among the high profile speakers for the conference. The power-packed conference offered a complete package for talent leaders by enabling them with exclusive keynote sessions, panel discussions, masterclasses, Ideas for the Future zone, a confluence of HR tech start-ups followed by the TechHR Night Fest and a day of exclusive workshops.

The game-changing impact of the digital workforce on the HR function

ORGANIZER: People Matters and Automation Anywhere
DATE: 26th July, 2019
VENUE: Leela Palace, Bengaluru
KEY TAKEAWAYS: Robotic Process Automation (RPA) is empowering organizations to put the "Human" back into HR while ensuring all the important but tedious tasks are efficiently carrying on. Recent research by Goldsmiths, University of London commissioned by Automation Anywhere reveals that organizations that invest in RPA and AI technology see much higher performance returns, especially if they also invest in people. The burning question is -- can automation make work more human? How are RPA and AI impacting the HR function? And how can organizations apply insights in the context of your organization? In an exclusive roundtable discussion organized by People Matters, in association with Automation Anywhere, HR leaders from diverse sectors came together and discussed how RPA and cognitive automation is impacting the HR function. Kick-starting the discussion Shalini Pillay, Office Managing Partner from KPMG stated that as organizations embark on their digitization journey, one of the biggest challenges is on the workforce part-- the need to bring in a greater level of agility as the workforce adopts and embraces digitization. Taking the discussion further, Sonali De Sarker, Senior Director HR at IMEA, Automation Anywhere, shared that RPA is driving the Fourth Industrial Revolution. It is imperative for businesses to move with the times; Bots or Digital Business Assistants (DBAs) can help automate mundane and repetitive tasks helping in augmenting the overall productivity of the workforce and bringing back the "Human" part in Human Resources.

Upcoming events

Learning for the future

ORGANIZER: People Matters and ACCA

DATE: 20th September, 2019

VENUE: The Leela, Gurugram

THEME: There is only one way to stay relevant in today's dynamic business environment and that is through learning the new and unlearning the old. A research report by People Matters & ACCA on "A Finance-Talent strategy for the long term" reveals that the importance of learning initiatives has risen. Key talent priorities like designing learning initiatives aimed at keeping the skills up to date to match evolving talent demands emerged as one of the top talent priorities in the next 12-18 months as over 59 percent of the total respondents highlighted this being at the very top of their agenda. This was followed by two key concerns which have become extremely relevant in today's world i.e. retaining top talent (51%) and building the digital proficiency of modern-day finance teams (41%). In such a scenario, the role of HR and L&D leaders becomes more important. How can they help talent upskill in line with future skills and competencies? How can they design their learning processes to support learning for the future? More so, when it comes to specialized professions such as finance and accounting, what will be the key competencies needed for them in the future? HR leaders from diverse sectors will come together for an exclusive round table discussion on "Learning for the Future" and discuss the answers to these questions. A plan for upskilling the talent in line with future skills and competencies will be churned out.

HOW TO REGISTER:
By Invite only

CII: Leadership Masterclass Series

ORGANIZER: Confederation of Indian Industry

DATE: 1st October, 2019

VENUE: Taj West End, Bengaluru

THEME: Prof Soumitra Dutta, Professor of Management and former Founding Dean of the SC Johnson College of Business at Cornell University, in a day-long session will speak on the theme "A strategic roadmap for winning in the Digital Revolution". Widely regarded as an authority on all aspects of innovation in the digital economy, he will share the latest insights with the Indian business community.

HOW TO REGISTER:
https://bit.ly/2xNaiLn

People Matters L&D Conference 2019

ORGANIZER: People Matters

DATE: 6th November, 2019

VENUE: Grand Hyatt, Mumbai

THEME: The future is uncertain; it's fast, and it changes rapidly. To enable and empower L&D leaders to spearhead the organizational future-readiness agenda and create a fast learning ecosystem, People Matters is back with L&D Annual Conference 2019. This year, the conference will bring together the latest trends, innovations and best practices under one roof and will help the leaders foster right the mindsets, design processes, and put enabling structures in place to build a future-ready workforce. Global thought leaders and experts will come together to deep dive into thought-provoking conversations on critical aspects of the entire learning lifecycle from developing a narrative on skilling to strategizing to design, to execution and impact. Some of the speakers include Sanjay Behl, Chief Executive Officer Raymond, Manavi Baveja, Head APAC - People Development, Uber, and Charandeep David, Head Of Learning And Development (Sob), Oyo, among others. All the attendees will have access to the knowledge, strategies, and solutions they need to effectively scale, develop and reinvent and not merely train talent to stay relevant for the future. This conference is for everyone who wishes to reinvent the strongest bastion of your business for the future –the human side.

