

people matters

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₹150

BIG INTERVIEW

Steven Hatfield

Global leader for Future of
Work at Deloitte

MENTAL HEALTH

The cost of presenteeism

SKILLS GAP BRIDGING THE CHASM

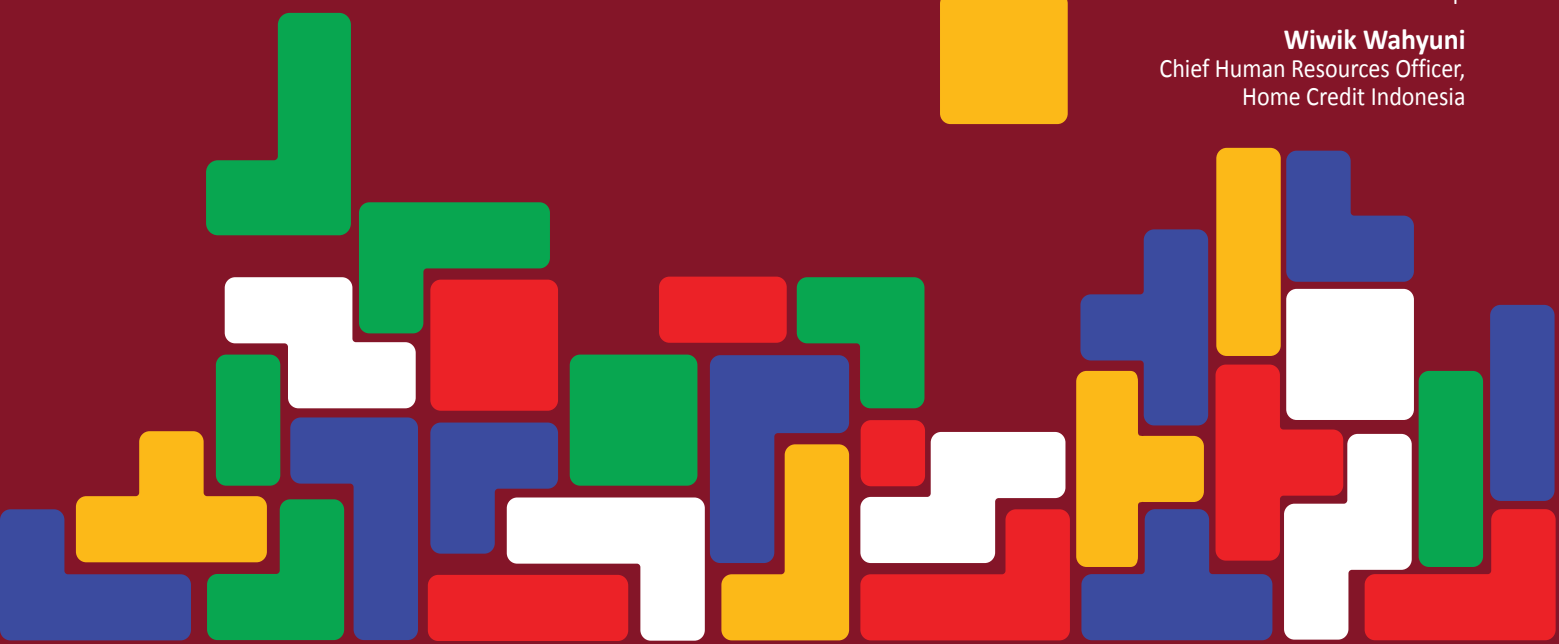
INTERVIEWS

Paul Gibbons

Author, speaker, public
intellectual, and expert on
business ethics and leadership

Wiwik Wahyuni

Chief Human Resources Officer,
Home Credit Indonesia



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the answer

28th November 2019

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Sales managers are the key lever in driving sales. Whether a company targets higher market share, better account penetration or some important outcome, sales managers are the principal mechanism for success. They are the conductors of a company's revenue engine. They create and nurture high performance sales teams, and lead them to generate hit revenue forecasts and meet customer needs.

Negotiation and Closing

Ability to control the sales process and move it toward closure of business on the right terms within the right time frame.

Solution Offerings

Ability to control the sales process and move it toward closure of business on the right terms within the right time frame.

Decision Making

Making decisions in complex or unusual situations and implementing decisions with logic and confidence.

Planning and Prioritizing

It encompasses prioritizing and differentiating between issues that are urgent vs. important and maintaining focus on important issues.

Team Management

Ability to coach, mentor, share experiences and guide people/team members in decision making.

Drive and Persistence

A person having high drive and persistence has the ability to take things forward when they get stuck and refuses to give up.



Moving the needle on learning

Learning is a tool that helps boost an organization's growth and productivity. Across industries, organizations are increasingly refocusing on their L&D efforts to make sure they keep up with the latest by integrating learning and work as a part of their culture. Personalized and byte-sized learning for instance, are among the top trends that organizations are betting on to make sure their employees stay abreast of the latest. Many companies are implementing "tech & touch" blended learning solutions that combine the delivery of learning content using tech-enabled methods with bolstering the application of learning through group discussions, social learning methods, practice sessions, and experiential learning opportunities. At the other end of the spectrum, some companies are already using next-generation learning tools like virtual or augmented reality to provide employees with more innovative learning experiences.

Having said, learning is one of the top-rated challenge of 2019 as identified by Deloitte in their Global Human Capital Trends report. People take up jobs based on "opportunity to learn" as one of the top reasons. The growing emphasis on continuous learning has also opened up a new opportunity to build robust learning

programs helping employees upgrade their skills in the natural course of their day-to-day jobs. Employees have increasingly higher expectations and want the platforms they use at work to look and feel like those in their personal lives.

CEOs and CHROs need to ensure that there is a culture of learning and that we provide the infrastructure and the training required to upskill the existing workforce. HR leaders and professionals are well-positioned to advocate for this at all levels of the enterprise. As the link between what organizations aspire to be and the skills needed to get them there, people managers can help shepherd individual employers and entire industries bridge that gap.

The cover story in this issue attempts to dig deep into the current learning and development scenario across industries, initiatives organizations are embracing to tackle the skills gap, technologies that are powering the skilling conundrum, challenges businesses face to skill and re-skill their employees, and what the L&D function needs to do to enable organizations to reinvent for tomorrow.

For the big interview, we have Steven Hatfield – the global leader for Future of Work at Deloitte, who talks about the complex mix of things that executives need to bring to the table to excite and engage a workforce for higher productivity while sharing insights on the future of work based on his larger discussion with top business executives.

We also have an interview with Paul Gibbons, author and speaker, who talks about how successful digital transformation hinges on the ability to bring people in the workplace closer together and fostering the uniquely human qualities that make a business thrive, and what are the key reasons behind these transformations failing.

The issue also features an indepth feature story on why presenteeism is worse than absenteeism. Also featured is an interview with Wiwik Wahyuni, Chief Human Resources Officer, Home Credit Indonesia who shares the importance of investing in building a high-impact learning culture.

The issue also features a special story where People Matters got together with the LGBTQIA+ community for a candid conversation discussing experiences at workplaces, opportunities we have in front of us, focus areas that require immediate attention, and more.

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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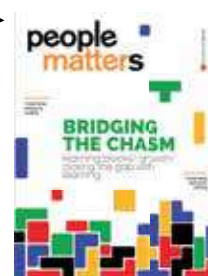
THE COVER STORY (BEHIND THE SCENE)



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SKILLS GAP BRIDGING THE CHASM

The world of work is changing fast, but are we doing enough to keep pace with the change?

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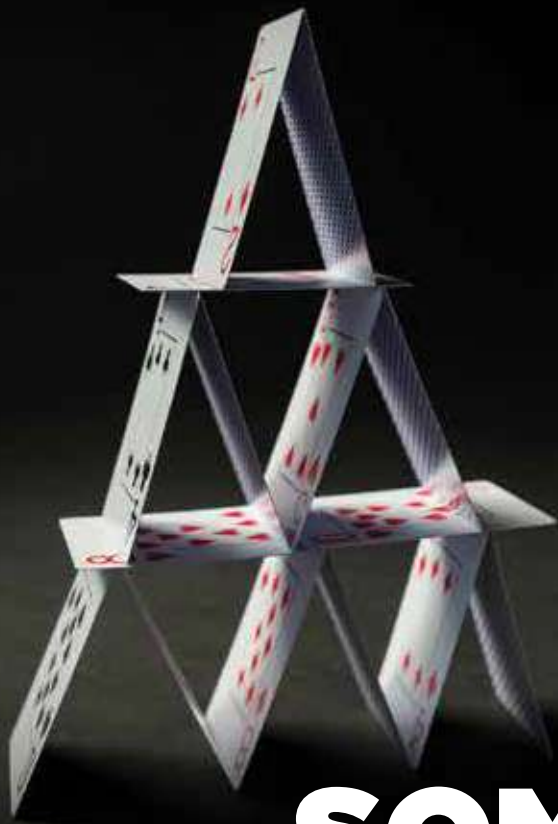
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WINNING THE WAR FOR TALENT

The mismatch between the demand and supply for quality talent is one of the biggest challenges facing organizations today. To attract and retain the best talent, employers need to use a variety of new and innovative recruitment and engagement strategies. In order to win the talent war, organizations must improve the efficiency of recruitment by using intelligent technology, build an engaging employee experience, use new-age tools to retrain employees, cultivate an attractive employer brand, and revamp their processes to make the most of the gig economy. Thus, we need a fresh perspective and approach on how to redesign the entire talent acquisition and engagement function that takes into account the aspirations, ambitions, and expectations of today's talent. Considering the fact that the future of work will be built on the back of great talent, organizations must update their talent strategies as soon as possible.

- ARUNAV SHARMA

The future of talent in digital banking

The BFSI industry has rapidly integrated digital technology in its core processes and functions. The banking sector, specifically, has made huge strides in using innovative technologies to provide cutting-edge services to its customers. These changes have naturally necessitated a shift in the talent requirement, with an equal focus on knowledge and innovation. I have been in the banking sector for more than two decades and have experienced the fast-paced adoption of technology in the

sector first-hand. Most Indian banks today deploy several strategies to hire, retain, and engage the best talent in the market and have pioneered several best practices as well. There is also a massive undertaking to acquaint employees with new tools and technologies that simplify existing processes. I am sure that the banking sector will continue to innovate traditional hiring and engagement strategies and set a precedent for other industries in making the best use of intelligent technology to engage customers and employees alike.

- JAYANT MATHUR

A Hippocratic Oath for HR

I like the suggestion by Visty Banaji of having HR professionals undertake an official oath of committing to the highest values and principles of the profession.

The premise of administering oaths to government officials, military personnel, and medical practitioners to consciously remind them of their duty towards other human beings is also applicable in the field of HR. His proposal, albeit a bit wordy, encapsulates what it means to be in the HR profession and the ideals one should uphold to do their job effectively. I particularly like the fact that the suggested oath takes into account the ability to admit mistakes and the commitment to take evidence-based and well-thought-out decisions. I agree that such a universal oath will not only bind HR professionals with common values but also serve as a moral compass.

- VIGNESH KUMAR



NOVEMBER 2019 ISSUE

Managing political talk at the workplace

It is rather surprising that Google has changed its workplace guidelines to enforce stricter controls over what their employees are talking about. I agree that political discussions and conversations can serve as a distraction, but controlling them can be counter-productive. While discussions about politics and news are best avoided, one cannot eliminate them from the workplace as offices are an important social setting where we spend the bigger part of our days. Much like the constitutional right to freedom of speech, political discussions in the workplace must come with some riders and conditions. Similarly, people must also be aware of what to discuss and how to discuss it. At the end of the day, the culture of an organization determines the freedom and liberties enjoyed by its employees, and that is why the developments at Google have taken the business world by surprise.

- DHRUV BATHINA





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ideas at editorial@peoplesmatters.in



Burnout at work: Before you think 'it won't happen to me'

Leela Bassi's article on burnouts is a must-read for all working professionals.

She rightly points out that burnout comes unannounced and slowly manifests itself, which makes it harder to identify and remedy. The threat of burnouts today is higher than ever because most employees fail to identify with the work they are doing, thus, leading to stagnation and frustration. I have seen many of my colleagues and friends drudging along, despite needing an urgent break. Leela's suggestion on how to manage burnout might seem commonplace but are highly effective. I believe that sustained support from leaders and organizations can help prevent employee burnout and mitigate its effects. Most importantly, we need to reverse the glamorization of sacrificing health, family, or personal life in order to achieve success and make a healthy work-life balance the norm.

- SAKSHI SINGH

AI in recruitment: Balancing the speed & quality of hires

The research undertaken by People Matters and ABC Consultants highlights some of the most important trends regarding the use of AI in recruitment. While AI continues to play an ever-increasing role in the recruitment process, challenges regarding improving efficiency, optimizing the process, and enhancing human decision-making persist. It is heartening to see that the talent acquisition function is being increasingly considered central to organizational strategy. While recruiters and hiring professionals have no option but to embrace technology, as suggested by the findings, it is imperative to balance the speed and quality of hiring in an environment wherein the unavailability of skills is the foremost challenge faced by TA professionals and recruiters. As rightly stated, the recruitment function will continue to need people in order to understand candidate needs and build the company culture.

- YAMINI GOYAL



Why the future belongs to curious leaders

Stacey Kennedy's article on the importance of curiosity in today's business world is extremely relevant for business leaders today. The ability to listen with attention is a skill that not everyone has, and I agree with Stacey that this can make all the difference in the world. Leaders need to be attentive and receptive to the needs and expectations of their employees in order to engage and help them utilize their skills in meaningful work. Furthermore, HR needs to listen to what their employees want and help create the right policies and culture to those ends. As we look at an uncertain future, those who have the humility and confidence to seek answers will undoubtedly have the edge over their peers. Rest assured, I will surely be using the phrase "tell me more, please" in my future conversations and meetings.

- SRUTHI SRINIVASAN

The threats to a mentally healthy workforce

The global mental health statistics and figures mentioned in the article paints a rather worrying picture of the status of mental health

in the society and workplace. While it is rather difficult to achieve mindfulness and mental well-being in today's high-pressure work environment, organizations must prioritize the mental well-being of their employees and de-stigmatize the issue by helping them understand their mental health better. We need to understand that an individual who is physically, mentally, and emotionally healthy will naturally be more productive, efficient, and innovative. Similarly, an organization that looks after the holistic well-being of their employees will naturally attract the best talent and candidates. While the progress made in the last few years has put the spotlight on mental well-being and wellness like never before, a lot more needs to be done in order to ensure that employees are able to preserve their sense of well-being and happiness.

- CHARUL GEHLOT



Skillsoft India @SkillsoftIndia

Here's a quick recap of a recent roundtable we hosted in partnership with @PeopleMatters2. @kamaldutta1970 MD-India, @Skillsoft set the context with his opening keynote 'demystifying digital transformation' which was followed by the roundtable session. bit.ly/2pHqzAC

Vijai Pandey @vijai_pandey

Well done @PeopleMatters2 @Ester_Matters and all the active participants of this wonderful discussion. #PMLnD is trending at #3 in India.

CashKaro.com @Cashkarocom

Read our co-founder, @Swats26's thoughts on leadership, solving problems of people and what she wants to change: bit.ly/2VYi0NO Thanks to @PeopleMatters2 for the feature. #CashKaro #YouGetMore

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#LeadTheWay | "It's important for #leaders to walk the talk and have the ability to get the best out of his team; while also helping in the development of others." Read @samit_deb's interesting conversation with @PeopleMatters2. buff.ly/2VRG0lz #LeadershipDevelopment

The Brand Called You @followtbcy

Role of HR is changing with changing dynamics of businesses. Discover the future of HR from @Ester_Matters, Founder, @PeopleMatters2 #HumanResources #LearnFromLeaders #tbcy

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CORRIGENDUM

Refer to the article titled "Choices define a leader, not qualifications" carried in the October Issue of the People Matters Magazine, page number 88, the author of the article is Abhinav Singh, Director, Operations (Middle Mile, Special Handling and New Businesses) at Amazon and not Amitabh Adhikary as mentioned in the article. We regret the inconvenience caused.



(WRITE TO US NOW BY
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FUNDING & INVESTMENT

WeWork potential takeover to put Neumann's role at risk



SOFTBANK GROUP OFFERED nearly USD 10 Bn to WeWork and its shareholders under a takeover plan that would keep the U.S. office-space sharing start-up afloat. According to the sources, the move also suggests the exit of its Chairman Adam Neumann.

Reports also suggest that Neumann could step down from The We Company's board as part of the deal with SoftBank

and become an adviser. SoftBank Chief Operating Officer Marcelo Claure would succeed Neumann as Chairman. SoftBank, a long-time WeWork investor, plans to invest between USD 4 Bn and USD 5 Bn in exchange for new and existing shares. According to the recent development, WeWork has accepted SoftBank's takeover offer. As a part of the deal, Neumann is getting USD 1.7 Bn.

GENDER BALANCE

Women representation in Indian boards rose by just 4.3% to 15.2% in 2019: Report

INDIA'S FEMALE REPRESENTATION on boards increased by 4.3 percentage points to 15.2 percent (significantly below the global average of 20.6 percent) in 2019 from 2014, as per the latest "CS Gender 3000 in 2019: The changing face of companies" report by the Credit Suisse Research Institute (CSRI).

India also has the third-lowest rank in the APAC with regard to female CEO representation (two percent), and the second-lowest rank for female CFO representation (one percent). The report stated, "India saw a slight improvement in female representation in senior management of 1.6 percentage points over the past three



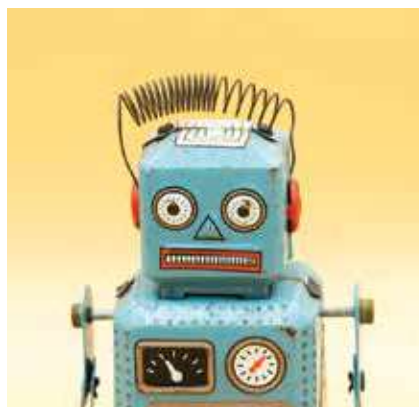
years, rising from 6.9 percent in 2016 to 8.5 percent in 2019, based on the matched dataset. However, the country holds the third-lowest spot in APAC, ahead of South Korea (four percent) and Japan (three percent)."



ECONOMY

Despite automation, Indians optimistic about finding new jobs: Report

INDIANS ARE SOME OF THE most optimistic people in the world when it comes to technology, according to a poll prepared by SAP and Qualtrics in conjunction with India Economic Summit 2019. More than 10,000 respondents from 29 countries participated in the survey. Indian respondents exhibit greater trust in climate scientists and international organizations than people



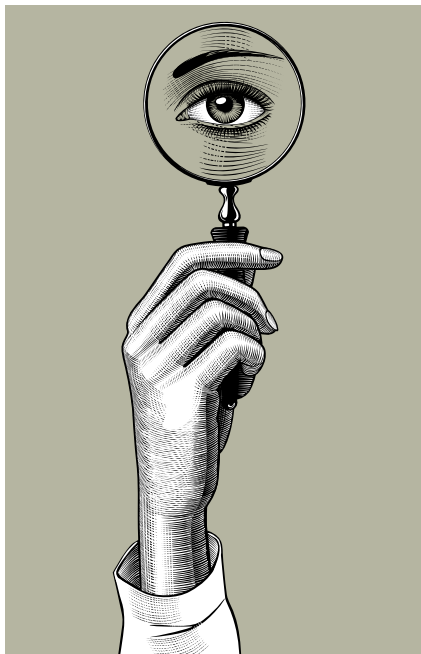
in other regions. They are also some of the least skeptical in the world about the motives of technology companies: more than two-thirds reject the idea that technology companies "only want to make money".

They said technology makes "personal relationships", "society" and "jobs" better. They are embracing new technology, acknowledging that jobs may be jeopardized, but believe that a growing economy will continue to provide opportunities. One-half say their job could be mostly automated. More than two-thirds said finding new employment would be "somewhat" or "extremely" easy to get a different job.

JOBS

Oracle plan to hire 2,000 employees & expand its cloud business

BY 2020-END, Oracle plans to open 20 more cloud “regions” or places where the company operates data centers for businesses to safely stash data for disaster recovery or to comply with local data storage laws. Oracle has 16 such regions, a dozen of which were opened in the past year. Now with expansion plans in Chile, Japan, South Africa, and the United Arab Emirates, in addition to Asia and Europe, the company plans to hire nearly 2,000 more employees.



Oracle’s business expansion plan and upcoming hiring spree seem to be to compete with rivals like Amazon Web Services and Microsoft Corp. This will help transition Oracle’s business software for finance, sales, etc. to new systems. The space where businesses pay a cloud provider to handle their computing and storage tasks instead of building their own data centers was estimated at \$38.9 Bn in 2019 by Gartner.

Oracle had some 1,36,000 full-time staff, of which 18,000 were employed in cloud services and license support operations. New roles will be created for Oracle’s software development hubs in Seattle, the San Francisco Bay Area and India, and near new data centers.



JOBS

Only 9% of organizations in Singapore have digital & business strategy

WITH THE SURGE IN WORKPLACE automation showing no signs of abating, relatively few APAC employers, including in Singapore, have developed an integrated digital trans-

formation strategy, according to a survey by Willis Towers Watson. The Pathways to Digital Enablement Study found the proportion of work delivered through automation among companies has more than doubled over the last three years, from eight to 20 percent, and is expected to grow to 34 percent in APAC in the next three years. Nearly all respondents expect to be using workplace automation, including AI and robotics, within three years.

Those organizations that progress, to the level where they effectively partner with startups, invest in corporate venture arms or incubators, reap many benefits, including leveraging technology that cannot be built quickly internally, increasing agility on new initiatives, bringing innovative ideas and perspectives in-house, and working with top talent.

HIRING

HP to cut up to 9,000 jobs globally

HP HAS ANNOUNCED that it will cut up to 16 percent of its workforce which will be about 7,000 to 9,000 jobs via a combination of retrenchment and voluntary early retirement, as part of a restructuring plan aimed at cutting costs.

Based on the current environment, HP is hoping to generate a free cash flow of at least \$3 Bn for FY 2020. The company also expects to incur total labor and non-labor costs of approximately \$1 Bn in connection with the restructuring and other charges. The restructuring is expected to be completed in FY 2022.

HP currently has about 55,000 employees worldwide. The announcement has left Singapore employees worried as there could be around 10,000 employees in Singapore or about one-fifth of HP’s global workforce.



ECONOMY

Tariff wars could threaten jobs, living standards: WTO

THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION said the rising tariff wars across the globe are posing a threat to living standards and jobs while slashing the forecast for trade growth during 2019.

Having halved its growth forecast for goods’ trade in 2019 from 2.6 to 1.2 percent, the WTO cited the burgeoning US-China trade war, a slowdown in global growth, and the fear of a no-deal Brexit, as reasons for the forecast change.

The hostile environment dissuades businesses from spending money on purchasing new capital which makes it a hostile ground for innovation and growth, said Roberto Azevedo, Director-General, WTO. Job creation may also be hampered as firms employ fewer workers to produce goods and services for export.

Employer Research: India Stats

A digital learning company recently conducted a Global Employer Survey across countries like Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, India, UK and US. Respondents were HR professional recruited for a mix of functions, industries, and geographies. The recruiting targeted corporations with over 5,000 employees. The report deep dives into employers lacking an organized approach to L&D, a disconnect between employers and employees on L&D culture and recognizing a need for upskilling to name a few.

Employers lack an organized approach to L&D today

- Only 42% companies in India have a centralized L&D policy
- 57% employers support L&D through internal mentoring/work-based learning programs. However, fewer provide financial assistance to employees for other programs



Disconnect between employers and employees on L&D culture and resources that impacts engagement

- Only country where equal numbers of employers and employees say CE is encouraged as part of the company culture
- Employers find a lack of employee engagement, difficulty with employees taking time off and finding the right providers

A need for upskilling & reskilling in the next ten years

- 49% of Indian employers want to retrain employees on new skills for current roles
- 52% of Indian employers want to invest in training employees for new roles
- Employers are open to many types of L&D support from external partners: including identifying the right employees to train, to developing



“Creating and promoting assessments to help employers evaluate 'what they have' and 'what they need' to develop their workforce, including soft skills is the need of the hour.”

Varun Dhamija
Vice President, Pearson Professional Programs, Pearson India

Employers are increasingly open to non-degree credentials

- 71% of Indian employers are exploring/hiring employees with only non-degree credentials
- 51% of Indian employers think industry-based non-degree credentials is valuable vs 34% who value the selectivity of the program
- More importance is given to candidate who can demonstrate real-world application with their non-degree credential



Employers focus on developing soft skills for existing workforce and are concerned about identifying the right hard skills when hiring

- 70% of Indian employers are interested in formal soft skills assessment
- 51% of Indian employers think that hard skills are more important and lacking in Indian candidates
- 38% employers in India struggle finding candidates with desired soft skills





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NEWSMAKER OF THE MONTH

'No human is limited'



QUICK READS

After the first attempt at the Nike Breaking2 project, Eliud Kipchoge ran the fastest marathon in history at 2:00:25. After he finished, he said, "The world now is only 25 seconds away." And on 12th October 2019, he became the first person on the planet to complete a marathon in less than two hours. His official time was 1 hour, 59 minutes, and 40.2 seconds.

The 2-hour long journey was not only a run but a true representation of dedication, passion, hard work of a man who believes in discipline. According to Kipchoge, those who are disciplined in life are free. If you are undisciplined, you are a slave to your moods and your passions.

Like Nike's Breaking2 event, the Ineos 1:59 Challenge bent the rules of the IAAF, athletics' governing body. The location and

Courage and discipline are two important things to learn from Kipchoge's marathon. The legend gave a positive message to the world by completing his run in under two hours

route were optimized to increase the likelihood of a sub-two-hour time. Though these factors were supporting the legendary runner but clocking a time under two hours is a huge milestone. The runner himself once said, "I don't know where the limits are, but I would like to go there." And,

proving all the sports scientists and critics wrong, he crossed the limits. Courage and discipline are two important things to learn from Kipchoge's marathon. The legend gave a positive message to the world by completing his run in under two hours. Not only sportspersons but leaders, students, working professionals can learn from him. The message is simple—one has to be disciplined and courageous enough to complete his or her dream. He is an ideal example for everyone who is trying hard but unable to succeed. The legendary runner also tried multiple times and failed but he never quit. We all need to follow his footsteps and it'll work as a pathfinder for our dreams.

Kipchoge is also an Olympic gold medalist and winner of the gold medal in the World Championship. 🏆

APPOINTMENTS



COGNIZANT INDIA PROMOTES RAMKUMAR RAMAMOORTHY

US-based IT giant Cognizant has promoted Ramkumar Ramamoorthy as the Chairman and Managing Director of its India operations. Having worked with the company for more than two decades, Ramamoorthy will report directly to Cognizant's Executive committee in his new role. Ramamoorthy had been instrumental in enhancing several of Cognizant's India-based portfolios, according to an email sent to employees from Cognizant CEO Brian Humphries.



MAUREL & PROM APPOINTS NEW CEO

France-based oil company, Maurel & Prom has appointed Olivier de Langavant to the position of Chief Executive Officer with effect from November 1, 2019, as a replacement for Michel Hochard. In 2009, Olivier de Langavant was appointed Finance, Economics & Information Systems SVP of Total E&P, based at the Total Group's head office, before taking up the position of Strategy, Business Development and R&D SVP of Total E&P in 2011.



SEQUOIA CAPITAL APPOINTS NEW MD

Amit Jain, the former APAC Head of Uber, has joined marquee venture capital firm Sequoia Capital as a Managing Director. He will join the firm's Growth team, advising on new opportunities and helping existing growth stage companies in India and SEA. Jain will be based out of the Singapore office.



NISSAN APPOINTS MAKOTO UCHIDA AS CEO

Nissan Motor Co. has chosen Makoto Uchida, the current Senior Vice President, as the next Chief Executive. During a board meeting, directors at Nissan including the ones from Renault SA, which happens to be their top shareholder, voted unanimously in favor of Makoto Uchida. After months of upheaval at the second-largest automaker of Japan, this decision comes at the heels of the downfall of former Chairman Carlos Ghosn last year and the exit of CEO Hiroto Saikawa last month.



MANPOWERGROUP NAMES SANDEEP GULATI AS INDIA MD

ManpowerGroup has announced the appointment of Sandeep Gulati as Managing Director of India Operations. Sandeep is a multi-faceted leader who is passionate about building winning teams in a global environment. He has joined ManpowerGroup from Aegis (Startek), a global business service provider, where he held various positions relating to sales and operations.



GREY GROUP HONG KONG APPOINTS CEO

Grey Group Hong Kong has appointed Jenmon Yeung-Jenkins as its CEO. She has over 20 years of advertising experience spanning three continents and three major markets in Europe, North America and Greater China across luxury, fashion, beauty and lifestyle sectors.



SAP'S CEO STEPS DOWN AFTER NINE YEARS

Bill McDermott, SAP's CEO for the last nine years is stepping down as he has decided not to renew his contract. Executive Board members Jennifer Morgan and Christian Klein will be taking over McDermott's responsibilities as co-CEOs, according to reports in TechCrunch. McDermott, who became co-CEO in 2008 and the company's sole CEO in 2014, joined SAP in 2002 as the Head of SAP, North America.



BHASKAR BHAT RETIRES, VENKATARAMAN BECOMES TITAN MD

C.K. Venkataraman who was the CEO of the jewelry business of Titan Company since 2005 has taken over the role of Managing Director of Titan Company upon the retirement of the former MD, Bhaskar Bhat. Venkataraman will be taking over Bhat's role, leveraging his experience as the CEO of the jewelry business since 2005. As Venkataraman moves into the new role, Ajay Chawla has taken over as the CEO of the jewelry Division.



CAPGEMINI APPOINTS NEW CHRO

Capgemini announced the appointment of Pallavi Tyagi as CHRO for its India operations. Pallavi joins Capgemini in India after managing multiple roles in DuPont where she was the Head of Talent Acquisition and Organizational Vibrancy for Asia Pacific in her last role. She takes over from Anil Jalali, Executive Vice President who will become Group HR Transformation Advisor reporting to Hubert Giraud, Member of the Group Executive Board and Group Chief HR Officer.



GOOGLE CLOUD ROPES IN FORMER SAP EXECUTIVE AS VP HR

Google Cloud has appointed Brigitte McInnis-Day as new Vice President of HR. She comes with a total experience of over 20 years and has managed board level HR and digital transformation strategies. McInnis-Day has also led global organizational change and redesign and helped senior level executives in their transformation journey.



DXC TECHNOLOGY APPOINTS NEW CHRO

End to end IT services company DXC appointed Mary E. Finch as Executive Vice President and CHRO, reporting to company's President and CEO Mike Salvino. Finch is the first senior leader hired since Salvino was named to his role in mid-September. Finch will lead all aspects of DXC Human Resources and employee engagement globally.



YES BANK APPOINTS NEW COO

Yes Bank announced the appointment of former ICICI Bank Chief General Manager Anita Pai, as the chief operating officer and former head of marketing at Kotak Life, Jasneet Bachal, as the chief marketing officer as it aims to further strengthen the top management at the bank. Anita Pai will also focus on augmenting systems, controls, and processes... and would be responsible for operations across the Bank, according to a statement by Yes Bank.

Mausami Arora

Head of Human Resources at British American Tobacco, Singapore

By Neelanjana Mazumdar

1

Who is the one leader you look up to?

It's not just one. I derive inspiration from the passion that any individual brings to the table. The list would range from my 14-year-old niece to industry veterans to sports stars and many more.

2

What is the one leadership lesson you learned on the go as a People Leader?

The importance of providing enabling support to the team when things are not going in the intended direction.

3

Which was the last book you read on leadership?

Influence: The psychology of persuasion by Robert B. Cialdini.

4

What is the one thing leaders should do to make a difference?

Respect capability of every individual and leverage it wisely.

5

One thing that you consider as your strength and one thing that you would like to improve on?

My learning agility has always helped me navigate ambiguous paths and solve business challenges comfortably. At the same time, I am committed to enhance my storytelling skills to deliver key, engaging messages with a deeper impact.



7

How digitally ready are you as a leader on a scale of one to ten?

I would say 8. With myriads of tech solutions available in the market, there is always a catching up to do.

8

One step that you are taking to develop a leadership culture in your organization?

Driving a culture of ownership and servant leadership.

9

One thing that makes you passionate about your work?

People around me. In particular, my fantastic team that makes me look forward to every day.

10

What matters to you most, effort or outcome?

While I strongly value results more, I also recognize the importance of celebrating milestones along the way.

11

What's the one most important factor you consider when hiring someone?

Grit, which for me is a critical asset in this ever-changing dynamics around us.

12

What sort of leader would your team say that you are?

One who plays to their strength and pushes to continuously raise the bar.

I am committed to enhance my storytelling skills to deliver key, engaging messages with a deeper impact

6

What should leaders do: Create more leaders or create more followers and why?

I believe leadership need not come with titles, everyone can choose to lead in their domains. Therefore, it is vital for a leader to enable such a culture. This can be done by building the next generation of leaders who are well-positioned to take the organization to the next level.



Confederation of Indian Industry

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The digital revolution and global headwinds are together causing unprecedented disruptions in businesses which is requiring all organizations to respond with agility, flexibility, proactivism and product and process innovations as central focal points. In this context, the demand on the HR function to align with businesses as a 'strategic' partner by understanding, appreciating and leveraging technology to its advantage and creating necessary interventions for transformation is increasing phenomenally.

How does HR cope with this tech disrupted fast changing environment and leverage the same for **Building the Future Together** with all stakeholders and drive business aspirations?



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Regulating the gig economy

Drivers working with cab aggregators and delivery companies will be considered full-time employees in California from January 2020; what's next?

By **Manav Seth**

Californian lawmakers were in the news recently for formulating a law that is expected to change the business model of several new-age companies and regulate the gig economy. Let us take a look at what the law aims to do, how companies like Uber have reacted and the different perspectives shaping the narrative.

What is the California Assembly Bill 5 (2019)?

A few weeks ago California legislators approved a bill that essentially reclassifies contractors, freelancers, and contingent workers as full-time employees; thus, making them eligible for basic labor rights like paid time off, benefits, minimum wage, etc¹. The bill, named Assembly Bill 5, or, AB 5, makes it challenging for popular employers like Uber, Lyft (the second-most popular cab aggregator in USA) and DoorDash to consider their workers as contractors and confers full-time employment status on them. A few days after the bill was approved by the Senate, the Governor signed the legislation and the law will go into effect from 1st January 2020. Although some industries have been given exemptions, ride-sharing and delivery companies are very much under its purview.²

The law is being viewed as the result of the long process to get contractual workers their due and will ensure that employers apply the famous “ABC Test”³ to determine the nature of the employment. The test identifies a contractor as someone (a) independent of the hiring entity’s control and direction about how they perform their work; (b) engaged in work different from the hiring entity’s business; and (c) conducting an independent business in the same field as the work they’re doing for the hiring entity. While the law makes way for contractual workers to be covered under wage and benefit laws, it doesn’t guarantee the right of collective bargaining or unionizing, since it is a federal matter. What’s more, legislators have also given cities in

California the right to sue organizations that do not comply with the law.

The debate gained momentum in May this year when the Assembly passed the legislation and Uber and Lyft jumped into action⁴. Top executives from both the companies (otherwise bitter rivals) co-authored an op-ed piece in the San Francisco Chronicle⁵ and argued that classifying drivers as employees would “pose a risk to their business”. They also reportedly encouraged and paid employees to oppose the bill by signing petitions and attending rallies⁶. Several back-door negotiations with Californian unions with alternative classifications were also suggested by Uber and Lyft; only to be rejected by driver groups⁷.

What has the reaction been?

As anticipated, the passage and signing of the bill received a polarized reception. On the one hand, companies like Uber and Lyft are publically criticizing the bill and have promised to fight it; and on the other, labor activists, politicians and lawyers are considering it a landmark law. So, while some experts are saying that AB 5 is the “antidote to the excesses by Uber and Lyft”⁸; others are convinced that the law will weaken the very foundation of the gig economy. Supporters of the bill say that contractual workers, especially the likes of Uber drivers, usually earn less than minimum wage after taking into account vehicle expenses and the extra taxes⁹. Those opposed to the bill state that benefits

Supporters of the bill say that contractual workers, especially the likes of Uber drivers, usually earn less than minimum wage after taking into account vehicle expenses and the extra taxes



and security is the trade-off that workers willingly make in exchange for the freedom to have a flexible work schedule, minimal interference from the organization and the choice to work for multiple companies simultaneously¹⁰.

Uber has gone as far as to say that the company need not comply with the new bill because under the ABC test, the drivers' work is outside the usual course of business for Uber, which is primarily a tech-platform for different types of digital marketplaces¹¹. In other words, Uber is claiming that drivers aren't core to its business, and hence, the law doesn't apply to them. This has already resulted in a class action lawsuit being filed by labor attorney Shannon Liss-Riordan on the behalf of Uber drivers, which is urging the courts to issue an injunction to enforce the compliance of AB 5 at Uber. "We are not arguing for the status quo, nor are we denying that independent work needs to be improved," Uber said¹² in releasing its framework, which many considered to be contradictory.

Adrian Durbin, Senior Director of Communications, Lyft, said that the state "missed an important opportunity to support the overwhelming majority of rideshare drivers who want a thoughtful solution that balances flexibility with an earnings standard and benefits. We are fully prepared to take this issue to the voters of California to preserve the freedom and access drivers and riders want and need."

What does the future look like?

Lyft and Uber have clearly stated that they are ready to legally challenge the law and deploy strategies to prevent its application on them. According to one estimate, the reclassification of drivers as full-time employees will cost Uber \$500 million and Lyft \$290 million in California alone¹³, which is bad news for both these companies that are already in deep red. This explains why the legislation has become an existential question for companies like Uber, Lyft and DoorDash and their deep-rooted commitment to oppose it. Uber and Lyft are said to be actively working with politicians and labor groups to frame a follow-up piece of legislation that would barter rights like collective bargaining and a minimum wage in exchange for employee reclassification. In case this fails, Uber, Lyft and DoorDash have already pledged to allocate \$30 million each to push for a ballot initiative and campaign to exempt them from the legislation by creating a new category of cab-aggregator drivers.

Uber and Lyft have also said that changes made in the classification of their workers will force them to change the rules



The reclassification of drivers as full-time employees will cost Uber \$500 million and Lyft \$290 million in California alone

about shifts, which means that they will hire fewer drivers and take away their flexibility to decide their own schedule. It is important to note that there has been some opposition to the legislation within the driven community as well¹⁴. Many gig workers are worried that an employee status will take away the flexibility of the job, the prime reason why they took it up in the first place. The development is also an important milestone against corporate lobbying as over the past few years, several companies have successfully lobbied for the passage of laws that identify drivers as contractors in more than half the states in USA. Thus, even states which legally followed the ABC test were unable to classify workers as employees due to the overriding laws which explicitly classified them as contractors¹⁵.

Many are considering AB 5 to be a landmark law that will prevent worker exploitation by tech companies and will increase accountability. The bill will not only elevate the employment status of over a million low-wage workers in California, but also set the precedent for other law-making bodies all over the world. Already, other cities, like Seattle, New York, Oregon and Washington, are said to be working on their own versions of AB 5¹⁶. Similarly, one can expect the law to be considered in Britain as well, where the Supreme Court is due to hear arguments related to Uber's appeal against a labor tribunal's decision to classify drivers as workers and provide

them minimum wage and vacation¹⁷. The fact that the legislation has been endorsed by leading presidential candidates in the upcoming US elections means that the issue is going to be discussed extensively in the near future as well¹⁸.

It is unclear how this development will impact the ride-hailing experience and whether companies will pass on this cost to the customers, thus, ending the era of subsidized rides. Nonetheless, AB 5 has made an attempt to regulate an entire industry that has resisted scrutiny on the back of innovation and job creation. The fact of the matter is that contractual workers can be found in all kinds of jobs and industries and there is no denying that the way the gig economy currently operates leaves a lot to be desired for the quintessential gig worker. In order to begin the process to reframe the debate and design an inclusive future of work, AB 5 might just be the tipping point that labor groups and politicians need. One can expect similar pieces of legislation that are aimed at regulating modern workplace systems and processes in the future and organizations must adapt to these changes or else face political and public backlash.

The debate around what constitutes a gig worker and how organizations should manage them is set to intensify. The first step in the larger battle to regulate the future of work and future workers has been taken and it remains to be seen how organizations respond. 🚗

The new age of learning and India's slow steps forward



Today not only do the millions entering the jobs market require skilling opportunities, but even managers and professionals with years of experience also find themselves on thin ice

With countries shifting to a more knowledge-based economy, learning has gained a lot of interest in recent times. Rapid skill changes and evolving talent demands reflect a need to keep up with what the markets demand. Can technology be efficiently leveraged to solve this growing demand?

By Dhruv Mukerjee

One of the largest impacts of technological advancements—and its often consumer-driven nature—has been in the way we consume information. Not only have methodologies advanced owing to a shift in technological applications, but there's also been a definite rise in the need to remain knowledgeable to function better. Learning has been ever more prevalent in what today is slowly becoming an increasingly knowledge-driven society. And businesses remain no exception to this.

Learning, for most parts of modern human history, has been the result of institutionalized education. Although personal experiences form a large part of an individual's learning, it's been the case of a superior, institution-driven, certification based form of learning that's gained importance. Businesses too followed suit and began preferring to hire from the best of institutions, taking certifications as a given mark of excellence. But if one looks closely, the existence of such institutions have always fallen short of their demand. Over the years this has resulted in sub-par education institutes coming up to fill the gaps and passing candidates who may be unqualified to procure well-paying jobs. Those passing out of such schools and universities often find themselves to be unemployable upon entering the jobs market. This has been one of the many systemic reasons that drive over 80 percent of the working population into the unorganized workforce.

This mismatch of quality and education is further compounded by the fact the nature of jobs themselves are rapidly evolving. The shelf life of skills, especially the tech-related ones, are quite

short in comparison to the one's decade or even years before. Today not only do the millions entering jobs market require skilling opportunities, but even managers and professionals with years of experience also find themselves on thin ice.

The culmination of these factors has led to the often-quoted trend of skills-gap, one that has become a major culprit, among other economic factors, in the problem of jobs lost in recent times, especially within India. As newer technologies emerge and their adoption within businesses rises, such skills gap only gets more pronounced within economies.

The response to this lies greatly in how learning methodologies evolve to keep pace and the quality of content rises to meet external demand. As it turns out, how we learn forms a key part of the solution. Addressing prevalent learning needs has to be an important way of addressing the skills gap. Especially in a country with a growing young population that's looking for work.

The nature of the skills gap

The skills gap today is prevalent across countries. Both within developed and

developing economies, such an increasing application has resulted in workforce restructuring; making certain professions and their related skills completely obsolete. With technological applications within businesses evolving more rapidly than the rate at which universities and skill development programs impart new age knowledge and skills, the phenomena of skills gap have become a common occurrence. While addressing learning needs might help bridge this gap, it's important to understand the nature of such a skills gap first.

The symptoms that a labor market is being hampered by an overarching skills gap exhibit themselves in different forms. In some cases, the rapid changes brought on technological advancements raise the barrier to entry just by their requisite qualifications which end up impacting many young people looking for jobs. In other cases, its impact is felt across mid-career professionals, especially within tech fields, who have lost their jobs and must now adapt. With businesses unable to stay away from the benefits of tech adoption and transforming their processes in turn, sectors like IT, Banking, BFSI, and retail all stand effected. Many companies as a response have expanded their scope of

reskilling workers to create better mechanisms of updating skills without losing portions of their workforce.

But such pace has been found wanting of a cohesive approach.

And it's not only that companies and candidates that suffer because of the skills gap that persists in the economy. Whole economies stand to lose on economic productivity if it fails to solve the problem of the learning and skills gap. An Accenture study found recently that if left unchecked, the problem of skills gap could prove a major hurdle in front of countries. The G20 economies could stand to lose up to US\$11.5 trillion in cumulative GDP growth in the next ten years if skill mismatches in the economy are left unaddressed. India with one of the largest work pools and a fast-growing number who enter the labor market looking for jobs would face a major brunt of this cost. The threat of automation and AI poses a further challenge as jobs become obsolete and require the workforce to respond to changing talent consideration.

A collaborative effort

A vital part of successfully designing future-looking learning programs is to be able to predict and anticipate skill changes.

A vital part of successfully designing future-looking learning programs is to be able to predict and anticipate skill changes




And to be able to increase the reach of better quality learning materials—one that has indeed been a problem in the past, as an Accenture report from 2017 notes Indian business leaders and workers agreed that difficulties in identifying learning opportunities prevent them from developing new skills—which in turn would make both corporate and public learning initiatives more robust. But to address the learning needs of tomorrow, no single stakeholder can solve the problem alone

The increased scope of collaboration has been one of the major welcomed offshoots of technology redefining our everyday. Addressing the rising skills gap cannot have a single pill, a clear antidote that ails all problems but rather would be the result of a collaborative effort. Right from learning professionals to policymakers and even recruiters need to both update their understanding of the potential of learning tech and better address talent needs.

Recruiters, often the first point of contact need to understand how learning new skills have importance over certifications and how skills like empathy and creativity need to be addressed. For learning professionals, the commercial use of learning tech has today resulted in a plethora of services and tech applications like experiential learning and VR, enabling many to address the change in softer skills as well. Companies are also depending more on online learning solutions to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse, multi-generational workforce. At the same time, businesses are also in need to take a fresh look at how they hire people with the right skills. Certifications and degrees are slowly making way for a focus on better skill proficiency.

For policymakers, technology can greatly benefit and strengthen the existing education system and enable them to become more responsive to employability needs. This also means that traditional focus on a merit driven perspective should be broadened to a more holistic attempt to build learned individuals.