HOW TO REGISTER:
https://lndconference.peoplematters.in/

Leadership traits like resilience can be developed. Here's how organizations can train potential leaders

Developing resilience during crisis

Have you ever felt like a seed at times? When you plant a seed, it first grows roots, it faces pressures, challenges and setbacks whilst in the ground. Some seeds have a hard time as they fall into rocky places and need to fight to find a way out. But once out, a small plant emerges, breakthrough, and it eventually grows upwards against the force of the solid soil to become an awesome, huge tree.

We too are like seeds. Like a young child taking his first step, he stumbles over but soon gets back up and tries again; the seed of resilience has already been planted. Just like the seed seeks the light of the sun to grow – We too strive to find the path that lights our way and enable us to grow.

Without a doubt, it is through good leadership that you become an effective communicator, gain integrity, enhance honesty and inspire others.

As Stephen Covey quoted, "Leaders are not born or made, they are self-made."

Although leadership skills teach you how to survive in all sort of climates, whether rough or sleek, at times, organizations face endless challenges, significant risks, and disruptions can emerge rapidly with very little or no warning at all and smart leaders know they may not have all the answers.

Hence, it is crucial for industries to be "crisis ready" and know how to prepare themselves at a tactical, operational and strategic level. As one Deloitte article on Resilient Leadership states – The flip side, "leaders must not wait for a crisis to test their brand, they must proactively prepare for the worst whilst also laying the groundwork for the best"

Just like the seed that requires protection from the storm, leaders must learn to not only survive but thrive in times of calamity and disaster.

It is through good leadership that you become an effective communicator, gain integrity, enhance honesty and inspire others

So how do we emerge stronger from a crisis? The Resilient podcast series by Deloitte explores two main lessons – don't wait for a crisis and communicate & collaborate.

How is it that crisis seems so inevitable but many CEOs are still not prepared for it? Paul Morell, the American Airlines 's Vice President for Safety Security and environmental who holds more than a dozen scenarios exercises annually that include role rehearsal for top leadership & personnel across all levels of the company says, "no matter your position, each leader needs a designated role so they can face all possibilities and deal with the impossible."

So, ask yourself, are you prepared to overcome your next crisis? It is always difficult to deal with an unstable crisis which may cause major destruction; however, you can prepare yourself to survive and recover quicker by becoming as effective as possible, as quickly as possible, and that is by getting to know your team well – building relationships. ⓟⓜ

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

LEELA is a UK based multilingual keynote speaker and Transformational Coach. Leela left her corporate career in order to fulfil her vision of inspiring and empowering others. She is the CEO/Founder of Above & Beyond RESILIENCE / The Unstoppable FEMALE Academy | ENTREPRENEURIAL MINDSET MENTOR

LEARNING HELPS YOU WIN.

HERE'S AN AWARD THAT LETS YOU WIN IN LEARNING.

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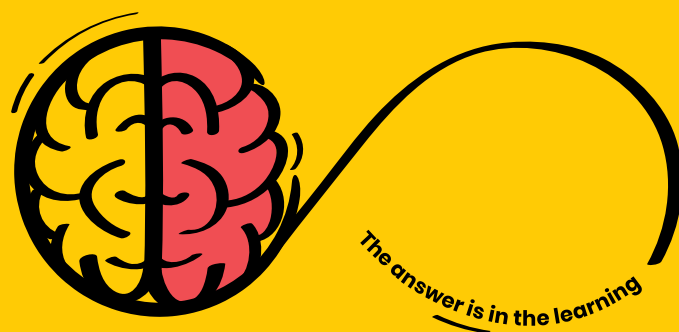
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