To tap into the potential of technology in restructuring how we learn and gain skills, although immense, is certainly bound by our use of it. By using relevant content and delivery mechanisms that are appropriate to the context, together India's learning needs can be greatly met. 

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, AUTOMATION WILL HELP MAKE WORK MUCH MORE MEANINGFUL

DELOITTE'S GLOBAL LEADER FOR FUTURE OF WORK

It's a complex mix of things, however, that executives need to bring to the table to excite and engage a workforce for higher productivity, says **STEVEN HATFIELD**, the global leader for Future of Work at Deloitte, in a conversation with People Matters, while sharing insights on future of work based on his larger discussion with top business executives

By Mastufa Ahmed

Steve is a principal with Deloitte Consulting and serves as the global leader for Future of Work for the firm. He has more than 20 years of experience advising global organizations on issues of strategy, innovation, organization, people, culture, and change. Hatfield has advised business leaders on a multitude of initiatives including activating strategy, defining a preferred future, addressing workforce trends, implementing agile and resilient operating models, and transforming culture oriented to growth, innovation, and agility.

Hatfield has significant experience in bringing to life the ongoing trends impacting the future of work, workforce, and workplace. He is a regular speaker and author on the future of work and is currently on the Deloitte leadership team shaping the research and marketplace dialogue on the future workforce and workplace trends and issues. He has a master's in social change and development from Johns Hopkins and an MBA from Wharton and is based in Boston.

Here are the excerpts of the interview.

Q You have been advising global organizations on issues of strategy, innovation, organization, people, culture, and change for over 20 years. Can you share some insights around what have you learned from the larger conversations with top business executives of those organizations?

A What we've noticed is that it's a much more complex mix of things that executives need to bring to the table to excite and engage a work-

force for higher productivity. Given shortages for critical skills, emerging required capabilities and generational preferences, if you don't actually have a cogent workforce strategy, then likely whatever business strategy you are aiming for won't happen. If you aren't organized in a way that enables learning, exploration, and innovation, or if your people are just cogs in a big machine unexcited by the work they're doing, then you won't achieve the strategy and innovation objectives that you're looking for. The human (and worker) experience becomes central and that becomes the emerging focus.

Q You have devoted much of your life to researching what's next. If you were to look back, what are some of the changes that have taken place over the last few years and what are the implications of them for the future?

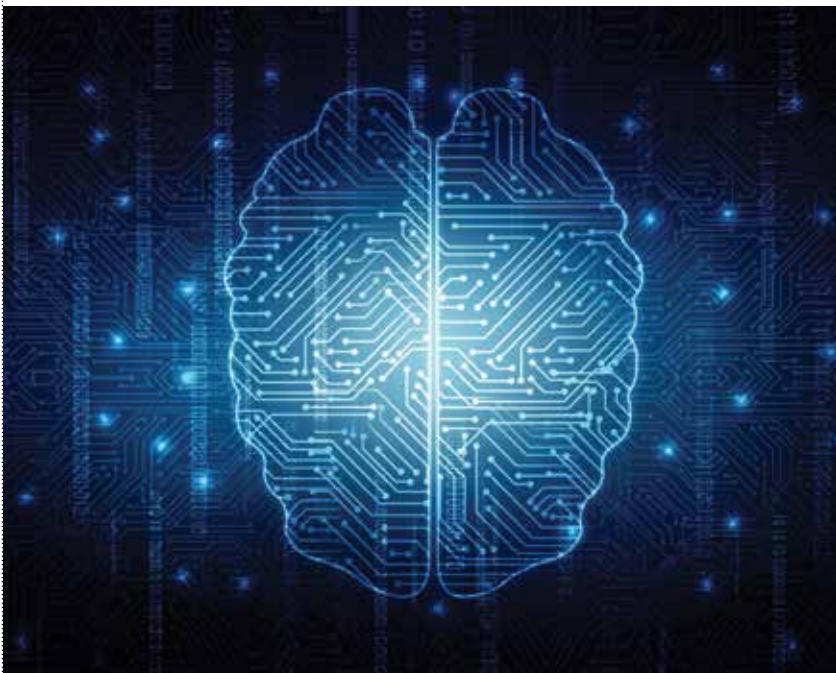
A We have seen more and more dollars going into collaboration tools, learning, redesigning the workplace, and programs like workforce flexibility. This was demanded by Gen X and late stage Millennials—and the workplace has responded—but we're only scratching the surface on where this is headed. Now with the advent of technologies that enable workers to be effective virtually, worker preferences about where they work, how they work and when they work have become more paramount. For the future of learning, we need to harness these new worker preferences to curate knowledge and bring learning to the team level where innovation is happening while also collecting enterprise intelligence.



Q What's your vision for the future of work now that business dynamics are changing and new age technologies are emerging? How do you view the current skills gap scenario?

A The dialogue in the market is often geared towards the robot apocalypse because this grabs media attention, but if you look at what's happening, it's a world of opportunity. As more people can access the internet (seven billion predicted in the next five years) and with 5G capability, there's the ability for people to plug into economic flows from any part of the world¹. Upwork, a gig platform to provide higher value add work to an enterprise, for example, sources work from 180+ global locations with freelancers representing more than 5,000 skills². Imagine, a Millennial woman who creates marketing materials in Malaysia can now plug into a North American opportunity without leaving her home. We do see a skills gap emerging because of skill shortages and emerging capabilities. In some ways, we expect this to increase because

For the future of learning,
we need to harness new
worker preferences to curate
knowledge and bring learning
to the team level where
innovation is happening
while also collecting
enterprise intelligence



of 50 million new tech jobs and the anticipated increases in the creative class, professional class, and non-routine manual work like home health-care. However, this puts more emphasis on the critical needs to the upskilling and reskilling workforce. According to the Deloitte 2019 Human Capital Trends report, 54 percent of companies state they have no programs in place to build the skills of the future, yet 86 percent of respondents cited reinventing the way people learn as important or very important.

Q Can technology actually compliment the future human workforce now that AI and automation are transforming business models and the nature of work? How do you view the landscape of future employment?

A The advent of AI technology and greater automation create the opportunity for work to become much more meaningful. In fact, AI taking over both simple and complex tasks creates capacity for higher value work. For example, AI can help decrease the amount of administrative work that is being done so that a nurse can focus on better bedside care instead of inputting patient data into a computer. Even augmenting the workforce with robots and drones, as we see with Energy, Resource and Industrial companies, can lead to solutions for increased worker safety. These technologies will only be a value add for the future of employment.

Q With companies struggling to anticipate the needs and expectations of future generations of the workforce, how should organizations gear up to face the future challenge in a world where uncertainty is the new normal?

A Today, we put a lot of energy and effort into anticipating and solving for different customer needs using data sets in a bespoke way. What's going to emerge is that the same toolkit of data sets and technologies will be applied to the workforce, creating bespoke solutions for employees as well. This will enable an enterprise that feels more like an umbrella of startups, creating a dynamic career marketplace that fosters strong resiliency and adaptability for the organization to handle changes as they come.

Q With organizations shifting their culture to become more focused on building capabilities for innovation, and the ability to act like owners, do you think culture can actually be a competitive advantage?

A There are those that would argue that culture is already a competitive advantage. I think of the phrase made famous by Mark Fields, President of Ford "culture eats strategy for breakfast". I think though that sometimes culture is confused with engagement. Culture is the behavior set of an organization, the unwritten rules. Let's say a leader is not the kind of person who goes around the table and asks for everyone's opinion, he or she may not be fostering a strong innovation culture because workers don't feel comfortable speaking up. It's these behavior sets paired with programs

for engagement that will be very important dimensions for how we handle innovation in the future.

Q There seems to be a renewed focus on leadership with the rise of next-gen technologies and changing business dynamics. Do you think we have enough digital leaders with requisite leadership capabilities to drive change businesses need today? How do you view the current landscape?

A Leadership development programs will shift and calibrate to be more geared to enduring human capabilities. It's not just empathy and hypothesis-driven problem-solving capabilities, but also venture management, complex systems thinking, pattern recognition, etc. These capabilities become hallmarks of what digital leaders need to bring to the table. Leaders can develop these skills, but they need to do it as a practicum where the capabilities can be applied and honed over time

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

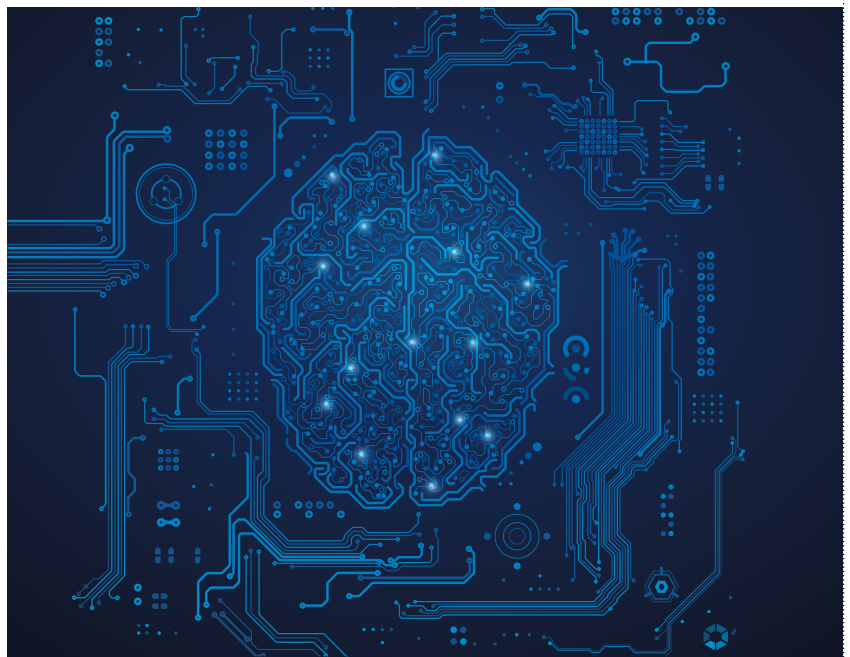
A I liken myself to a corporate anthropologist. I bring a skillset around complex systems thinking, seeing patterns and discerning the future. With my team, I am clear about what outcomes need to be met and then I give them the space to bring their strengths to the table in achieving those outcomes. I have very little patience for leaders who declare they know more than they do or aren't up to speed with what they are talking about. Although I spend time thinking about the future, I am also very authentic about what we don't know yet.

Q What's your take on the digital transformation initiatives organizations are going through? Experts say it's more about culture and mindset shift than technologies powering it.

A It's very much a mindset shift, a set of capabilities and a culture that can adapt to digital transformation. Technologies are on an exponential curve and are changing every 18 months. So, it is not about individual technologies like early-stage blockchain, AI or robotics—it's about creating a culture that is open, receptive, adaptable and fosters a passion for learning that will become critical for keeping abreast of all the changes that are coming.

Q What is real about the gig economy? And how are they going to impact the future of work?

A The gig economy is very real—by 2020, the number of self-employed workers in the U.S. is expected to triple to 42 million people, but only eight percent of Deloitte's 2019 Global Human Capital Trends report respondents had established processes to manage and develop alternative workforce sources. Deloitte is urging organizations to start thinking about experimenting with their talent models, expanding the view of their organization to be an ecosystem of players contributing to the outcomes they want. What will likely happen is that it won't be about attracting talent, as much as it will be about accessing the capabilities from within your ecosystem as you need them.



Prepare your organization for the evolution to adaptable ecosystems and teams by shifting way from hierarchies

Q If you were to share five pieces of advice to large gatherings of CHROs and People leaders on how they should gear up to prepare for the future of work what would that be?

A It can be difficult to know where to start on your Future of Work journey. Here are five considerations you can begin to act on today...

- **Redesign jobs:** Begin designing “superjobs” by identifying integrated roles that leverage the significant productivity and efficiency gains possible when people and machines work together and provide more meaningful work to employees
- **Reskill your talent:** Develop a culture of continuous learning, incentives that motivate people to learn, and a focus on helping individuals identify and develop new, needed skills
- **Reengineer your workforce:** Move beyond “managing” contractors and freelancers to “optimizing” and “leveraging” the alternative workforce deliberately and well
- **Reconstruct teams:** Prepare your organization for the evolution to adaptable ecosystems and teams by shifting way from hierarchies
- **Refresh the human experience:** Address the “human experience” at work—building on an understanding of worker aspirations to connect work back to the impact it has on not only the organization but also society as a whole. 

Note

1. 2019 Global Human Capital Trends report
2. Upwork 2018 Annual Report



HR strategies that help digital transformation succeed

While functional transformation is an essential component, HR must also take a lead role in transforming organizations by ensuring employees have the capability and opportunity to make the transformation possible



As new technologies and tools continue to emerge at an ever-increasing rate, and the changes infiltrate organizations, individuals need to learn and adapt at a faster rate to remain relevant and employable

With the adoption of technologies which typify the fourth industrial revolution, the need for workplace and workforce change creates significant challenges for Human Resources (HR). Many HR departments have focused on functional transformations, applying different technologies to solve problems of efficiency and data integrity. While functional transformation is an essential component, HR must also take a lead role in transforming organizations by ensuring employees have the capability and opportunity to make the transformation possible.

HR departments yet to embark on a broad program of transforming employees to thrive in a digital era will very soon be left behind. As HR knows, changing a policy or program takes a relatively short timeframe; changing people takes far longer, is costlier, and needs sustained commitment. If business needs employees who can operate effectively in a different

way a year from now, then the time to start the change is now.

There are three HR focus areas that support the digital transformation of business and employees:

1. Fostering curiosity, knowledge development and the lifelong learning mindset of employees,
2. Ensuring employees can work effectively in cross-functional teams, and
3. Endorsing structures that support the forming and reforming of teams and effective flow of information.

Curiosity, knowledge and lifelong learning

For the first time in modern history, lifelong learning is now a professional survival imperative. With new technologies changing work and business at a rapid rate, the need for continuous and rapid adaptation is unrelenting. For many people, the lifelong learning concept is relatively new. Many began their careers when employment was assured after

university graduation through the development of deep expertise in a field. As technology in business crosses and binds multiple areas, employees now need to develop knowledge beyond their own area of expertise, along with knowledge about technology. Naturally curious people find the adjustment easier, as their focus tends to be on growth and change.

As new technologies and tools continue to emerge at an ever-increasing rate, and the changes infiltrate organizations, individuals need to learn and adapt at a faster rate to remain relevant and employable. Those yet to learn about technology, risk being irrevocably left behind. This does not mean everyone needs to be able to code, but employees must understand the basics of new technologies and how they affect the workplace and business stakeholders.

Yet we live in a paradox; in a world permeated by digital technology, human skills such as creativity, critical thinking and emotional intelligence have increased importance, and dominate the World

Economic Forum's list of skills needed for people to succeed in 2020. Employees need to be capable of balancing the possibilities and opportunities of technology, with the disadvantages they present if the human factor is not sufficiently prioritised.

Overcoming the challenges of acquiring digital skills and supporting employee development can lead to higher engagement and according to Gartner (2018) four times better retention, providing a return on the learning investment. Some organizations have made progress, providing employees with access to micro-learning platforms, organising internal hackathons and running workshops and peer-learning exchanges. Though the term has become commonplace, fostering a lifelong learning mindset remains beyond the reach of most learning and development programs. Employee transformation is a prerequisite for the successful digital transformation of a business and possessing a lifelong learning mindset is a crucial part of employee transformation.

Cross-functional teamwork

Team-based cross-functional work is increasingly common, reducing the insulation many people have experienced working in siloed business units. Cross-functional teams, teams composed of members from different functions and with different functional expertise, are commonly found during the implementation of technology to business.

For many experienced employees the opportunities to work in multi-functional or cross-functional teams during their career have been limited, leaving them without the benefit of experience for developing the skills needed to work effectively in cross-functional teams. In a Harvard Business Review article, Tabrizi asserts that 75 percent of cross-functional teams are dysfunctional, with barriers between silos perpetuating within teams cited as a key contributor to dysfunction. Clear governance that addresses silos and aligns rewards to recognize cross-functional team contributions can increase the effective functioning of a cross-functional team. Employees benefit from learning the vernacular of other functions, as it improves communication and understanding. The judicious application of collaboration tools also facilitates better communication and information flow.

With the increasing importance of cross-functional teamwork, there is a significant need for employees to be supported; from opportunities to develop individual capability to perform effectively in cross-functional teams to systemic reconfiguration of the organization structure.



Modern organization structures

To support team-based cross-functional work, organizations have started adopting modern structures such as network and boundaryless structures. A boundaryless structure is uninhibited by the vertical and horizontal limits of departments and functions. People operate in reforming teams, depending on the current needs of the business. People also work in cross-functional teams focused on the delivery of the company's service or product in a network. Networks recognize that information flows across the social connectedness between people. An understanding of the network can be developed through an analysis of communications and knowledge sharing practices. Organization Network Analysis (ONA) tools already exist, and future focused HR departments are using them to develop a deeper understanding of the networks within their organization.


Traditional organization structures are coexisting and slowly being replaced by modern structures, which enable organizations to better respond to the volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity of today. Modern structures require people who can work effectively in continuously reforming cross-functional teams; often as the only individual with their domain knowledge on the team. Individuals performing in such environments need to operate and behave differently from traditional ways of working and are likely to need training and support to do so effectively.

Today's ideal employee is curious and embraces the opportunity to learn, has strong core domain knowledge and knowledge of at least one other domain, a good understanding of technology, and advanced uniquely human attributes such as creativity and critical thinking. Organizations who plan to hire the 'right' people instead of investing in developing their current employees towards the ideal are missing the point. It is unrealistic to

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assume most companies can only hire such people, because supply is insufficient. The historic needs of business did not produce such employees. The labor force changes needed today are wholesale, there won't be anyone unaffected by the transition to the fourth industrial revolution. HR must help individuals transform, while engaging them to transform business. We cannot have one without the other.

According to McKinsey (2018) only 16 percent of digital transformations are successful. Transformation is not fast nor painless, and there is little benefit in delay. Companies that have started their transformation journey are nearer the front of the learning curve than those who have yet to begin. How a company proceeds is dependent on the company's current situation and progress to date with new technologies, systems, structure, and ways of working; there is no single formula for transformation.

A courageous and capable HR department will step up and help lead the transformation of the people and the company, beyond its own functional boundaries. 

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

PHILIPPA (PIP) PENFOLD is CEO & Co-Founder, People Collider



How great leaders create and share a positive vision

A positive leader sees what's possible and then takes the next steps to rally and unite people to create it



“It’s important to have a compelling vision and a comprehensive plan. Positive leadership—conveying the idea that there is always a way forward—is so important because that is what you are here for—to figure out how to move the organization forward”

- Alan Mulally

Leadership is all about seeing and creating a brighter and better future. It’s about inventing, innovating, creating, building, improving, and transforming education, healthcare, business, government, technology, and every aspect of our lives and the world we live in. Some scoff when leaders share bold ideas, imaginative goals, and seemingly impossible dreams, but ideas, imagination, and dreams are the fabric positive leaders weave together to create the future and change the world.

At one time, Star Wars was just an idea in the mind of George Lucas, but now the Force is as strong as ever. J.K. Rowling had a vision of Harry Potter and now he’s an iconic part of our society—and as real as a roller-coaster in Universal Studios. John F. Kennedy had a vision for sending a man to the moon. Ronald Reagan saw the Berlin Wall come down before it crumbled. Steve Jobs imagined the iPod and iPhone long before the world was addicted to them. Abraham Lincoln envisioned a united America. Martin Luther King, Jr., had a dream about equality.

As someone who has had the opportunity to work with many Fortune 500 companies, busi-

nesses, professional and college sports teams, hospitals, schools, and nonprofits, I’ve met many amazing positive leaders and have witnessed firsthand the power of positive leadership. I’ve seen how they have led, inspired, and transformed their teams and organizations. I’ve observed the impact they have had and the results they have achieved. I’ve also researched many positive leaders throughout history and learned about their paths to success.

A positive leader sees what’s possible and then takes the next steps to rally and unite people to create it. Every invention, project, creation, and transformation starts with an idea, an imagination, and a vision of what’s possible. History shows us that if you can see it, you can create it. If you have a vision, then you also have the power to make it happen. Positive leaders tap into the power of a vision and find a way forward. But in order to rally people to follow you, you must be able to articulate and communicate your vision in a simple, clear, bold, and compelling way.

A North Star

The vision a positive leader creates and shares

serves as a North Star that points and moves everyone in an organization in the right direction. The leader must continually point to this North Star and remind everyone that this is where we are going. Yes, we were here yesterday. Yes, this is what happened in the past. But this is where we are going now. We don't have a perfect set of plans because the world is always changing, but we do have a North Star that will guide us. We don't have a perfect road map, but we have a path forward and we have each other. Let's keep our eyes on the North Star and keep moving forward.

Sharing a vision and a North Star is important because everyone needs one. Everyone needs something to hope for and work toward. As humans, we have an innate desire to be great and do something great. We have a longing to improve and create a brighter and better future and, yet, so often fear holds us back.

A Telescope and Microscope

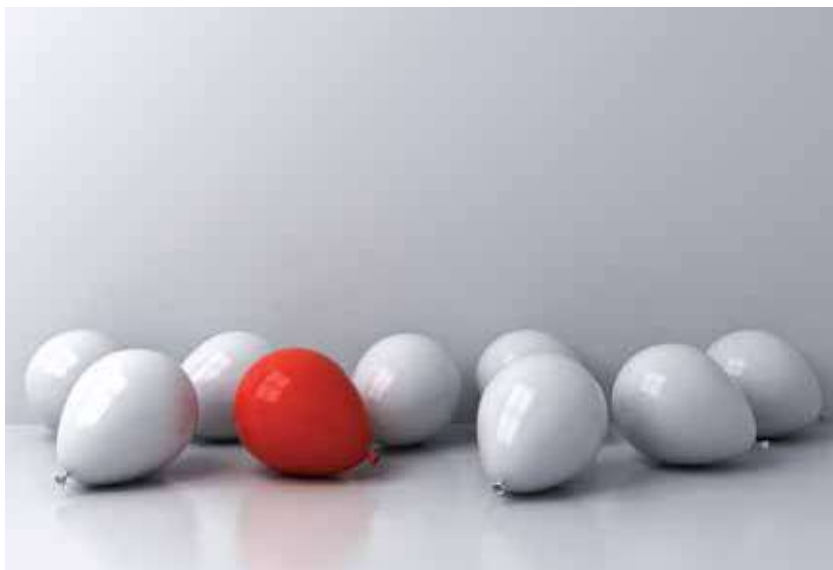
As a positive leader, you will want to carry a telescope and a microscope with you on your journey. The telescope helps you and your team keep your eyes on your vision, North Star, and big picture. The microscope helps you zoom-focus on the things you must do in the short term to realize the vision in your telescope. If you have only a telescope, then you'll be thinking about your vision all the time and dreaming about the future but not taking the necessary steps to realize it. If you have only a microscope, then you'll be working hard every day but setbacks and challenges will likely frustrate and discourage you because you'll lose sight of the big picture.

You need to frequently pull out your telescope to remind yourself and your team where you are going, and you'll need to look through your microscope daily in order to focus on what matters most and follow through on your commitments. Together they will help you take your team and organization where you want to go.

Keep the vision alive

To understand the importance of keeping your vision alive, let's look at marathon runners. The fewest number of people quit a marathon in the first mile. And the second fewest runners quit in the last mile. I would expect a lot to quit in the last mile because, by that point, they have been running the longest and should be the most physically tired. But they don't quit because they are so close to the finish line. They don't quit because they can see the end in sight. They have a vision of where they are going and they keep running towards it. It shows the power of the mind and vision. The body should give up but it doesn't because the mind sees the finish line. Most people quit a marathon in the 20th mile. That is where they are physically tired and mentally drained. They have run far and still have a long way to go. They lose their vision and so they give up.

When I speak to companies, schools, and organizations, I encourage the participants to write down when they experience their 20th mile. We all have




Positive leaders tap into the power of a vision and find a way forward. But in order to rally people to follow you, you must be able to articulate and communicate your vision in a simple, clear, bold, and compelling way

a 20th mile. Then, I encourage them to write down the words "Keep your vision alive" because if you keep your vision alive, you won't stop. You won't give up. Like Dabo you'll keep moving forward and inspiring your team along the way.

Make the vision come alive

One of the simple ways to transform ideas and visions into results is to have a conversation with the people you lead. During each conversation, you should share the vision and ask each person to identify what it means to him or her. For the vision to come to life, it must have meaning to us individually.

After the people on your team identify what the vision means to them, ask them what their personal vision is and how it can help contribute to the bigger vision of the organization. Then ask them how you can help them on their journey. What do they need from you to be their best? Finally, ask them how they would like you to hold them accountable. If you have an open and honest conversation like this with each person you lead and continue to communicate and discuss their personal and organizational visions throughout the year, you'll see the power of a vision come to life. When people know how they are contributing to a bigger vision and have a bigger purpose at work—and feel like their manager-leader-coach genuinely cares about them—the research shows that engagement soars. 

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

JON GORDON is a best-selling author and keynote speaker whose books and talks have inspired readers and audiences around the world. His book, *The Power of Positive Leadership*, is available now.



The plan to being mindful

Today in most of the classrooms, the training is delivered in the form of an elaborate skit, which closely follows a pre-decided structure, moving from one topic or activity to another. Any deviation is seen as a derailer, not as another potential learning opportunity

The classroom is here to stay. The preference for an in-classroom session doesn't seem to be waning despite the proliferation of choices that a modern learner has. In this age of virtual and self-paced training the classroom experience has refused to bow out and for a good reason. This is evident from the fact that most organizations are opting nowadays for a blended design where all these learning elements are leveraged for their strengths. So, I wanted to explore the science behind the preference for the classroom further and decided to talk to a few facilitators, peers and learners. One thing that emerged from the discussion is the difference brought by "being in the presence of peers and facilitators" – this enhanced the learning experience and the learner walks out enriched.

Since it is a physical presence that makes a difference, we can take this a step further and position classrooms to drive impact. The question here is: "Are we deliberately leveraging classrooms to bring in a difference that it is capable of?". This

is a question to both the learners and the trainers, to make them ponder the significance of being mindful during a classroom experience.

Why mindfulness is important

According to the American Psychological Association (APA.org, 2012), mindfulness is: "a moment-to-moment awareness of one's experience without judgment. In this sense, mindfulness is a state and not a trait. While it might be promoted by certain practices or activities, such as meditation, it is not equivalent to or synonymous with them."

Today in most of the classrooms, the training is delivered in the form of an elaborate skit, which closely follows a pre-decided structure, moving from one topic or activity to another. Any deviation is seen as a derailer, not as another potential learning opportunity. This is mostly because the trainers have a greater allegiance to the syllabus than to the moment that they and the participants are experiencing. This can be reversed I believe if both the trainer and the learner become

more mindful of the experience. We all know the 70-20-10 rule. Given that any learning event can only be a trigger for a learning journey should we not make it touch a deeper part of ourselves. Being mindful inside a training session provides:

1. An opportunity for each of us to evaluate our mindset and see if there are any changes that we must undergo
2. A greater degree of contextualization for that group and individual as learning evolves inside the classroom as against a framework being downloaded into the minds of the learner
3. Ensures higher learner autonomy as every learner now is present in the moment to question, discuss and derive what will help him or her to move forward

Imagine a situation where all the content that a facilitator wants to cover is already curated and sent to the learner and once the group meets inside the classroom, they discuss challenges that crop up during execution or the experiences the learners had while putting it to practice



What is happening currently

One of the most common slipups that happen when organizations design learning interventions is that the classrooms are still intended to achieve the same things that a self-paced or a virtual session does. Classroom often focuses on content, frameworks, tools & aids, which are often better delivered using online, interactive, gamified modules.

The other thing that currently isn't addressed is the ability of a classroom session for hyper-personalization, only if we unshackle ourselves from the anchoring presentation that needs to be covered with the given eight hours. Imagine a situation where all the content that a facilitator wants to cover is already curated and sent to the learner and once the group meets inside the classroom, they discuss challenges that crop up during execution or the experiences the learners had while putting it to practice. Let's now explore a few ideas which could take us towards such an experience.

How we can achieve mindfulness in training

Design mindful programs intentionally: Infusing mindfulness in our programs must be by design. If the facilitator is expected to deliver eight hours of content, there is hardly any room for exploration. We should design courses that have more reflection exercises and less content. There must be room not just for discussions but also for digressions. Branding and setting expectations play a vital role here, if the participant walks in, expecting a lecture, the value of these activities will be lost. For example at Adobe, we begin most of our sessions by emphasizing the importance of both "do" and "be" and we say there is no better place for this than "A-dobe". This helps us mitigate the action bias to an extent before we start discussing any topic.

Facilitator's mindset: In a mindful training session, a facilitator is neither a subject matter expert, nor a motivator. Here the facilitator is a moderator who will create a synergy among the group and ensure peer to peer learning. The value of the facilitator will emerge when he connects these discussions with the concepts and contextualizes this to the group that is in the class right now. The facilitator should also be comfortable with fluidity in terms of structure, time and roles. The training now becomes a co-learning experience than a knowledge transfer.

Use proven techniques: There is a plethora of tools that help us improve our mindfulness, it would be a good idea to



In a mindful training session, a facilitator is not a subject matter expert, neither a motivator. Here the facilitator is a moderator who will create a synergy among the group and ensure peer to peer learning

incorporate some of these into our training. Consider replacing an energizing activity with a guided breathing exercise. We could start the sessions with a small meditation exercise. At Adobe, we make good use of guided breathing in training sessions. Sometimes people fall asleep during these activities which is viewed positively as the person would wake up recharged to move ahead.

Digital Detox: One of the greatest hurdles in being mindful is our constant access to information. With mobiles configured and designed to do anything that a laptop does, we are never away from our work or social media. So, it is a good idea to have a device free session. If the lack of online Oxygen makes the learners gasp, they could access the devices during breaks or during lunch as a first step. An entire day without the pings and notifications will not only do wonders to the learning but also to our own wellbeing.

Create a space of learning: We must also acknowledge the importance of the physical setting in delivering a mindful session. A classroom where there is no barrier between the facilitator and the participant feels more inclusive for sure. The seating must also be conducive to an open discussion, like a large circle of which the facilitator is also a part as

opposed to a circle with a facilitator standing outside. Often, the judicious use of good music has also improved the environment. What I found effective is the interpolation of music, discussion, and silence for people to focus, contextualize and reflect.

Classrooms provide us with an opportunity to touch and change people's lives and we must start making full use of this time to ensure that the learner not just acquires skills but goes out as a much more mindful, sensitive and collaborative person. With each of us taking such small steps, we can usher in this revolution in learning, which is as important if not more as the technological one. 🧘

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

MADAN PANATHULA is the Senior Talent Development Partner at Adobe and is a New Age Learning Strategist, with a specialization in Emergent Learning Methodologies. Madan has ten years of international experience in Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Europe & East Africa across various industries.

The more technological our decisions become, the more important the human becomes:

Paul Gibbons

In an exclusive interaction with People Matters, **Paul Gibbons** talks about how successful digital transformation hinges on the ability to bring people in the workplace closer together and fostering the uniquely human qualities that make a business thrive, and what are the key reasons behind these transformations failing

By Yasmin Taj



An author, speaker, public intellectual, and expert on business ethics and leadership, Paul Gibbons helps business leaders use science and philosophy - science, to make better strategic decisions, implement change, innovate, change culture, and create workplaces where talent flourishes, and philosophy to navigate ethical conundrum around AI, privacy, and disinformation. In 2017, he was recognized as one of the top 20 experts on culture change. His most recent book, *Impact* (21st-century change management, behavioral science, digital transformation, and the future of work) is the second in a series called *Leading Change in the Digital Age*. The book shows a way out of the irony of using "analog" change methods in the 21st century and using old school methods in 21st-century digitally enabled business.

In an exclusive interaction with People Matters, Paul shares his views on the digital transformation journeys that organizations are going through, how successful transformation hinges to bring people closer together, and what are the key reasons behind these transformations failing.

Q Take us through your journey so far.

A I started as a science and math guy and went on to work in banking. Thereafter, I went into consulting and with my science and math background, the kind of consulting I did was called 'expert consulting'. So, we provided copious advice to clients, which in my case was derivatives. One of the most stunning things to me as a young and naïve consultant was when I produced a report for the Barclays Bank. To my astonishment, though they said they loved the report and found it marvelous, they did nothing with it. And we had charged them seven figures for it! I was perplexed and disappointed at that time. I was idealistic and was thinking my work would make a difference. So, I then became curious about change, both at an organizational and personal level. So, mid-career, I reinvented myself and went back to school and got a Masters in Psychology followed by a Masters in Philosophy and then founded my own Leadership Development Company in London, where we did some really interesting work. And then, I became a professor after I moved to the United States and teach Business Ethics now.

Q Please tell us more about your book, *Impact*, which is focused on what businesses need to do, from cultural changes to upskilling, to avoid getting left behind in the race to digitize 21st-century business. What made you write this book?

A One of the things I realize today is that when I was taught change management in the 90s, a lot of it was wrong. The very first model was something from Kübler-Ross' research on Death and Dying. It basically talks about five stages of denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance that people who are dying went through. But somehow this got adopted as something that happened in organizations when people go through change. As if a change in business needs to be like a death experience. I think a lot of those metaphors are fallacious and wrong-headed. I wanted to debunk these bad change models in my books – *The Science of Successful Organizational Change* and *Impact*. Also, now there are new ideas on change and a lot of amazing stuff has been happening in behavioral science that is first being brought to the public attention with books like *Thinking, Fast and Slow* and *Predictably Irrational*, which are two books on the limits of human thinking and rationality. So, behavioral sciences provide us really interesting ways to change behavior that are better than the old-fashioned ways that I learnt. The other reason that I wrote this book was because with all the brand-new concepts - like Artificial Intelligence, the fourth industrial revolution, the future of work, the changing culture that millennials represent, the globalization of the workforce, etc. - the context in which we do change is different and so I thought a book needs to be written that covers these topics.

Q What is your take on the digital transformations that organizations are going through at the moment?

A It is one of the most exciting changes to happen in the last 35 years in the business scenario. I am particularly excited about the developments in healthcare. It is interesting to see how AI and robotics are going to improve human wellness. However, though digital transformation is among the most exciting opportunities in business today, according to McKinsey, only 25% of them succeed. So, if you are a CEO today, you are on the horns of a dilemma. You risk investing a lot of capital with possibly a high chance of failure or you take another way, which is, not to follow the digital path and resist being disrupted or being put out of business. It is an interesting time to be a leader, and a challenging one too.

Q In your book, you have mentioned why digital transformations in businesses fail. Can you tell us the top three reasons for this failure?

A Some of it has to do with people change. Of course, there are technological challenges but a lot of it boils down to people challenges. It also has to do with upskilling your people for example. It is certainly the human challenges that captivate me the most. Some of those can be having a mindset to

work with data rather than traditional ways of making decisions, having the skills to work with data, and having a culture where people are ready to experiment. In behavioral science, a lot of what you need to do is about experimenting with different behaviors to find out what produces the best results. You need to do that in data science too; you need to have an experimental mindset and an agile mindset. Organizations have always struggled for change and always struggled with engaging people, so none of that is new. The necessity for culture and mindset changes are not new, but I think they are more dramatic than they have been previously. I guess in a three-word summary, it would be - mindset, skills and culture. These are the top reasons for the failure of many digital transformations.

With all the brand-new concepts - like Artificial Intelligence, the fourth industrial revolution, the future of work, the changing culture that millennials represent, the globalization of the workforce, etc. - the context in which we do change is different



Q Impact argues that successful digital transformation hinges on the ability to bring people in the workplace closer together and fostering the uniquely human qualities that make a business thrive: curiosity, community, collaboration and trust. Could you shed some light on this?

A Digital transformation isn't unique; it has always been the case that to make change happen, you need some kind of coherence or alignment from staff. But digital transformation gives us an opportunity to do that in new ways. For example, the old top-down model of communication is that the leaders come up with strategy and then try to align people with it. That model of the strategists coming up with the design for the business and then hoping to persuade people of the wisdom of it and to bring their hearts and minds along, is an old model. It is an old model for a couple of reasons. People lower down in the organization are most close to the customers and what's going on and there are many more of them who can provide strategic insight. But further more, if you involve them constantly in checking the strategy,

you have the opportunity to engage them first and develop the strategy later. That doesn't mean that if you have an organization of a million people, everyone gets an equal vote. By engaging people and bringing them together first and thinking about the strategy second, you have an opportunity to not have to persuade them later that your idea is good. We also have new tools for constant engagement now and with new communication techniques, you can talk to customers all the time. So, you can create these communities where people learn and discuss constantly. You want a model of constant engagement and not one of periodic engagement. It is good for one of the other things I am interested in, which is democracy in organizations. It is about giving people a say in matters that affect their working lives. There's a paradox that more technological our decisions become, the more important the human becomes.

Q To make a success of digital transformation, effective leadership and a mature organization culture is required. What is the mindset that leaders require in order to actually succeed in a digital world?

A There are two important ones. One of them is that they need to put culture first. Satya Nadella once said, "The C in CEO stands for Culture". One of the things he undertook when he took over Microsoft, he said we are going to make this a culture where people experiment, where people take risks and collaborate, where people have fun at work, where people are at the liberty to be creative, and where people have a growth mindset. And he saw that as CEO as one of his most important jobs, because culture is the soil in which all of these innovations and projects take place. A metaphor I have used in the book is, 'a leader is

Though digital transformation is among the most exciting opportunities in business today, according to McKinsey, only 25% of them succeed. So, if you are a CEO today, you are on the horns of a dilemma



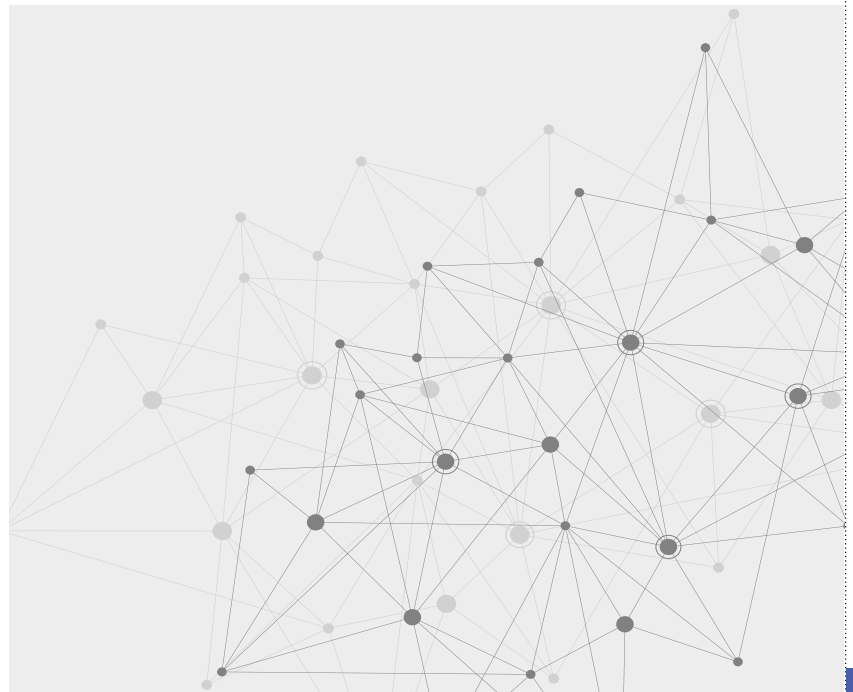
the master gardener'. So, there is a little bit of time spent tending to individual tasks, but what you want to make sure is that the soil is correct, the layout is correct, the plants are properly placed together and essentially, you are looking much more holistically at the business. The other metaphor I used in the book is, 'a leader is a learner'. For organizations to upskill quickly enough, leaders need to model the behavior. Leaders need to be modeling constant learning. They need to be the Chief Learning Officers, they need to be demonstrating to the workplace that though our current capability is great and valuable, but it's the slope of the line and how quickly and easily people are developing will tell us about our future.

Q What cultural traits must an organization possess before embarking upon a digital transformation journey?

A Some of the cultural traits according to me are creativity, having a mindset of experimentation, having the skills to conduct data science and behavioral science experiments, and also having a culture that understands the importance of being able to fail fast but fail forward. One of the people I admire today is Elon Musk. He is someone who is prepared to look at the next quarter of the century instead of the next quarter financial results. Where do I want my business to be in the next quarter of the century? He is one of the few people I know who is looking at a 20-year term. For me, the higher up you go in the organization, the more you need to expand your horizons.

Q One of the chapters in your book is based on change management. How can organizations make change management successful and what is the future of change management?

A One of the things that's a problem is that change is too important to be left to a specialist. So, the model right now is that you have a manager who gets an opportunity on the job, goes away to do an MBA and then comes back and drops all of that theoretical knowledge. But nothing that they have learnt so far has taught them how to manage change, how to empathize with people, how to bring people along, how to create a vision, how to engage stakeholders, how to manage risks, etc. They haven't learnt any of that stuff. In all my time working at organizations, most of the headaches people have are when big changes happen. So, you don't want to call a consultant every time you have a change problem. You want some skills yourself. Like when there is a conflict within my team or between two other people, you should have the skills to bring people together. So, a lot of what we pay change management specialists to do, is just a substitute for things that we don't teach people in management education. By and large, we don't teach people sufficiently people skills and change skills when we deliver management education.



Organizations have always struggled for change and always struggled with engaging people, so none of that is new. The necessity for culture and mindset changes are new, but I think they are more dramatic than they have been previously

Q Any particular tip/recommendation that you would like to share with HR leaders on building an impactful digital-ready culture?


A One of the things that gets talked about a lot is about learning organizations. It is about having an organization that learns. Learning is similar to growth, change and life. But all of those are part of life. The fact that life has existed on our planet for as long as it has is because we were able to learn and adapt very quickly as a species. When we became able to talk to one another, we were able to share those insights and learnings and build a historical record of things. So, that's our great superpower as human beings – learning and adaptation. Organizations need to think and work on how to create a developmental culture. Organizations need to have a culture where everybody spends a decent percentage of their time not just on delivering work, but on getting better at delivering work. They should focus on bettering themselves and bettering their own capacity to deliver. **Am**

SKILLS GAP BRIDGING THE CHASM

The world of work is changing fast,
but are we doing enough to keep
pace with the change?

By **Mastufa Ahmed**

Human capital is the biggest asset to any organization and is also the key to achieving business goals. This makes it imperative for organizations to prepare their workforce for the future through continuous learning. Learning the new and unlearning the old is the way to stay relevant in today's dynamic business environment. The skills needed for most jobs are changing rapidly and our training systems are lagging behind. As such, 35 percent of skills demanded for jobs across industries will change by 2020, according to World Economic Forum. Hence, empowering workers to remodel and update their skills is a key concern for organizations across the globe.

The cover story attempts to dig deep into the current learning and development scenario across industries, initiatives organizations are embracing to tackle the skills gap, technologies that are powering the skilling conundrum, challenges businesses face to skill and re-skill their employees, and what L&D function needs to do to enable organizations to reinvent for tomorrow. 

Commitment, advocacy of C-suite is critical for L&D: HP's Global Head of People Development



The Global Head of People Development at HP, **Mike Jordan**, in a free-wheeling conversation with People Matters, shares intriguing insights on the impact of 4th industrial revolution on the workforce and the skilling scenario and how L&D team of tomorrow need to look like in order to prepare organizations for a digital future

By Mastufa Ahmed

Mike has been working with companies for more than 20 years to transform their approaches to development, leadership and culture. From a tech startup, DigitalGlobe, which he helped to scale and take public, to larger organizations like Verizon, Shell and Sony, he has partnered with leaders to define and refine the way they think about their people. He has consulted and worked with global companies in marketing, HR and channel management.

As the Global Head of People Development at HP, Mike and his team have transformed the function, including the implementation of a social learning platform, as well as reinventing how talent, career and performance management help shape a culture of innovation. Outside of work, Mike volunteers, hikes with his dog (Charlie) and is an avid movie fan.

Here are the excerpts of the interview.

Q What kind of impact will the 4th industrial revolution have on the workforce and the skilling scenario?

A At HP, we're not only preparing to enter the 4th industrial revolution with our digital manufacturing business, we are preparing employees to develop and thrive as automation, robotics and roles shift with the digital transformation. We have been implementing digital fluency for employees to build skills aligned to HP's digital strategy and will launch development roadmaps for deeper certifications across all businesses and functions. It is core to HP's values to leverage a growth mindset, continue learning and staying curious, and to keep reinventing our own skills to lead HP into the future.

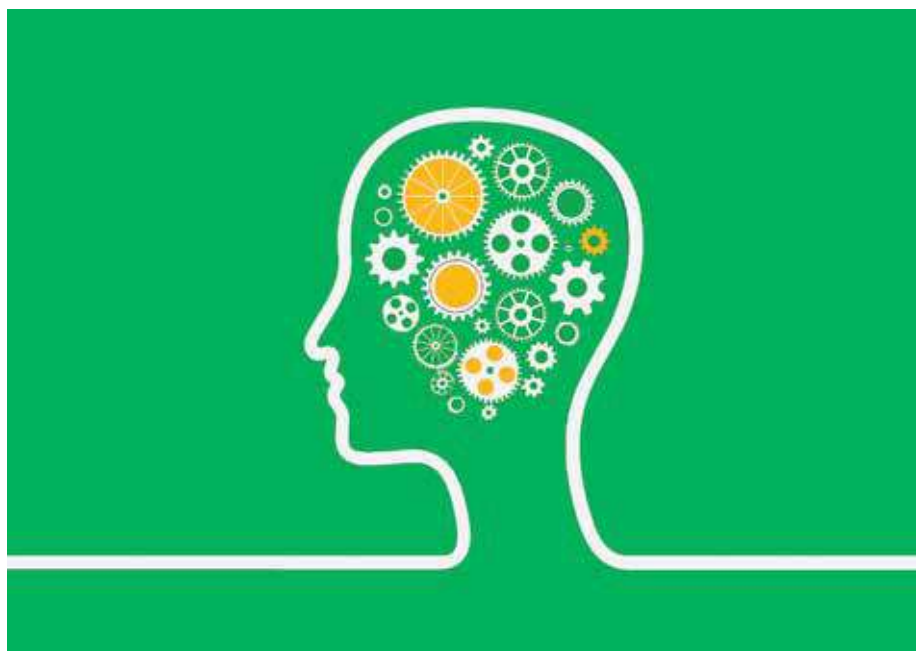
Q The World Economic Forum predicts that by 2022, no less than 54% of all

employees will require significant re-skilling and upskilling. So, how can organizations upskill their workforce at this scale and make them future-ready?

Organizations play a critical role in supporting the development of their employees, and can harness the creativity and new skills employees attain to lead their company into the future. Each company will have a unique strategy about what becomes digital and how they will transform, and nobody is better positioned to lead transformation than the employees who work there. From process reengineering to automation and improved data insights, employees know what can be amplified or transformed better than anyone – and with the right skills they can lead the charge.

Q How can L&D function help reinvent organizations to prepare for future of work?

A Employees want the context for how and why an organization is changing at the outset. A clear strategy and story galvanizes and activates people to see where they are headed and how they fit into the future. Then comes personalization and choice. Employees want access to different development roadmaps and to connect to their interests to find the intersection



AT HP, WE'RE NOT ONLY PREPARING TO ENTER THE 4TH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION WITH OUR DIGITAL MANUFACTURING BUSINESS, WE ARE PREPARING EMPLOYEES TO DEVELOP AND THRIVE AS AUTOMATION, ROBOTICS AND ROLES SHIFT WITH THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

between what they want to do and what the business needs. When that overlap happens, and learning can be applied to real work, transformation happens faster and with more engaged employees.

L&D teams have the task of connecting multiple platforms and development methods so the user experience feels personal and lacks complexity. Employees have increasingly higher expectations and want the platforms they use at work to look and feel like those in their personal lives. If the experience is cumbersome, unwieldy, or unavailable on a device, employees quickly disengage and are hard to convert.

Q What holds an organization's learning and development efforts from reaching their full potential? Is it because of a lack of planning and commitment from the C-suite?

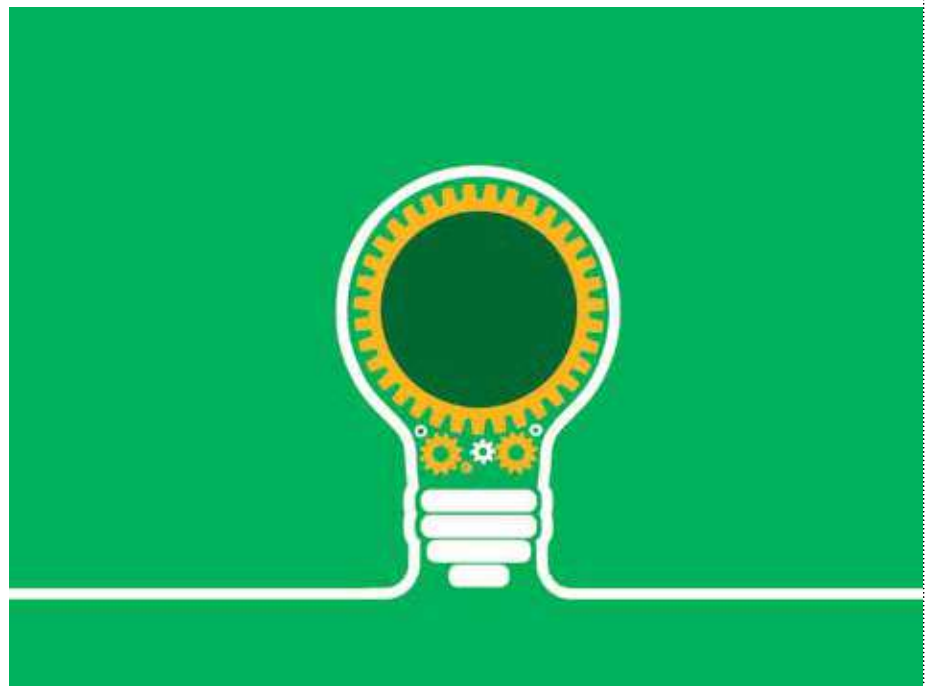
A The c-suite is critical in both commitment and advocacy for development. At HP we have a strong development culture that is reinforced by executives with their teams and cascades into the organization. Everyone struggles to find time to develop and carving out time requires support and encouragement from the top of the organization to keep reinventing ourselves.

Q How important is identifying, assessing, and addressing skills gaps? How to conduct a skills gap analysis?

A Soft skills (though I hate the term as they are the most challenging to get right) become even more critical as work moves up the value change through digital transformation. This is true for current employees as much as new hires. We focus on developing roadmaps for storytelling, creativity, managing conflict, influencing and decision making, to name a few, so employees can keep an edge. We also assess external talent with a rigorous interview process that uncovers critical skills required for roles.

Q A 2019 LinkedIn study finds that the biggest challenge for talent development is getting employees to make time for learning. In such a scenario, what's the way forward for organizations and how can they deliver training on multiple platforms?

A The time challenge is real for employees at every level in the organization. We all have the same 24 hours in a day and we reinforce the practice of finding and carving out time to develop in a way that works for each employee. Having multiple platforms and approaches is key to this as some employees want short nuggets each day on their mobile device while others prefer a deeper dive in a face-to-face experi-



ORGANIZATIONS PLAY A CRITICAL ROLE IN SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR EMPLOYEES, AND CAN HARNESS THE CREATIVITY AND NEW SKILLS EMPLOYEES ATTAIN TO LEAD THEIR COMPANY INTO THE FUTURE

ence. Choice is key and support from leaders to make time is critical – so we focus on both levers.

Q How can L&D function leverage technologies such as analytics to power reinvention and make an organization-wide impact?

A L&D teams have access to and can leverage data from multiple sources in their organizations. We look at engagement scores for leaders and whether they are talent scouts (movement through their teams) to determine development plans. From our social learning platform, Brain Candy, we can see what skills are most searched, accessed, and endorsed to inform what content we develop and curate. We also look at business, role and regional data to ensure development meets the diverse needs of our employees across the globe.

Q What does the L&D team of tomorrow need to look like in order to prepare organizations for a digital future?

A L&D teams need to continue to transform and stay ahead of technologies, methods, and business trends. Besides being obsessed with how employees learn, and leveraging empathy and design thinking

(we think of ourselves as a product team), we want learning to be accessible, engaging and simple to navigate. Everything should add up to employees developing in ways they care about to drive the business forward in a way that matters.

Q What is your advice for CHROs and people managers who face challenges to skill and re-skill their employees including cost and other bottlenecks?

A There are more low-cost development options these days that offer a Netflix-style way of learning, which we leverage. In our Brain Candy platform we curate content from multiple providers and organize by topic. While we fund many of the options, there are some that are funded by managers with development budgets for their teams. This keeps flexibility for teams to drive critical development for the work they're doing and keeps costs down for the organization. **em**

Michelle Prince is the SVP, Global HR, Head Learning & Development at Randstad. Michelle provides strategic human capital leadership in the areas of leadership development, employee engagement, organization design, organization effectiveness, HR analytics, career development, expatriate management, diversity and inclusion, executive coaching, mentoring, and innovative learning techniques. Michelle has national

Create right programs at the right time, at the right scale: Global Head of L&D, Randstad



The L&D team of tomorrow needs to be prepared to use multimedia tools to train people on new processes as well as soft skills that are becoming even more important such as interpersonal dynamics, influencing skills, and critical thinking skills, says **Michelle Prince**, the Global Head of Learning & Development at Randstad

By Mastufa Ahmed

and international industry experience in HR services, technology, pharmaceuticals, medical devices, and financial services, working for market leaders Randstad, First Data, Novartis, and Siemens. Michelle is a speaker and media contributor on the topics of workplace issues and trends.

In her current role, Michelle is responsible for ensuring Randstad learning and development investments are optimized to deliver business results and create a strong leadership pipeline for the company. Randstad is a global leader in the HR services industry headquartered in Diemen, the Netherlands with over 38,000 corporate employees working across 38 markets, employing over 650,000 people every day and training over 300,000 people annually.

Michelle holds a Doctorate of Management in Organizational Leadership from the University of Phoenix, a Master of Science in Human Resources from Rochester Institute of Technology, and a Bachelor of Science in Management from Binghamton University.

Here are the excerpts of the interview.

Q How do you see the impact of fourth industrial revolution on the workforce?

A Automation, globalization, and workforce aging spark public debate and concern over the future of work. Society and its leaders are facing the challenge of how they can use these developments to foster economic growth, while at the same time ensuring decent work, fair pay, and adequate social security.

The digital revolution has brought its own set of labor market impacts which, considering the speed of innovation in robotics, machine learning and Artificial Intelligence (AI), will continue into the future. These impacts are all getting a great deal of public attention as they propel fears of job losses – fears that, although understandable, are factually unfounded. In our Flexibility@Work 2019 publication “Future of Work, an agenda” the authors, Maarten Goos and Anna Salomons (Utrecht University & Boston University TPRI) show that automation will actually have a positive net effect on jobs. Advancing technologies are likely to increase total employment by around 0.5% annually.

There will be no shortage of jobs in the future of work, but work will change fundamentally. While embracing the future, we also need to brace for change. Shaping a future of work that is more inclusive and rewarding for all calls for a transition agenda and a whole-of-government approach that includes all stakeholders, targeting interventions to those who need them most.



THERE IS NO SHORTAGE OF CAPABLE VENDORS WHO SAY THEY CAN SUCCESSFULLY IMPLEMENT TECHNOLOGY INTO THE ORGANIZATION. HOWEVER, IT'S THE ORGANIZATION'S OWN PEOPLE WHO NEED TO ADOPT THE NEW TECHNOLOGY AND USE THE NEW TOOLS WHO ARE GOING TO DETERMINE IF AN ORGANIZATION WILL REALIZE ITS TRUE VALUE

Q What strategies can organizations follow to upskill their workforce and make them future ready?

A Jobs in the future will not be the same as those of today. Despite an increase in total employment, on average 1 in 7 individual workers will be faced with job loss as a direct result of automation. The changing nature of jobs has been an enduring feature of past waves of technological progress and will ultimately lead to the emergence of three new work types: ‘frontier work’, ‘wealth work’ and ‘last-mile work’. Frontier work concerns jobs in new technological fields, wealth work concerns jobs created thanks to increased productivity and last-mile work concerns jobs that cannot yet be automated. Looking even further ahead, the OECD estimates that 65% of the children currently at nursery school will end up doing a job that does not yet exist, such as ‘vertical urban gardener’ or ‘drone controller’.

New jobs will require new and different skills. While the rising demand for hard STEM skills and basic digital skills is well known, there is also ample evidence of a rise in the demand for soft social skills. Crucially, we will need to prepare our educational systems for these 21st-century jobs. In addition, we will need to create seamless public-private partnerships – connecting the world of work with that of education – enabling life-long learning opportunities to support workers in their careers and to help them transition securely to new jobs. Randstad is certainly playing its part in meeting this need for upskilling and reskilling. In 2018 alone, we trained some 300,000 flex workers worldwide.

Q What's new in learning and why businesses should embrace them?

A The most critical thing that the L&D function needs to do to enable organizations to reinvent for tomorrow is to create the right programs at the right time, at the right scale. Segmenting L&D efforts and investments is important because we need to support the business needs of today while building for the future. Staying aligned with the current business strategy and priorities to deliver programs needed today; and ensure these programs provide the expected business impact (measure, adapt). We do this while simultaneously building the skills and competencies of leaders needed for the near future according to the longer-term outlook of the organization, industry, competition, etc. L&D also needs to stay closely aligned with the people strategy and strategic workforce plans in order to understand what future skills need to be planned for, by when, and what will be the demand expectations for programs to build these skills. The design and development of these new programs take time, and will likely need to be agile to accommodate fast-changing content, while also being scalable - so planning appropriately is critical.

What's new? It depends on where you are starting from. For some companies, the 'next step' may be something as basic as moving from traditional classroom training to implementing a learning experience platform for self-paced development or delivery of tech-enabled learning programs. Many companies, like Randstad, are implementing "tech & touch" blended learning solutions that combine the delivery of learning content using tech-enabled methods with bolstering the application of learning through group discussions, social learning methods, practice sessions, and experiential learning opportunities. At the other end of the spectrum, some compa-

nies are already using next-generation learning tools like virtual or augmented reality to provide employees with more innovative learning experiences.

Q The CEO of one of the largest L&D providers in the US says, "the biggest mistake I see that keeps an organization's learning and development efforts from reaching their full potential is a lack of planning and commitment from the C-suite. What's your take on this?"

A Executives who view digital transformation as human transformation understand the commitment that is needed and the time it takes - whether be it for new L&D technology or business-oriented technology. There is no shortage of capable vendors who say they can successfully implement technology into the organization. However, it's the organization's own people who need to adopt the new technology and use the new tools who are going to determine if an organization will realize its true value. What's key to any transformation is shifting the culture, processes and business model to leverage digital capabilities. This requires visible and ongoing support from executives and managers, planning and resourcing efforts

appropriately, understanding that new technology implementations take time and don't always go perfectly the first attempt, adapting plans as needed, providing the necessary training, and demonstrating their ability to lead people through times of change and uncertainty by communicating clearly, empowering their people, and role modeling the courage to learn and try new ways of working.

Q There is widespread concern among recruiters that the soft skills gap is widening with the technologically savvy but soft-skill-poor Gen Z employees entering the workforce. In fact, one of the top areas that talent developers expect to focus on through 2019 is identifying, assessing, and addressing skills gaps, according to a study. Your take?

A In my opinion, talent developers ought to be prioritizing building those skills that deliver the best Customer Experience (CX) and Employee Experience (EX), and the skills needed for these are not necessarily a generational issue. The skills needed to create a delightful customer experience is going to differ based on factors such as industry, geography, technology, and customer expectations. By focusing on

TALENT DEVELOPERS OUGHT TO BE PRIORITIZING BUILDING THOSE SKILLS THAT DELIVER THE BEST CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE (CX) AND EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE (EX), AND THE SKILLS NEEDED FOR THESE ARE NOT NECESSARILY A GENERATIONAL ISSUE



creating development programs that build the skills needed for delivering on the CX, the emphasis is less on the generation of employees or singling out members of certain generations, and much more focus on building collaboration and a continuous improvement mindset to deliver well across the organization.

Q How can organizations deliver training on multiple platforms to eliminate the time crunch for busy employees?

A Many people already feel overworked, some feel overwhelmed by ever-increasing workloads and expectations, therefore, carving out time for formal learning is not necessarily their priority. However, learning can take many forms beyond the “traditional classroom” or online learning environment - for example, being assigned to a new project, taking on the challenge of leading an initiative, receiving mentoring from a peer or coaching from a manager, or simply trying to get more

Q How can technology and analytics be leveraged for L&D to power reinvention and make an organization-wide impact?


A The first question to ask is what business outcome are we trying to drive and will technology enable us to achieve it best? If we start by trying to implement a particular L&D technology without understanding the problem we are trying to solve, then it's likely that usage and adoption will be low and we won't achieve the ROI or business impact intended.

We have to view our learners just like ‘customers’ or ‘end-users’. So if we start by asking ourselves business-related questions, such as “How could we better serve our customers (the employees) through faster, more flexible technology?” or “How could artificial intelligence transform the way we train our employees?” or “How can we leverage technology to enable us to scale our programs or accelerate adoption of our new digital tools most effectively and efficiently?” Once you understand your goals, you can make better technology

tencies need further development? What expertise can be more fully leveraged across the organization? Who is ready for a new role? Who is at risk of leaving due to mastery of a role and/or ambitious career aspirations? What development or experiences does someone need to be successful in a certain role?

Q What is your advice for CHROs and people managers who face challenges to skill and re-skill their employees including cost and other bottlenecks?

A CHROs need to have a people strategy that addresses the needs of today and plan for the needs of the future - working with business and technology leaders to comprehend what will be the organizational skills needed for the future. Across the world, industries are being faced with skills gaps. According to one study, France will require 80,000 more IT and electronics workers than will be available by 2020, while the US will have to deal with having 250,000 fewer data scientists than it needs. In the UK, 23 percent of people lack basic digital skills despite the fact that they are required for around 90 percent of all new jobs. Talent scarcity already exists and it will become more difficult, competitive, and will take more time to fill open positions for new skills needed in the future and this can be very costly for the company. Attracting and retaining people with scarce skills will become a greater issue than it already is today. The workforce of the future will be made up of employees, contractors, freelancers, and gig workers as they allow for flexibility and adaptability to meet the fast-changing needs of the business.

Many CHROs are already considering how to upskill (keeping people in the same job but advancing their skills) or reskill (moving people to a fundamentally new role) their existing employees. Increased use of HR analytics and data are now allowing companies to address talent shortages and look at redeployment in a new, more “intelligent” way, making redeployment to internal job moves more effective than ever before. While redeploying employees has been a strategy used by companies in the past, what's modern about it is the use of HR data and analytics, providing much more information about the organization's human capital. 

ACROSS THE WORLD, INDUSTRIES ARE BEING FACED WITH SKILLS GAPS. ACCORDING TO ONE STUDY, FRANCE WILL REQUIRE 80,000 MORE IT AND ELECTRONICS WORKERS THAN WILL BE AVAILABLE BY 2020, WHILE THE US WILL HAVE TO DEAL WITH HAVING 250,000 FEWER DATA SCIENTISTS THAN IT NEEDS

efficient at what you are already doing by learning to use technology more effectively. Ideally, employees are learning all the time, so by redefining “learning” as having a continuous learning mindset people and organizations can stay current, relevant and agile. Offering support, such as reallocation of work projects, for those who need to attend formal training classes can help them stay on top of work priorities while completing their training.

Using multiple methods of learning can reduce time away from the job. What I've been reading lately from experts is the need for L&D to integrate learning into the job, so that people are learning while working. Using tech-enabled learning support guides that integrate with software systems, on-demand job aids to support the process workflow, along with suggested “next steps”, and mini “how-to” videos that people can access in the moment of need are examples of ways people can learn while doing the work and this can also enhance engagement and productivity.

decisions - this applies in L&D as well as across the business.

There is an ever-increasing array of tools and technology platforms offering ways to train and engage employees - selecting the right method of training i.e. traditional classroom, mobile, e-learning platforms, social/content creation, content curation, MOOCs, self-paced online programs, technology academies, learning laboratories, etc. depends on what you need to train as well as the readiness of your workforce to accept these different methods. There is not a one-size-fits-all approach and every company is going to likely have to manage an ecosystem of learning methods, tools, and provider resources to gain the most impact.

Data and analytics that help us reflect, understand, and predict the behavior of our employees can be leveraged by L&D and Talent Management, providing answers to questions such as - Are we getting the right participants into our learning programs? Can we show the application of learning? What skills and compe-



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Learning is the new currency: Mastercard's Chief People Officer



Learning should be a business priority, says **Michael Fraccaro**, the Chief People Officer of Mastercard, while talking about reskilling talent to adapt to change, in a conversation with People Matters

By Vallari Gupte

Leveraging a learning culture to gear up for the future of work, instilling a sense of purpose among all employees, and staying ahead of the curve when it comes to building the right skills for the digital age, are just some of the aspects of being a Chief People Officer that Michael Fraccaro is passionately concerned about.

Having worked in the BFSI sector and lived across the globe throughout his career, Fraccaro values cultural nuances and asks L&D leaders to identify those trends in order to inculcate a culture of continuous learning and rally the employees towards a common goal of upskilling themselves and in turn building a skills' pipeline for the organization.

In a candid conversation with People Matters, Michael Fraccaro, Chief People Officer, Mastercard, talks about valuing "learning" as the new currency of a business that is prepared to change the game

and build high-performing teams and organizations.

Here are the excerpts of the interview.

Q Having worked with the BFSI sector for a long time now, what do you see as the top trends that, in your opinion, are going to transform the future of HR for the BFSI sector?

A A couple of trends that I'm seeing across the board are the rise of AI and Machine Learning, especially in the BFSI sector. We see the merging in business and the ability to accelerate the mining of data in order to help inform better decision-making or to help mitigate risks or risk profiles, which is crucial in the BFSI landscape. In terms of the HR perspective, we get hundreds of thousands of resumes of candidates who are looking for jobs. Through technology, resume screening has become more accurate. Tools based on AI and ML enable HR leaders to speed up the process of identifying the right resume and can also mitigate bias.

create flexible organizations and set a learning agenda to re-skill talent to adapt to change?

A We know the types of skills that we're looking for and even the types of skills that other companies are looking for. We also know that, for example, there is a rising demand for data scientists or cybersecurity experts and those with expertise in artificial intelligence and machine learning. There is a large demand for those kinds of skills and a supply of those job roles. However, the supply of that talent is limited. It is precisely why CEOs and CHROs need to ensure that there is a culture of learning and that we provide the infrastructure and the training required to upskill the existing workforce.

The culture of learning is not just limited to conducting trainings or skill-building sessions just for the sake of it. It must be very intentional and driven by the organizational strategy. It is also about thinking beyond learning through definite classrooms or traditional means. We have

CEOS AND CHROS NEED TO ENSURE THAT THERE IS A CULTURE OF LEARNING AND THAT WE PROVIDE THE INFRASTRUCTURE AND THE TRAINING REQUIRED TO UPSKILL THE EXISTING WORKFORCE

Another major trend is around data analytics. Just business is focusing on making data decisions or conducting targeted marketing based on data analytics. Especially at Mastercard where we deal with a lot of data, data analytics is not just a nice-to-have but a must-have. Being mindful of data privacy and at the same time leveraging the information to understand what training modules would be beneficial for the employees, plot the kinds of jobs and skills that are emerging in the field becomes essential.

Another major trend is for organization to become more aware and build a socially-oriented organizational mission. Big organizations have a major role to play in helping solve some of the world's biggest issues. My role in the people function is to actually pivot and make connections between the types of partnerships that we have in the wider business landscape, while providing opportunities for our employees to volunteer their time and dedicate themselves to some of these initiatives.

Q With global trends changing the way we conceptualize work, workplace, and workforce, how can CEOs and CHROs

multi-blended learning approaches that combine online learning, classroom training, in-person conferences, etc.

We look at learning through three lenses: Education, Exposure, Experience. These are the three key pillars of the learning culture at Mastercard.

Q How is the L&D landscape changing with respect to new talent management practices and what are some of the new approaches being followed by employers to enhance learning and development?

A The focus of the L&D function has moved towards realizing that employees are interested in being with those organizations that are invested in their employees' career development.

Ensuring that there are career development conversations with employees at least once a year—that's sort of the basic hygiene now. Education, experience, and exposure are a core part of talent management practices. Providing managers and employees with the opportunity to move from one business unit to another, from one geography to another either through attachments or short-term and/or long-term assignments, or working on a variety

of projects so that the employees can get the required experience and exposure. The most nimble of companies, the most agile ones are those that are going to win in the war for talent and those that actually invest heavily in development—not just in traditional classroom-based training but taking a look at the experience of learning as a whole and developing a multifaceted approach to developing quality and relevant talent. That's a key practice as well.

The onus is on the talent leader to empower employees with the required reskilling and upskilling opportunities as are deemed necessary given the rapidly evolving landscape of technology. Development areas could differ for various employees—it could be about relationship building, making presentations, whatever skill it may be that would help the employees build their career. And the second part of that is around what are the actions? What is it that the manager can do or someone else in your own agency that can help develop employees' careers?

Q You have led global talent management transformation at companies such as HSBC Asia Pacific and Australia. Can you share some of your learnings with our readers?

A Even though the cultural context of operating changes across different geographies, the one learning is that despite differences, there is one commonality amongst organizations who are looking at talent transformation. The notion about curiosity, finding the right fit for purpose and agility. So, what's the big differentiator with the best talent? The ones that really do well at those companies that have got this is the sense of urgency and a curiosity to keep on learning. Regardless of what geography I've worked in, that seems to be the common theme that drives success.

The other piece is around the humanistic skills—those that revolve around relationship building and networking. It's a combination of the self-driven individual learner and curiosity balanced with “soft skills” or “humanistic skills.” I would say, that is a winning combination!

Q Corporate learning is getting reinvented with the future being all about micro-learning platforms, AI-based systems and VR-based learning. Is HR ready to shift to this tech-based learning?

A Our current workforce is made up of multiple generations who have come of age in the digital economy. They spend a significant portion of their working hours in front of a screen. They're accustomed to consuming information digitally—via smartphone, computer, even VR headsets.



THE CULTURE OF LEARNING IS NOT JUST LIMITED TO CONDUCTING TRAININGS OR SKILL-BUILDING SESSIONS JUST FOR THE SAKE OF IT. IT MUST BE VERY INTENTIONAL AND DRIVEN BY THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGY

So learning platforms and tools that fit that user experience and profile remain very relevant for corporate learning. However, we shouldn't overlook the impact and value of interpersonal learning formats. For example, Mastercard hosts hackathons and special events for coders, developers, and designers to provide them the opportunity to collaborate on real business challenges in areas beyond their day-to-day roles. We also make significant use of traditional classroom learning sessions. Even in a world driven by technology, the human touch remains an invaluable part of the learning experience.

Q What's your take on how the HR industry can transform itself to build a culture of learning and reinvent for tomorrow?

A In an era defined by disruption, organizations should always be looking to evolve themselves. The mindsets and behaviors you need to stay ahead of the curve are changing every day. Employees should have a passion for learning and leaders should embrace learning as a business priority. HR leaders and professionals are well-positioned to advocate for this at all levels of the enterprise. As the link

between what organizations aspire to be and the skills needed to get them there, we can help shepherd individual employers and entire industries across that gap.

At Mastercard, we're laser-focused on the skills that will fuel our future success. We cultivate a culture of continuous learning, where we encourage employees to acquire new skills and we invest in opportunities for them to do so. We believe learning is the new currency at all levels of the organization. It allows an organization to meet new challenges and make the most of new business opportunities.

Q How do you see the future of jobs, now that technologies such as AI, IoT, and big data are making inroads into business DNA and transforming traditional jobs?

A At their core, these technologies are eliminating manual, repetitive tasks, while creating new possibilities for better, more efficient, and intimately personalized experiences. This will potentially free us up to focus on aspects of work that require truly human skill sets. If we apply the right mindset, the jobs of the future may present more opportunities to make work more interesting and rewarding for more people.

Q In your vast experience of having worked in the HR landscape across different countries in the APAC region and the western part of the world, can you share the top challenges new-age HR leaders face today?

A I believe today's HR leaders face a healthy tension brought on by three key factors. First, the new generation of employees, i.e., millennials and Gen Z are not just looking for jobs. They're looking for purpose. They want their work to have a measurable, social impact. To engage with them, businesses need to embrace and embody a greater purpose.

Second, employees are more likely to take a stand on issues that matter to them. Employee activism requires organizations to listen to the expectations of their workforce and provide them with a platform to voice their opinions. Such platforms bring employers and employees closer and create a healthy work environment.

Last but not least, is the potential impact of technology on HR. It's time we scale up our own implementation of these technologies to bring efficiency to processes and practices within our HR functions. This will allow HR leaders to focus more on strategic issues. **com**



Democratized learning is the new standard at work



Any employee can teach or learn from anyone else, says **Jacob Morgan** - the founder of Future of Work University, while talking about the learning in an era of AI and automation, in an interaction with People Matters

By **Mastufa Ahmed**

Jacob Morgan is one of the world's leading authorities on leadership, employee experience, and the future of work. He is a 4x best-selling author, speaker, and professionally trained futurist. He is also the founder of The Future of Work University, an online education and training platform.

Here are the excerpts of the interview with Jacob.

Q Albert Einstein famously said, "Once you stop learning, you start dying." How true is this in the context of the workplace in an age dominated by technologies such as AI and automation?

A It's never been more important, especially in a world driven by AI and automation. The best way for each of us to future proof our lives and careers is by becoming super perpetual learners - meaning learning new things and applying them in our lives and organizations all the time. This includes everything from coding and development to empathy and self-aware-

ness. The world is changing quickly which means we need to change along with it.

Q What's new in learning & development and why businesses should embrace them?

A First, learning is no longer just being done by a specific team or department. Any employee can teach or learn from anyone else. Democratized learning is becoming the new standard at work. Next, we are seeing changes around what is being taught with a huge emphasis on what was traditionally known as "soft skills." Things like empathy, self-awareness, etc. Third, is how these programs are being delivered. It's no longer about sitting in a dimly lit room for hours. Today the platforms that we have access to are amazing, and many of them are free. Just think of all of things you can learn on something like YouTube!

Q How do you create an organization where everyone is engaged in learning given that engagement is a top challenge as far as learning is concerned?

A You help employees understand why this important and you make them accountable for it. The CEO of AT&T basically went in front of his entire company and told his hundreds of thousands of employees that if they weren't willing to

be perpetual learners then they should quit! Organizations need to of course support these efforts but also make sure employees are accountable. One way to do this is by providing transparency to employees in the future of their careers. If an employee knows that the company is planning on automating some of their job, then that will serve as great motivation to learn something new. But you can't just tell employees to "learn all the time" without explaining to them what they are learning for and how these things can be applied.

Q Millennials own the workforce these days, which means it's time to figure out what they want out of their jobs. How can organizations cater to their learning needs?

A I think focusing on a single generation is a bit overhyped. It's true millennials are the majority of the workforce demographic but we would be naive to think that they are the only ones who care about learning in a modern way. I don't think this is as much of a generational thing as much as it is a mindset thing.

Q How can organizations embark on a journey of lifelong learning and create a culture of continual learning?

A I'd focus it down to more specific areas

THE CEO OF AT&T BASICALLY WENT IN FRONT OF HIS ENTIRE COMPANY AND TOLD HIS HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF EMPLOYEES THAT IF THEY WEREN'T WILLING TO BE PERPETUAL LEARNERS THEN THEY SHOULD QUIT!





which are: 1) Committing to a dedicated learning strategy. 2) Holding employees and leaders accountable for that strategy. 3) Being transparent with employees and helping them understand the future of their jobs/careers. 4) Investing in the right technologies to enable learning. 5) Leading by example. 6) Creating a culture of learning.

Q What are the one or two factors inhibiting the L&D from shifting the needle from intervention to reinvention?

A Lots of people in HR and L&D are traditionally focused on the traditional aspects of their jobs. I think the number one factor here is about mindset and understanding that you are now in the business of human transformation and then taking a step back and asking, what can you do to help the people at your company transform? That's a very different way to think. Another component here is assuming that you are designing programs for other employees but the reality is that you should be designing things with them!


Q What kind of impact will the 4th industrial revolution have on the workforce and the skilling scenario?

A Routine jobs will certainly be at risk but the biggest impact isn't so much around jobs being replaced as much as it is about how jobs will change. I'm optimistic about the future but this optimism rests on two assumptions. The first is that organizations will invest in various programs to help train and upskill their people and the second is that we as

I'M OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE FUTURE OF LEARNING AND MY OPTIMISM RESTS ON TWO ASSUMPTIONS. THE FIRST IS THAT ORGANIZATIONS WILL INVEST IN VARIOUS PROGRAMS TO HELP TRAIN AND UPSKILL THEIR PEOPLE AND THE SECOND IS THAT WE AS INDIVIDUALS WILL PLAY A MORE ACTIVE ROLE IN OUR OWN PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

individuals will play a more active role in our own personal and professional development. Meaning we become perpetual learners who acknowledge that we can't always rely on educational institutions or companies to teach us everything we need to know to be successful at work and in life. If those two things happen, then we should be good!

Q Can re-skilling employees (instead of hiring new employees) help companies save money and stay competitive at the same time?

A I think every organization needs both of these things. Of course, you need to make sure that your current workforce can adapt to the changes we are seeing and continue to stay relevant. On the other hand, if your company is growing, entering new markets, etc then you typically need to bring in new employees to assist with that growth. It's not a question of picking one of these things, it's a matter of doing both of them in a modern way. 

Samir has extensive consulting experience in the areas of business strategies linked to people-organization dynamics across Southeast Asia. His experience includes all areas of human resources, particularly in organization structuring, manpower planning and optimization, integration of performance, reward and talent programs, and HR process review and audit.

Here are the excerpts of the interview.

Q How can L&D function enable organizations to reinvent for tomorrow? What has changed in L&D over the last few years?

A The issue with L&D functions is that many are still slow to respond to business needs. In the fast-changing environment that companies operate in today, this means that learning programs may be outdated and need to play “catch up”. Hence, the most critical thing that L&D

L&D function is still slow to respond to business needs



Companies are constantly stuck in a conundrum where when the economy is doing well, companies have no time to train; yet, when the economy is not doing so well, there's no money to train, says **Samir Bedi**, EY ASEAN Workforce Advisory Leader

By Mastufa Ahmed



TRADITIONALLY, THE L&D FUNCTION REPORTS TO HUMAN RESOURCES. WHILE THIS ENSURES GOOD GOVERNANCE OF THE PROGRAM AND THAT THE LEARNING PROGRAMS WILL BENEFIT THE ENTIRE ORGANIZATION, SUCH APPROACH MAY MEAN THAT THE L&D FUNCTION IS MISSING OUT ON UPDATES OF ANY NEW STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS THAT THE ORGANIZATION IS GOING FOR

functions need to focus on is reskilling themselves. As well, L&D functions need to ensure that the learning objective and resulting programs are better integrated with the business—even if this means that training modules that are deeply ingrained within the organization may be shelved if they are outdated and no longer bring value to the organization. Amid the busy schedules of employees, L&D may also wish to explore new and more agile approaches to deliver learning programs, so that learning can take place more easily and flexibly.

Q Lack of planning and commitment from the C-suite seems to be a major hurdle that keeps an organization's learning and development efforts from reaching its full potential. What's your take on this?

A Indeed, L&D functions can benefit from establishing a stronger connection with the C-suite. Learning now happens in bite-sized modular programs that allow for quick deployment and thus create immediate business value. This new form of learning works to the advantage of L&D

teams to operate more nimbly and deliver value faster.

Q One of the top areas that talent developers expect to focus on through 2019 is identifying, assessing, and addressing skills gaps, according to a study. How do you view this?

A Different generations bring different value and capabilities with them. For example, Gen Z employees are more creative, able to multitask better and are definitely more tech-savvy (i.e., they adapt to and adopt new technologies much faster), while Gen X employees have deeper experience. Hence, to manage a multigenerational workforce, it is important for business leaders to bring together employees of the different generations so they can learn from one another and create a strong connection that allows the sharing of experience and new ideas and perspectives to benefit the organization and workplace culture as a whole.

Q A study finds that the biggest challenge for talent development is getting employees to make time for learning. In such

a scenario, what's the way forward for organizations and how can they deliver training on multiple platforms?

A When the economy is doing well, companies have no time to train. Yet, when the economy is not doing so well, there's no money to train. Companies are constantly stuck in this conundrum. Organizations and L&D functions must recognize that learning and training is not about the number of hours. Instead, there should be a clear understanding about the abilities that the training or reskilling will develop and the value it delivers.

Lifelong learning is a culture that needs to be embedded within the entire workplace ecosystem. For example, employers need to measure the effectiveness of the training – how the reskilling works and whether it enhances business value and employees productivity. From the government perspective, the availability of nationwide programs such as SkillsFuture indicates the commitment to drive the initiative. For the education system, which includes educational institutions and training providers, how do they level up their programs to remain relevant and address market demands for new skills and new methods of delivery? And lastly for employees, there needs to be recognition that continual learning and upskilling will lead to better growth and career prospects as they increase their productivity and deliver higher value to their employers.

Q How can technology and analytics be leveraged for L&D to power reinvention and make an organization-wide impact?

A Technology is already being used by many L&D teams and training providers to allow the delivery of learning in a more flexible and accessible manner. As well, technology can also allow learning to be more interactive and effective. As learning is increasingly being delivered via varied platforms, technology can gather relevant data and information for better insights into user behavior for more effective learning programs to be developed. E.g., what types of programs generate more end-user interaction and interest, what training platforms yield better results.

Q What is one thing the L&D function needs to change about itself to be relevant in the changing future?

A A question that L&D teams should be answering is “how is the L&D function and team reskilling themselves?” The L&D function needs to be a position where they understand the business require-




TO MANAGE A MULTIGENERATIONAL WORKFORCE, IT IS IMPORTANT FOR BUSINESS LEADERS TO BRING TOGETHER EMPLOYEES OF THE DIFFERENT GENERATIONS SO THEY CAN LEARN FROM ONE ANOTHER AND CREATE A STRONG CONNECTION THAT ALLOWS THE SHARING OF EXPERIENCE AND NEW IDEAS AND PERSPECTIVES TO BENEFIT THE ORGANIZATION AS A WHOLE

ments and organization transformation so as to recommend appropriate learning programs for the talent.

Q What does the L&D team of tomorrow need to look like in order to prepare organizations for a digital future?

A There is no simple answer to this. However, for a start, L&D teams need to consider how they are structured and who they report to. Traditionally, the L&D function reports to Human Resources. While this ensures good governance of the program and that the learning programs will benefit the entire organization, such approach may mean that the L&D function is missing out on updates of any new strategic directions that the organization is going for, and will need to play catch up in time. While reporting to the corporate transformation or strategy office will mean that the L&D team is kept updated on the organization's strategic direction and can direct more resources to train employees accordingly (e.g., in digital), this may come at the cost of undermining the mainstay of the business. Perhaps the L&D team of tomorrow will see a

dual reporting line, where L&D teams are plugged into both the transformation office while keeping a close connection with the Human Resources function so that the right training programs are considered and delivered. 

L&D function needs to up their game to adapt-to-change



The most critical thing for the L&D function is to make people aware of the urgency of the change-to-adapt, identify employee skill gaps and ways to acquire those skills, says **Tho Luong Dac**, Head of Learning and Development at Vietnam International Bank, in an interaction with People Matters

By Mastufa Ahmed

Tho is currently Head of Learning & Development at Vietnam International Bank (VIB). Before joining VIB, Tho worked as a Training Consultant and Retail training manager at ANZ Vietnam and Prudential Vietnam.

With 20 years of experience in banking and insurance and more than 15 years of experience in learning and development, Tho possesses experience in identifying, planning and implementing training solutions that address the organization's demand for employee capability development.

Here are the excerpts of the interview.

Q What kind of impact will the 4th industrial revolution have on the workforce and the skilling scenario?

A The 4th industrial revolution has a critical impact on the workforce. We see rapid development in technology, the Internet of things, artificial intelligence (AI), etc., leading to a change in the labor force in the industry. We can see a typical example of changes in taxi service with the emergence of Grab, Uber and self-driving cars. Robots and machines are now replacing the human workforce in many jobs as surgery, call center, mines detection, diving, etc. AI now even plays important roles in the organization in terms of effective recruitment and customer credit reassessment and classification.

A large corporation like Amazon provided vocational training for a mass number of employees in order to create a future workforce readiness. We will see an increase in the need for the technology workforce, professions that require a complex skill. On the other hand, professions with simple and repetitive tasks will

gradually narrow. This change is rapid and will be a competitive advantage for corporations who take initiatives to bring technology into their businesses.

Q How can L&D help organizations reinvent for tomorrow? What's new in learning and why businesses should embrace them?

A The most critical thing for the L&D function is to make people aware of the urgency of the change-to-adapt (Why), identify employee skill gaps (What) and ways to acquire those skills (How) Learning now requires practicality, conciseness, flexibility, diversification, and availability so that learners can access learning anywhere and anytime.

Q The biggest mistake that keeps an organization's learning and development efforts from reaching their full potential is a lack of planning and commitment from the C-suite. What's your take on this?

A From my own experience, the more the leaders care for employee development, the more sustainable the organization is. Employees show a high commitment to upskilling themselves, developing their careers and engaging in the organization. The working environment promotes positive working spirits and creativeness. The lack of attention and commitment from leaders leads to the lack of employees' career development direction and commitment, resulting in the waste of investment and organizational loss.

Q One of the top areas that talent developers expect to focus on through 2019 is identifying, assessing, and addressing skills gaps, according to a study. Your take?

A In this modern technology era, Gen-Z has wide and fast exposure to technological knowledge. The emergence of social networks has restricted human communication, listening, and empathy among people. This happens not only to Gen-Z but also to society. We even see two or more people chatting with each other via social networks instead of talking to each other while working in the office or sitting in the same café. Therefore, developing these



THE MORE THE C-SUITE LEADERS CARE FOR EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT, THE MORE SUSTAINABLE THE ORGANIZATION IS



skills is very critical for employees in order to work more effectively and create values for the organization.

Q A 2019 LinkedIn study finds that the biggest challenge for talent development is getting employees to make time for learning. In such a scenario, what's the way forward for organizations and how can they deliver training on multiple platforms, such as classroom, mobile, and on-demand, to help eliminate the time crunch for busy employees?

A It is quite hard for an employee or a manager to join a 2-3-day training class in this fast-paced business environment. Alternatively, these skills and knowledge can be obtained right away with the help of the Internet (available for free or paid). People can easily get in touch with experts

apps for any time and anywhere learning.

- Create events, forums that motivate employees' sharing of what they learned and what they would like to learn.
- Continuously update and build up a library of available learning materials for employees.

Q How can technology and analytics be leveraged for L&D to power reinvention and make an organization-wide impact?

A Information technology plays a critical role in providing different channels, apps, tools and contents with easy access and fast, effective learning for learners. A thorough analysis will help organizations make better decisions on 'skill gaps' identification and optimize employee capability

technology, able to communicate and promote learning programs for best employee attention and participation.

- L&D has the capability to design and advise byte-sized learning materials, suitable for multiple learning channels.
- Listen and learn from feedbacks both inside and outside the organization. Building networks and regularly update learning trends from large corporations and researches.

ORGANIZATIONS
NEED TO FIGURE
OUT SOLUTIONS TO
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Q What is your advice for CHROs and people managers who face challenges to skill and re-skill their employees including cost and other bottlenecks?

A CHROs, especially line managers play roles in making great and direct impacts on their employees during daily work. They must be role models in active learning and applying diverse learning methodologies and sources in 4.0 revolution.

Inspire employees about multi-channel learning and create an environment that motivates employees to take on projects, etc. Identify and communicate to employees about competencies needed for the job and career goals in the future. Show them their skill gaps, agree on the individual development plan and support/supervise the implementation. Regularly inspire employees with continuous learning spirits through experts and champions' sharing. Build a learning culture/learning environment within the organization. **em**

instead of waiting for any training invitation. As a result, organizations need to figure out solutions to help employees acquire skills and knowledge in the most convenient, fastest way. Available byte-sized and online courses can help employees snack content on the go.

Organizations should design a learning culture within the organization, with support from C-suite. Show employees the "urgency" of developing own capabilities towards the fulfillment of work requirements.

Get line managers involved and realize their roles and responsibilities in developing employees. Provide them with the necessary knowledge, skills, and tools for their further coaching and training to employees.

- Provide employees with platforms and

solutions. This also assists L&D in reviewing and making proper changes in learning methodology and contents towards effectiveness.

Q What does the L&D team of tomorrow needs to look like in order to prepare organizations for a digital future?

- L&D should be the leading team in applying new learning models and methodologies and be the role model team in capability and career development
- L&D team needs to be creative, and adaptable to rapid changes
- Understand and identify skill gaps and provide in-time consulting solutions. L&D should be a partner and consultant to the business.
- L&D needs understanding about

Ling Hsern Wei is the Head of Learning and Development at PwC Malaysia and Vietnam.

He is responsible for driving "Future Skills" (an upskilling initiative) in PwC, covering both digital skills and essential skills. He believes that learning and development is most effective when it moves beyond the classroom and most transformative when it is designed into the work environment, activities and relationships.

Hsern Wei was selected as one of the "30 under 30" learning leaders at Elliott Masie's Learning 2011, a Programme aimed at developing and spotlighting the next generation of learning leadership. He has an MSc in organizational and occupational psychology and before PwC spent his working career in consulting and leadership development in London.

Here are excerpts of the interview with Hsern-Wei.

Become tech savvy, but keep the 'humanness'



Hsern-Wei Ling, Head of Learning & Development at PwC shares his views on capabilities that businesses need to consider when preparing for tomorrow's work, workers and workplaces, so they will be ready to take on the disruptive challenges ahead

By Mastufa Ahmed

A LOT OF ORGANIZATIONS ARE SPENDING BIG AMOUNTS OF MONEY ON NEW TECHNOLOGY AND IMPLEMENTING NEW SYSTEMS BUT NOT ENOUGH ARE SPENDING ON UPSKILLING THEIR PEOPLE TO USE THESE TECHNOLOGIES AND THESE INCLUDE NURTURING THE 'HUMAN SKILLS' NEEDED TO SUCCEED IN THE FUTURE

Q What kind of impact will the fourth industrial revolution have on the workforce and the skilling scenario?

A Here are a few statements to ponder upon:

1. I think technology will continue to innovate at a rapid pace
2. I am struggling to keep up with technology
3. I have a personal strategy to meet this challenge

I often ask these three questions at various speaking engagements and often most people would agree with the first two questions and struggle with the last one. I think on a human level, that is the biggest challenge we face with the fourth Industrial revolution and technology being the most radical driver of change. A lot of organizations are spending big amounts of money on new technology and implementing new systems but not enough are spending on upskilling their people to use these technologies and these include nurturing the 'human skills' needed to succeed in the future.

There are other trends that will impact the workforce, for example: the lines between our work and personal lives are shifting, diversity and demands for equality are also reshaping the workplace. With advancements in nutrition and healthcare we are also living longer, which means we will be asked to master more and different skills over time as the nature of work changes. And social and environmental pressures are creating demands for more flexible working conditions, as is the gig economy.

Not having a strategy to meet all these changes can be a source of anxiety and



insecurity for many people in organizations. In PwC's Workforce of the Future Survey 2017, we identified the most important organizational capabilities that businesses need to consider when preparing for tomorrow's work, workers and workplaces, so they will be ready to take on the disruptive challenges ahead.

Q The World Economic Forum predicts that by 2022, no less than 54% of all employees will require significant re-skilling and upskilling. So, how can organizations upskill their workforce at this scale and make them future-ready?

A The way I like to articulate the need for re-skilling is by using the medical concept of 'half-life'. If you take a Panadol, the half-life of the drug in your body is about 90 minutes, which means half of it, the Panadol has left your system and is now no longer effective. Skills used to have a half-life of 20-30 years but now is at about five years and for technology skills, it is two years. Now this might frighten some people but I think it is a great opportunity for people to reinvent themselves ever so often. The truth is, the days of taking a three-year degree and getting by for the next 30 years is long gone.

The good news is that 74% of employees say they are ready to learn new skills or re-train to remain employable in the future (PwC Workforce of the Future Survey, 2017) and they say that they would happily spend two days per month on training to upgrade their skills, if offered by their employer (PwC TechAtWork Survey, 2018).

There are five broad areas organizations will need to have in place in upskilling their workforce,

1. Assess the organization environment and identify skills gaps and mismatches

2. Build a future proof strategic plan and focus on gaps that deliver the most impact to business value
3. Lay the cultural foundation for learning and relearning
4. Develop and implement upskilling
5. Evaluate return on investment on upskilling programs

Start by looking at your current upskilling efforts and identify which of the five areas above need further attention.

Q What is the most critical thing that the L&D function needs to do to enable organizations to reinvent for tomorrow? What's new in learning and why should businesses embrace them?

A L&D professionals will know that development impact is created most in the course of our daily work, and yet many times the solutions we provide only take into account the classroom (whether physical or virtual). We need to rethink traditional teaching methods and content creation. At PwC, our focus is around "growth anytime, anywhere". This means that L&D no longer only focuses on the classroom, but wherever our people learn every day. For example, last year, we piloted "growth teaming" – rather than people taking time out to come to the classroom, we train facilitators who go out to teams. We facilitate

a process where team members identify development areas and how these can be developed in the course of their current project. We've received great feedback from this, as the learning is in the moment and contextualized to their project work.

Another shift is in L&D's role as a content curator. Technology has enabled world-class content at our fingertips, however the trade-off is an abundance of information that many people simply get lost in. We created a tool called Vantage, which is similar to Spotify for learning: It gives access to content, with the ability to create and share playlists, as well as allow offline learning. Using a combination of technology, curation and data, we are able to better target learning interventions to the individual at their point of need.

The skills we are looking to build in our teams now include things like design thinking, behavioral economics, UI/UX and neuroscience. In the 'attention economy', where attention is scarce, the role that L&D plays in terms of design is even more critical.

Q The CEO of one of the largest L&D providers in the US says, "The biggest mistake I see that keeps an organization's learning and development efforts from reaching their full potential is a lack

of planning and commitment from the C-suite." What's your take on this?

A In our recent PwC CEO Survey 2019, a lack of key skills is keeping 79% of CEOs awake at night – it is one of their top three worries and 46% of CEOs say their first priority is re-skilling workers they currently have.

What we are seeing is that the C-suite knows something needs to be done, the challenge is perhaps the upskilling challenge of today goes beyond a simple classroom solution and requires a holistic approach. It is more important than ever that cross functional units come together to deliver on upskilling. In our own efforts, it's been critical to align across our business priorities, digital strategy, IT functions and HR functions.

As organizations build a better workforce strategy for the future, they will need to rebalance their workforce composition, convert traditional jobs into more flexible roles, and appropriately price the tasks that people perform. Organizations must chart a path to a working environment that not only upskills workers for technological change but provides a sense of purpose and a great people experience (PwC Workforce of the Future Study 2017).

Q What is your advice for CHROs and people managers who face challenges to skill and re-skill their employees including cost and other bottlenecks?

A PwC's Workforce of the Future 2017 study provides CHROs and people managers a good starting point. Organizations can't protect jobs that are made redundant by technology - but they do have a responsibility to their people to prepare them for the future. Organizations have a critical role to play in building a narrative that helps workers understand the future. Unease about the future will impact employee motivation, well-being and sense of self; affecting people's productivity today.

Organizations need to:

- Build a clear narrative about the future of work
- Share your strategic direction if you want to take your workers with you
- Be clear about how you will support workers with re-skilling or redeployment
- Be transparent about the commercial pressures you face as you support your workers **PwC**

THE DAYS OF TAKING A THREE-YEAR DEGREE AND GETTING BY FOR THE NEXT 30 YEARS IS LONG GONE. IT IS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR PEOPLE TO REINVENT THEMSELVES EVER SO OFTEN



Your L&D strategy is missing one vital element



We "learn" something when a permanent pathway is created in our brain. Lifelong learning happens when we make time to create a permanent pathway

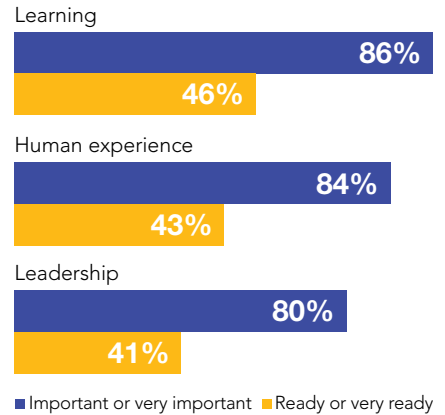
By Abhijit Bhaduri

The leaders have all shared their commitment to lifelong learning being the only way to succeed. They have all put money where their mouth is (even if that looks weird). Artificial Intelligence driven platforms are now recommending books, websites, blogs, podcasts, videos, seminars and more. "Learning is a lifelong process" is new poster found in every hip office space. These posters have now replaced the old posters that said, "People are our most important assets". The writing on the wall is clear. But then why does the Deloitte Global Human Capital Trends survey, 2019 show a huge gap between the importance of learning and the readiness of the organization?

Learning in an era of abundance

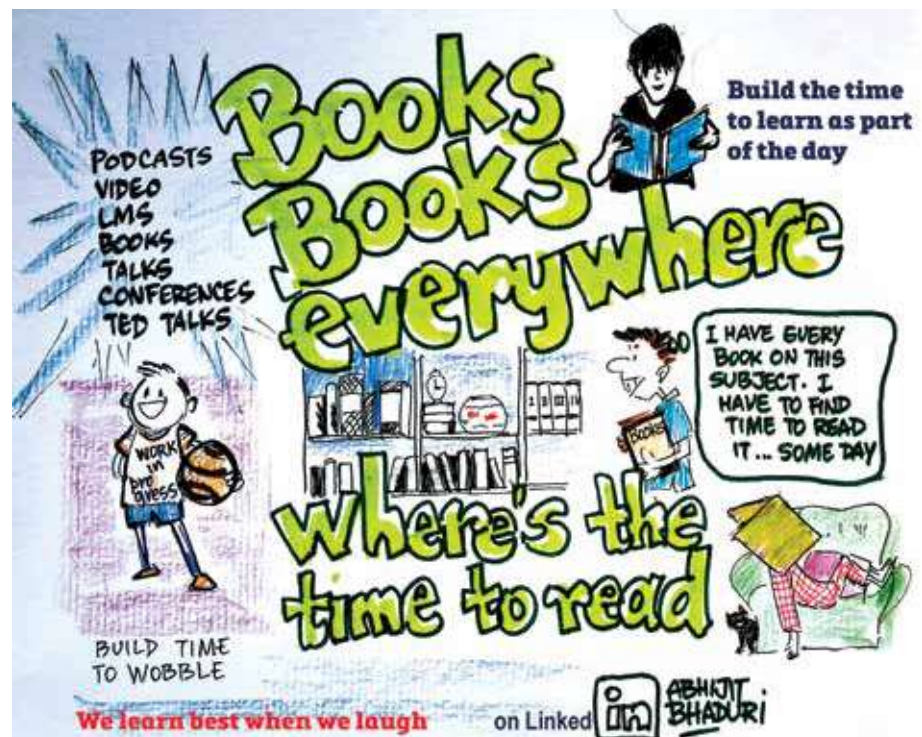
The half-life of skills is reducing. Business models are becoming obsolete. Digital born companies are growing at a pace unprecedented in human history. Never ever have we had knowledge sources so accessible and free. There are hundreds of courses run by the Ivy League colleges that you can take for free. Learning has been made easy and abundant. Then how do you explain the gap?

IMPORTANCE VS READINESS



There is no time. We all have books we have bought but not read. Taken subscriptions to journals and magazines that we have every intention of reading "sometime soon". At work, the companies have made learning possibilities abundant. Ask any CHRO or L&D professional and they groan at not being able to get the people to "learn".

"LEARNING IS A LIFELONG PROCESS" IS THE NEW POSTER FOUND IN EVERY HIP OFFICE SPACE. THESE POSTERS HAVE NOW REPLACED THE OLD POSTERS THAT SAID, "PEOPLE ARE OUR MOST IMPORTANT ASSETS"





Just-in-time is the jugaad version of learning

Many people will tell you that Alam Ara was the first talkie. Not too many people can tell you that the same Ardeshir Irani who released Alam Ara, the first Indian talkie, on 14 March 1931 also produced the first south Indian talkie film Kalidas directed by H. M. Reddy released on 31 October 1931. I got that from Wikipedia (so don't get impressed). I am no film historian. That is the jugaad version of learning. When someone follows a YouTube video to create a dish, it does not make the person a chef.


We "learn" something when a permanent pathway is created in our brain. Lifelong learning happens when we make time to create a permanent pathway. Repetition helps us build expertise. It means creating a habit by repeating the action enough number of times until it becomes a part of us. That means knowing several other related pieces that build context that helps us recall the information when we are using it.

Build the time to wobble and laugh

Second City, the famous improv and comedy studio uses their methods to train business leaders. "We use the improv methods pioneered on our stages to help people and companies improve their performance. Our Professional Development programs combine interactive exercises, facilitated debriefs, and practical application to get people excited about learning. That firsthand experience helps participants internalize better ways to communicate, collaborate, and innovate—all while building comfort with risk and change."

IN EVERY PERFORMING ART, THE ARTISTS BUILD TIME TO PRACTICE THEIR WOBBLY SKILLS BEFORE THE AUDIENCE TO GET FEEDBACK. IT IS THE EQUIVALENT OF HAVING A PROTOTYPE OF A NEW PRODUCT THAT MUST GET FEEDBACK FROM A CLIENT

To help employees build the habit of learning, providing them some slack time to learn and reflect plus the opportunity to try it out at work and get feedback. Letting the employee learn something (even if it unrelated to work) can help build a culture of curiosity. You cannot learn how to ride a cycle without wobbling in the early attempts. Making time available to wobble and learn may be the biggest cultural change needed in organizations.

In every performing art, the artists build time to practice their wobbly skills before the audience to get feedback. It is the equivalent of having a prototype of a new product that must get feedback from a client. So must a wobbly skill. We have to give the new skill or idea time to become a part of our repertoire and stabilize. That needs time to try it out without being evaluated. No wonder the tagline of Second City is, "learning works best when you are laughing". That is how we learned as kids. Those are the ideas that we fall back upon even today. Building time to wobble and learn may be the way to go. 

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

ABHIJIT BHADURI is a coach who works with organizations to transform their leadership, talent and culture. Follow him @AbhijitBhaduri

Galvanize a continuous learning mindset for your employees



When there is a lack of support and commitment from top management, it is common to see L&D budgets become one of the first items to get shaved off as part of an organization's cost-cutting measures, says **Clare Woo**, Human Resources Director for FCM Travel Solutions, Asia, in an interaction with People Matters

By Mastufa Ahmed

Clare Woo is the Human Resources Director at FCM Travel Solutions, Asia. Based at FCM's regional office in Singapore, Woo is responsible for supporting the company's Asian growth strategy through people development plans, as well as transformation, implementation and execution of end-to-end HR policies and programs.

Woo has 20 years of experience across diverse sectors including automotive, consumer goods, luxury brands, and reinsurance, bringing particular expertise in leading engagement with business leadership to build organizational and people capabilities. Companies she was previously with include BMW Asia, Swiss Reinsurance Company and LVMH Fashion, among others. A Singaporean and gradu-

ate of RMIT University, Woo also holds a Strategic Human Resources Leadership Certificate from Cornell University.

Here are the excerpts of the interview.

Q How has L&D changed over the years? What's new in learning and why businesses should embrace them?

A Having an agile mindset to un-learn and re-learn. With the world changing at a much faster pace, knowledge becomes obsolete very quickly. It's important to embrace learning with the mindset to un-learn obsolete knowledge or old school techniques that are hindering us from being successful in the future economy.

Q How important is the commitment from the C-suite to ensure organization's learning and development efforts reach its full potential?

A L&D requires a vast amount of time and financial investment and is definitely not a one-off initiative. L&D needs continuous investment and a robust curriculum to stay relevant. When there is a lack of support and commitment from top management, it is common to see L&D budgets become one of the first items to get shaved off as part of an organization's cost-cutting measures. Fortunately, FCM's management is a strong advocate of L&D and I have been

given a strong mandate and free rein to plan for a structured learning curriculum.

Q How important is identifying, assessing, and addressing skills gaps according to you?

A Generational shifts are common with increasing global connectivity in businesses. There is no doubt that the influence of Gen Z is expanding within organizations. However, it is important not to take a biased and blanket approach towards Gen Z employees (in fact this should be the case with all employees regardless of which generation they are part of). We believe in empowering employees to develop the best versions of themselves which is why we make sure that every single person goes through a career development plan which includes identifying, assessing and addressing skill gaps. This will help them to transition into the role or route that they are passionate about or towards a leadership position if it's something they aspire to grow into.

Q The biggest challenge for talent development is getting employees to make time for learning. In such a scenario, what's the way forward for organizations and how can they deliver training on multiple platforms?



WE BELIEVE IN EMPOWERING EMPLOYEES TO DEVELOP THE BEST VERSIONS OF THEMSELVES WHICH IS WHY WE MAKE SURE THAT EVERY SINGLE PERSON GOES THROUGH A CAREER DEVELOPMENT PLAN WHICH INCLUDES IDENTIFYING, ASSESSING AND ADDRESSING SKILL GAPS

DIFFERENT INDIVIDUALS HAVE DIFFERENT LEARNING PREFERENCES. BEING ABLE TO COMBINE LEARNING THROUGH A VARIETY OF TOOLS HELPS TO ENHANCE THE EMPLOYEE'S LEARNING EXPERIENCE

A It's in fact critical to offer learning through multiple platforms, even if not due to learners' time constraints. Different individuals have different learning preferences. Being able to combine learning through a variety of tools helps to enhance the employee's learning experience. The tools should be built to complement one another so the employee gets on a continuous learning cycle within a flexible time-frame.

Q How can technology and analytics be leveraged for L&D to make an organization-wide impact?

A Leveraging on technology for L&D helps in diversity of training programs and is a productive channel in this era of digitally enabled learning. At the same time, technology and training analytics are important for analysis of training ROI. This helps to clearly articulate the outcomes of a successful learning investment and determine its relationship to the improvement of business results, as well as employees' engagement, which can often lead to increased retention.

Q No matter what mode of delivery you choose, L&D Managers still report difficulty in driving engagement for learning? What strategy can organizations embrace to drive engagement?

A It is essential to spend time in understanding learners' requirements and designing fit-for-purpose programs based on their feedback. If the learners' needs are sufficiently met and they have taken ownership of the content design, they are more likely to have a higher commitment and deeper level of engagement which will lead to a more successful program for both the organization and the employee.

Q What does the L&D team of tomorrow need to look like in order to prepare organizations for a digital future?

A Knowledgeable, well-equipped and



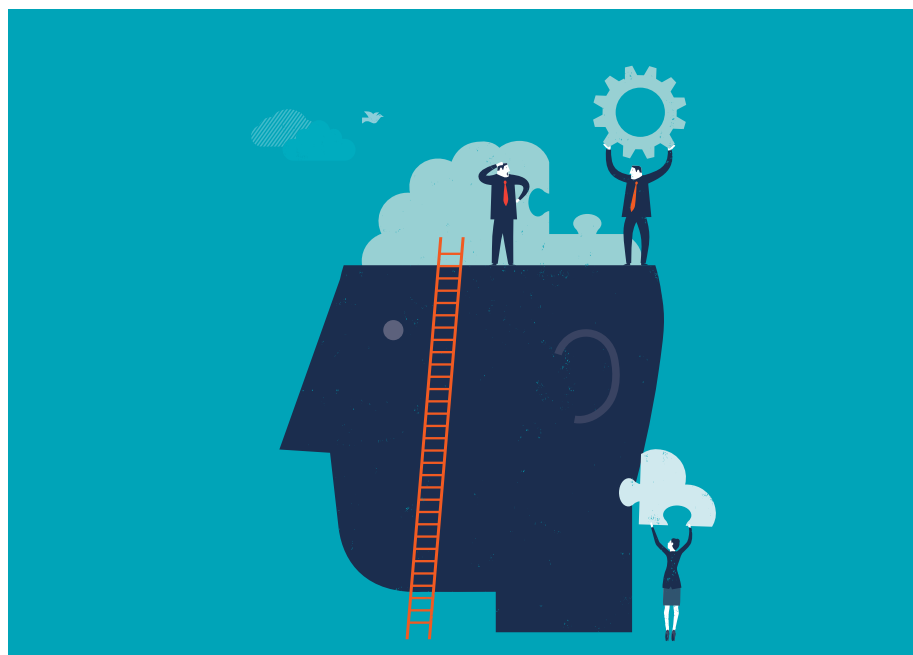
versatile in the use of technology to create and navigate a sociable and interactive approach in training experience. In FCM, we like to use gamification to make learning fun and engaging. Our e-learning portal builds a variety of quizzes and games into the learning curriculum and employees receive achievement badges for trainings completed. There is a leaderboard where employees who complete the most training gets mentioned. We have some very competitive employees so that really drives them! There is a panel of different subject matter experts available online for learners to do instant live chats or post questions if the experts are offline. Learners can also post instant feedback about the curriculum or their learning experience immediately.

Q What kind of impact will the 4th industrial revolution have on the workforce and the skilling scenario?

A There will be disruptions to businesses and jobs will become obsolete but new jobs with new skills required will also be created. Employees will have to adopt a continuous learning mindset to constantly refresh their skills to ensure they keep up to date with new job demands in order to stay relevant in the workforce. **Em**

In the last two decades, we have seen an explosion in the range, power, and accessibility of tools to help us to communicate and learn. Within seconds, we are able to connect with an expert on virtually anything, anywhere in the world. We can search for and find articles, white papers, and instruction sheets on how to do almost anything from how to tie a bow tie, to how to speak another language, and even how to make a bomb. In addition to what is generally available, most large organizations also complement this with internal Learning Management Systems, crammed with additional materials, many focused on each organization's unique needs.

So, surely, we must be the most skilled, the happiest, and the most relaxed generation of workers ever ... shouldn't we? We have, "How to do anything" right at our fingertips. But, wait, the evidence does not support this, does it?



Learning and development – hope or reality?



Productivity in most sectors has been stagnant for a decade and, in all sectors, falls short of expectations

By Clinton Wingrove

- Productivity in most sectors has been stagnant for a decade and, in all sectors, falls short of expectations;
- Stress, mental illness, and short-term absenteeism are at record levels;
- The quality of people management is generally poor and a primary trigger for attrition, grievances, and low employee engagement;
- Social intercourse is characterised by disrespect, aggression, and curtness.

So, what is going wrong?

Across the board, we are not investing in effective development. Much of our current learning and development activity is driven by populism, cost, and HR's passion for simplification.

Hopefully you work in an organization that is an exception. If you do, that could well be exceptional! But many face the harsh reality that learning and development needs may be clear, but addressing them may not be prioritized. Ask any executive if they believe in learning and development and you will almost certainly receive an unequivocal and rapid response of, "Of course. It is critically important." Ask stakeholders the same question and you will elicit a similar response. Ask, the senior finance managers the same question and responses will be far more guarded. Even though we now know that investment in Employee Engagement can produce demonstrable financial returns, the same is not yet believed about investment in wider learning and development.

When prioritization of limited funds is needed, senior management pays more attention to initiatives with demonstrable financial return, and with the potential for

ACROSS THE BOARD, WE ARE NOT INVESTING IN EFFECTIVE DEVELOPMENT. MUCH OF OUR CURRENT LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY IS DRIVEN BY POPULISM, COST, AND HR'S PASSION FOR SIMPLIFICATION

short term results – urgency beats importance.

This is not to say that many of the tools we now have are not valuable. Quite the contrary. Many learning needs require access to information – knowledge. And, contemporary tools meet that need exceedingly well. But, even more require development of skill ... and, that takes time, practice, and refinement. As the cliché goes, "You can learn about riding a bicycle from a video but you can only learn to ride one by doing it." And, therein lies the rub.

I see the following problems:

- Many organizations that have cut-back on face-to-face experiential development, have not done sufficient research to understand which needs require that form of development and which needs can be addressed well by merely providing access to information, or learning. For example, it is perfectly feasible to learn, "How to evaluate options when making a decision" by watching a video

or even reading a book. But, if you want to learn, “How to undertake the negotiation that making that choice may lead to,” eLearning is most likely not going to equip you with the skill ... only an appreciation for and understanding of it.

- Most organizations are not equipping their employees, especially managers, with the skill needed to take control of their own development. This leaves those individuals floundering and wondering what to do next. Yet, it is easy to equip individuals with the skills needed to reflect on their past, define their desired future, self-assess, identify skill and knowledge gaps, identify appropriate learning and development options, select appropriate courses of action, implement their plan, and evaluate its impact to inform the next cycle. But most organizations don't do that! Why? It takes time, effort, and funding, and only produces long-term impact.
- Most organizations appear to assume that, “If we make enough material readily available, everyone will become highly skilled.” That is about as robust as, “If we make healthy food and opportunities to exercise available, everyone

will be healthy and fit” ... and, we all know how well that works! Development simply does not work like that. Evidence is growing that most Learning Management Systems are seriously underutilised and that individuals typically access such learning options only when specifically triggered to do so, when a crisis occurs that might be addressed that way, or when they already have a passion for a subject. They don't typically engage in strategic development.

- Most organizations prioritize any genuine development activity based on short term needs such as:
 - o Job-specific training (often part of on-boarding)
 - o Health & safety training
 - o Compliance training (e.g., to satisfy legislative, fiscal, ISO, or regulatory requirements)
 - o Wellness, diversity, and stress management ... or other high profile topics
 - o Procedural changes e.g., new performance management process
 - o Populist topics e.g., the latest management buzz topic.

Generic management, leadership, and personal effectiveness skills development

has been ruthlessly cut over the past few years ... and we will pay the price for that!

At the same time, many organizations, especially multi-nationals, are focusing on immediate challenges such as Brexit in the EU, the so-called trade war between the USA and China, concerns about instability in the middle-east, growing economic presence from Russia, Of course, these are massive challenges and need attention. AND, we need to lift our heads and look forwards.

Population and economic growth data, when combined, show that we are heading towards a much bigger and more difficult challenge. By 2030 most predictions now show that we will have a substantially reduced working headcount, a dramatically higher demand for highly-skilled staff and a much reduced demand for low-skilled staff. Resourcing our prevailing demand will become difficult. Resourcing growth might become impossible.

The only sustainable longer-term solutions are for organizations to:

1. Rapidly increase real productivity – units of output per unit of human resource input;
2. Rapidly develop the skills needed to achieve 1. above and to meet the demands for higher in-post skill levels.

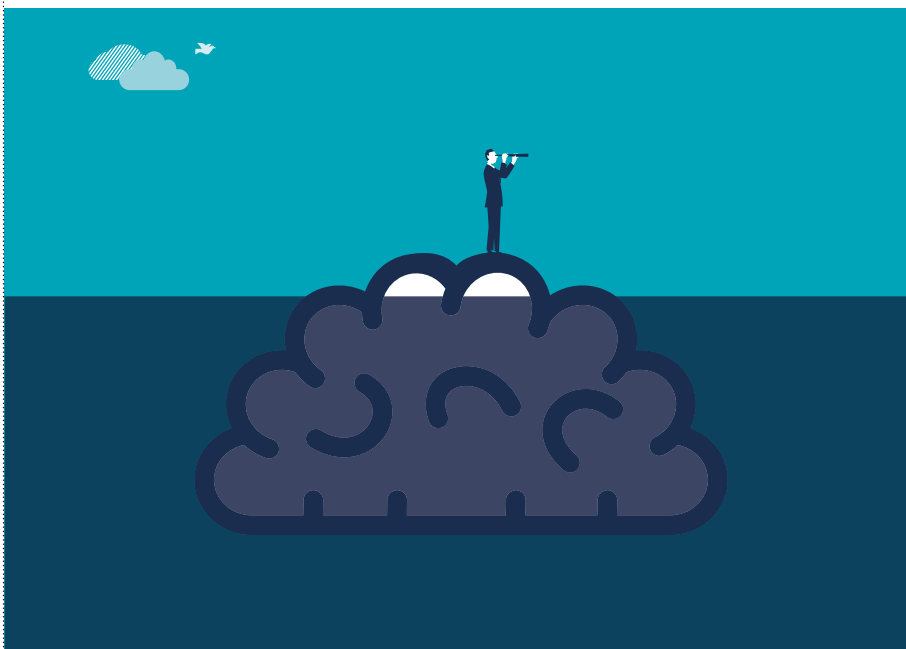
Achievement of these will only be possible if we see rapid increases in the skill levels of management and leadership. This will first require attention to the processes via which they are selected but, more importantly, serious investment in pre-appointment, on-appointment, and post-appointment skill development. We don't need managers and leaders who KNOW HOW to do their jobs; we need managers and leaders who CAN do their jobs and DO them well. Second, if we achieve the needed productivity levels, repetitive and mindless work will have been got rid of. So, we will need to invest in the development of individual contributors as they take on the work which requires skilled human intervention and thus cannot be automated.

Bottom line, the development pendulum may well need to swing back to include more strategic investment in genuine development, not merely learning. The current level of cost savings being accrued from eLearning, on-demand learning, and web-based workshops may prove to be financially ill-advised. 🧐

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MOST ORGANIZATIONS ARE NOT EQUIPPING THEIR EMPLOYEES, ESPECIALLY MANAGERS, WITH THE SKILL NEEDED TO TAKE CONTROL OF THEIR OWN DEVELOPMENT. THIS LEAVES THOSE INDIVIDUALS FLOUNDERING AND WONDERING WHAT TO DO NEXT



Don't treat L&D as a one-size-fits-all approach



Indy Lachhar, Group Talent Development Director, Robert Walters, shares her thoughts on why talent development, lifelong learning and career re-invention will be critical to the future workforce

By Mastufa Ahmed

Indy Lachhar has a wealth of experience within learning, talent and organizational development, having gained experience across multiples industries including investment banking, engineering and professional services.

She joined the Robert Walters Group in 2016 as Head of People for Resource Solutions based out of the London Headquarters. In 2017, Indy was appointed Group Talent Development Director for the wider Robert Walters Group and is responsible for the design and execution of bespoke talent and organizational development interventions that help to unlock the potential of people and teams. She then relocated to Singapore in 2019 to continue in her existing global role which includes an increased investment in talent development across APAC. As an accredited Executive Coach, Indy also works with Robert Walters' senior leaders to support their individual leadership development needs.

Here are the excerpts of the interview with Indy.

Q What kind of impact will the fourth industrial revolution have on the workforce and the skilling scenario?

A With the advent of the fourth industrial revolution, many jobs in the workforce can expect to be disrupted. Talent development, lifelong learning and career re-invention will be critical to the future workforce. A 2017 study released by McKinsey Global Institute estimated that as many as 375 million workers globally (14 percent of the global workforce) will likely need to transition to new occupational categories and learn new skills, in the event of rapid automation adoption. There will be an increased focus on interpersonal skills, teamwork and leadership. Bringing human skills and emotional intelligence into the workplace will become even more important. People can expect to shift towards the type of skills technology cannot offer such as creativity, collaboration and complex problem-solving tasks. However, new technology also comes with positive change. Whilst traditional jobs may disappear, the fourth industrial revolution is also expected to create a new wave of jobs, many of which did not exist earlier. People will need to quickly learn new skills to stay relevant with the fast-changing nature of technology.

Q How can organizations upskill their workforce and make them future-ready?

A Each organization faces unique challenges, and there is no one-size-fits-all solution. Some ways in which organizations can consider to upskill their workforce include:

- Organizations can start by encouraging their people to own and drive their own learning and development. Empowering people to have pro-active development conversations with their line managers and building coaching skills amongst

managers to be able to better support their people will ensure a continuous learning environment.

- Consider micro-learning - giving people small bursts of knowledge about very specific skills. This allows organizations to target top areas of concern in their workforce, without investing too many resources or having critical staff take too much time away from their duties.
- Invest in retraining people when new technologies are being brought into the organization to meet the company's new skill gap.
- Move towards a more blended learning experience such as encouraging people to get more involved in supporting strategic projects, peer to peer coaching and mentoring.
- Technological changes may make some of the career paths in your organization dry up, but it should also open up new ones. Foster, support and be transparent about new career paths to create the best opportunities for the business and your people.

Q What is the most critical thing that the L&D function needs to do to enable organizations to reinvent for tomorrow? What's new in learning and why should businesses embrace them?

- Stop putting people through mass training workshops. Consider the 70/20/10 approach to development where 70% of learning happens on the job, 20% from people around you and 10% in a formal environment. When selecting the 10%, ensure it is focused and aligned to the interests of people as well as the direction of the organization.
- Partner with the business to firstly understand the business and how to



WHILST TRADITIONAL JOBS MAY DISAPPEAR, THE FOURTH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION IS ALSO EXPECTED TO CREATE A NEW WAVE OF JOBS, MANY OF WHICH DID NOT EXIST EARLIER. PEOPLE WILL NEED TO QUICKLY LEARN NEW SKILLS TO STAY RELEVANT WITH THE FAST-CHANGING NATURE OF TECHNOLOGY

translate this into a development offering. Understand what the critical development needs are, for today as well as in the future. L&D need to act as internal consultants and design learning experiences that are suited to the internal culture.

- Create learning opportunities that are tailored to the business's needs.

Q The CEO of one of the largest L&D providers in the US says, "The biggest mistake I see that keeps an organization's learning and development efforts from reaching their full potential is a lack of planning and commitment from the C-suite." What's your take on this?

A We believe that an organization's culture and direction is very much influenced by its leadership. It is imperative that leaders adopt an open mind and believe in the value of investing in the development of their people to ensure that the company continues to stay relevant. Ensuring that learning and development efforts are included in the organization's future trajectory will also help accelerate the business' growth.

At Robert Walters, our senior leadership team is fully committed to the investment of our people and takes a unique approach by focusing on day-to-day learning and development (e.g technical and systems skills) as well as talent development which focuses on building the leadership capability across existing and upcoming leaders and their teams. The talent development offering is supported by a global team based out of London and Singapore and includes a bespoke and tailored approach to ensure both individual and organizational needs are met. This can include 1:1 immersive development experiences, leadership team development that focusses on where the team is now and what they want to achieve, 1:1 coaching programs as well as highly sophisticated leadership programs that focus on tailored career development to support existing leadership capabilities as well as accelerate their professional growth.

Q There is widespread concern among recruiters that the soft skills gap is widening with the technologically savvy but soft-skill-poor Gen Z employees entering the workforce. In fact, one of the top areas that talent developers expect to focus on through 2019 is identifying, assessing, and addressing skills gaps, according to a study. Your take?

A The good news is that the soft skills gap between an organization's existing workforce and the influx of Gen Z employees can be bridged with a pro-active approach



ORGANIZATIONS THAT SHOW EMPLOYEES THAT THEY ARE TRULY VALUED RESULTS IN INCREASED ENGAGEMENT, INCREASED CAPABILITY OF ITS PEOPLE AND RETENTION OF CRITICAL TALENT AS WELL AS CULTIVATING LOYALTY IN THE ORGANIZATION TOO

to learning and development, ensuring that the specific needs are identified, and any development opportunities are tailored towards these needs. Like hard skills, soft skills such as interpersonal communication and teamwork can be teachable with a systematic approach. Many organizations have adopted soft skills coaching with course providers like NTUC Learning Hub or the British Council Singapore, to better identify and address the skills gap. Soft skills development does not always need to be outsourced to external organizations. Ensuring that priority skills are identified in a timely manner, internal L&D teams can provide a blended approach to upskilling their people – there will be plenty of people internally who role model an outstanding approach to skills such as communication or collaboration. L&D teams can also provide curated content such as TED Talks, articles and co-ordinate internal lunch-and-learn workshops to share learning.

Q How can technology and analytics be leveraged for L&D to power reinvention and make an organization-wide impact?

A The impact of L&D is often non-quantifiable. By incorporating technology and analytics, organizations can now use data to demonstrate results. For example, they would be able to show how L&D may have made an impact on the company's ROI or influenced employee satisfaction. The data collected, such as on learners, about employees' job performance, and about activity and success (or failure) in eLearn-

ing and in application of skills, can be used when reaching an organization's decisions and empower them to confidently introduce new approaches. With data providing constant feedback, organizations will have more reasons to continuously make relevant changes for the company's growth and improvement.

Q What is your advice for Chief Human Resource Officers (CHROs) and people managers who face challenges to skill and re-skill their employees including cost and other bottlenecks?

A CHROs and people managers should view the cost to skill and re-skill their employees as a long-term investment for the company. The value that comes with investing in your people is priceless. The act of encouraging employees to learn new skills and upgrade themselves in this era of technology transformation shows that the organization has the best interests of its people at heart. Organizations that show employees that they are truly valued results in increased engagement, increased capability of its people and retention of critical talent as well as cultivating loyalty in the organization too. Showing that you care about developing your people can only have a positive impact on the business overall. Start small. Build momentum in one part of the business or one team, understand their needs, partner with them and showcase the impact that L&D can have. Make the approach tailored – respond to the individual and don't treat L&D as a one-size-fits-all approach. **em**

Workplace after Section 377

Celebrating a year since the verdict, representatives of the LGBTQIA+ community and People Matters got together for a candid conversation discussing experiences at workplaces, opportunities we have in front of us, focus areas that require immediate attention, and more

By Bhavna Sarin

LGBTQIA+



“History owes an apology to the members of this community and their families, for the delay in providing redressal for the ignominy and ostracism that they have suffered through the centuries. The members of this community were compelled to live a life full of fear of reprisal and persecution,” stated Justice Indu Malhotra, as the five judge bench announced the unanimous verdict on decriminalizing Section 377, after what was a prolonged fight for equality and justice.

Initiatives are generally run top-down in organizations, with clarity at the leadership level on what initiatives are to be driven, how to engage and what is the ultimate purpose or goal to be achieved. However, when it comes to LGBTQIA+ initiatives, this approach seldom works. Here's why - Prior to Sep 6th, 2018, organizations in India were restricted by the legal system to incorporate fair practices for the LGBTQIA+ community, owing to the existence of Section 377, that deemed individuals belonging to the community as committing an illegal offence. With the verdict, it has been established that any discrimination against any individual on the basis of their sexual orientation is a violation of their fundamental rights.

Even though diversity and inclusion initiatives have been in existence across organizations in India for some time, not all organizations could openly advocate their support or incorporate LGBTQIA+ friendly policies, paralyzed by the legal system. With the verdict coming in however, there was a huge opportunity to make things right.

Optimistic about the future, Aman Nath, Co-founder and Chairman, Neemrana Hotels, among the instrumental forces in the fight for decriminalizing Section 377, said, “I was approached by friends who needed someone from the corporate world to support the cause. I was happy to join to offer full support. Beyond that I think India is mature enough to handle such issues in the width of its worldview. Surely, the ostracism has ceased to some extent and things can only improve.”

Celebrating a year since the verdict, representatives of the LGBTQIA+ community and People Matters got together for a candid conversation discussing experiences at workplaces, opportunities we have in front of us, focus areas that require immediate attention and reflecting on the sentiment of the community with respect to opportunities and struggles at workplaces in India.

Voices from the LGBTQIA+ community



"With the verdict coming in, there has been a lot more social acceptance. Companies recognize that there is a potential talent pool to target."

- **Ramkrishna Sinha**, Co-founder, Pride Circle

Ramkrishna Sinha co-founded Pride Circle back in 2017, as a support group for the LGBTQIA+ community. 2 years later, Pride Circle is now a placement and consulting agency with a network of over 200 organizations. They successfully organized the first ever LGBT job fair in India, with over 38 participating organizations, that helped place 32 individuals with more offers in the pipeline. Talking about the impact and scope of the verdict he said that without the verdict, the job fair would not have been possible, let alone the opportunities. Inspired by the support the job fair received, he shared stories of individuals that clearly depicted the need of this verdict and how long the journey has been. From individuals from the community being turned down from entering the premises by security guards, owing to their physical appearance that indicated the individual was a transgender, to today, where a member of the community has three job offers to choose from. "Everyone engaging as allies or as organizations, be sensitive towards how the journey has been, educate yourself, so that when you have a conversation you come across as learned, with the actual intention of being a part of the support network," said Sinha.



"Bring the conversation to the table, not under the table. No more closed door conversations."

- **Suresh Ramdas**,

Global Facilitator at an MNC and Co-founder of Working with Pride

A software engineer facilitator by profession, Suresh Ramdas co-founded Working with Pride which started in 2016 with the intent of connecting, collaborating & enabling. It is a platform for bringing together members of the LGBTQIA+ community and their allies from across organizations, to learn, share, connect and empower people, and drive diversity and inclusion initiatives. Optimistic about the present and future scenario, he shares that post-verdict, the feeling is of new found freedom and conversations with leaders have become more fruitful. He did highlight that open-

ness to acceptance still remains a concern, given that people's exposure is varied and it reflects in how they see LGBTQ+ inclusion. "Law is gone, but the mindset is the same." He also added that the media has done a great job in contributing towards creating awareness.

"The community is very happy that the verdict finally happened, even if it took so long. There is increased social acceptance, more folks from the business world are coming out and owning their identity."

- **Adwitya** (name changed on request), a talent acquisition professional

Adwitya is a talent acquisition professional working at one of the big 4. Echoing the optimistic views of the community he shared how organizations today are actively investing time and effort in establishing fair practices. He does however highlight the difference in global and Indian establishments. Global organizations have an inherent fabric of openness and acceptance to diversity, those are the values they were built on, which have trickled down to their Indian counterparts. However, for organizations with a more traditional setup, the struggle is harder to be able to sensitize and educate leadership to accept and implement practices. With the new law, there is visible progress in refined policies and advocacy, however, the scope of policies being inclusive of identities across the spectrum of LGBTQIA+ is a long way to go. "There is a need to educate and have conversations on the different spectrums within LGBTQIA+." Adwitya further added that individuals spend the majority of their waking hours at their workplace, 'being authentic at work makes a huge impact'.





The veil of social morality cannot be used to violate fundamental rights of even a single individual, for the foundation of constitutional morality rests upon the recognition of diversity that pervades the society

- Former Chief Justice of India, Dipak Misra

Impact of the verdict on workplaces

- **Conversation starter:** There has been tremendous growth from not knowing what conversations need to take place at the leadership level, to today where conversations happen across career levels and throughout the organization. From closed door conversations to panel discussions and pride month celebrations, a lot has been done, and a lot more remains to be done.
- **Increased support from organizations with no legal barrier:** Law was a major barrier, in addition to mindset and resistance to acceptance. The legal system which once considered belonging to the community punishable, the same legal system has been refined to protect

the community against further ridicule and harassment.

- **Queer advocacy:** The verdict has empowered the community as a whole to come together at workplaces, overcoming the fear of harassment and abandonment, to form employee resource groups, address concerns, and build organizational capabilities to create an inclusive and open working environment.
- **Possibility of hiring from the talent pool:** Abolition of Section 377 has enabled organizations to become cognizant of the fact that there is an untapped talent pool of individuals with the skillsets they seek. LGBT job fairs have the potential to bridge the gap between the existing LGBTQIA+ talent pool and organizations that seek to bring them onboard.

"The veil of social morality cannot be used to violate fundamental rights of even a single individual, for the foundation of constitutional morality rests upon the recognition of diversity that pervades the society"

- Former Chief Justice of India, Dipak Misra.

Need of the Hour

- **Education:** There is a need to sensitize the workforce towards the journey. Companies like the big 4 have already started engaging in the same by conducting reverse mentoring sessions. Through such one-on-one or group sessions with members of the LGBTQIA+ community, leaders and employees can educate themselves on how they can make the work environment more supportive and LGBTQIA+ friendly.
- **Policies:** Organizations across the country need to implement LGBTQIA+ friendly benefits and policies, inclusive of health benefits for same-sex partners as well as benefits for transgender community. Recommendations for supporting transgender employees include providing medical support for sex reassignment surgeries as well as building gender neutral restrooms.
- **Extending support beyond boundaries:** Identifying themselves as part of the LGBTQIA+ community puts individuals at the risk of being questioned, judged and also abandoned, both at home and at workspaces. While there is increasing awareness and acceptance across the country, there is not enough education or support in smaller cities and towns. Organizations need to extend support across various segments of the population and skill people on the margins of the society who have been abandoned.

"It is difficult to right the wrongs of history. But we can certainly set the course for the future"

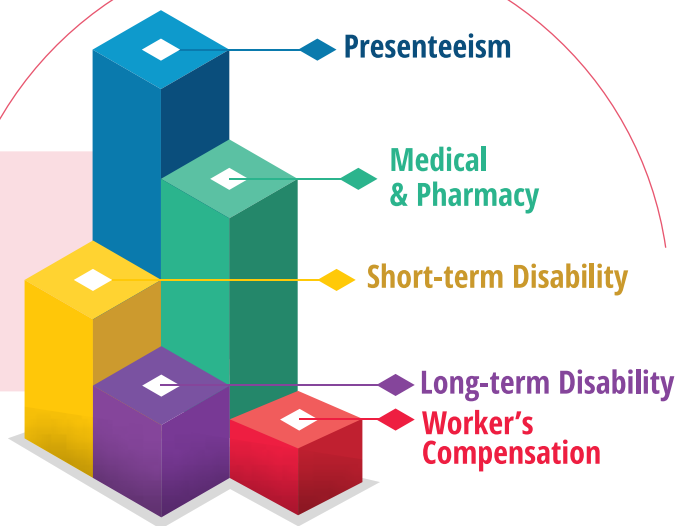
- Justice DY Chandrachud. 🙏

IS WORKFORCE HEALTH A COST OR IS IT OF BROADER STRATEGIC VALUE TO YOUR BUSINESS?



**Presenteeism comprised
majority of health-related
cost to the company.**

TOTAL HEALTH COSTS



LET'S CONNECT TO EXPLORE HOW PRESENTEEISM CAN BE REDUCED.

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Reference : From Acute Care to Business Performance Connecting Health to the Top Line at American Express, Integrated Benefit Institute, Published on: March 2015,
Available on: https://www.ibiweb.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Amex_March_2016_FINAL_FORMAT_-_covers.pdf , Accessed on Aug-18-2019.



Some experiments with truth

Decoding the truth and the lies is truly a daunting task. The mystery of decoding what the person opposite us is saying is an eternal tryst with truth



Deception research has consistently shown that accuracy rates tend to be just over 50 percent when they are averaged across truthful and deceptive messages and when an equal number of truths and lies are judged

I have, throughout my career been grappling with the issue of assessing myself in making an accurate judgment about candidates who I interview. I have been fortunate. Majority of the candidates I have selected have been good hires. But I have come across some writings and research that made me more aware of the risks involved.

Deception research has consistently shown that accuracy rates tend to be just over 50 percent when they are averaged across truthful and deceptive messages and when an equal number of truths and lies are judged. Interpreting the sales pitch of a sales person, inferring from the claims made during a selection interview, the statements made in meetings, all form an important part of human to human communication.

Decoding the truth and the lies is truly a daunting task. The mystery of decoding what the person opposite us is saying, is an eternal tryst with truth. In transactional analysis we hear about crossed

transactions and ulterior transactions. A crossed transaction is one in which the transactional vectors are not parallel, or in which the ego state addressed is not the one which responds. When a transaction is crossed, a break in communication results and one or both individuals will need to shift ego states in order that the communication is re-established. In an ulterior transaction, two messages are conveyed at the same time. One of these is an overt or social level message. The other is a covert or psychological level message. Most often, the social level content is adult to adult ego states.

Crossed and ulterior transactions do not necessarily demonstrate motive or intention to deceive. There may or may not be any *actus reus* and *mens rea* in such cases of communication. The terms *actus reus* and *mens rea* developed in English Law are derived from the principle stated by Edward Coke, namely, *actus non facit reum nisi mens sit rea*, which means: "an act does not make a person guilty unless

(their) mind is also guilty"; hence, the general test of guilt is one that requires proof of fault, culpability or blameworthiness both in thought and action. However, the situation is different in the Truth Default Theory (TDT). This is a theory of deception propounded by Timothy R Levine. Levine is a distinguished Professor & Chair of Communications Studies, University of Alabama at Birmingham. As the term Truth Default Theory (TDT) implies, the key idea is that when people communicate with others, we tend to operate on a default presumption that what the other person says is by and large honest. The presumption of honesty is highly adaptive. It enables efficient communication, and this supposition of honesty makes sense because most communication is honest most of the time. However, the presumption of honesty makes humans vulnerable to occasional deceit. There are, of course, times and situations when people abandon this presumption of honesty, and the theory describes when people are expected to suspect a lie or

conclude that a lie was told, and the conditions under which people make truth and lie judgments correctly and incorrectly.

Truth-Bias, is the tendency to actively believe or passively presume that another person's communication is honest independent of actual honesty. The term was originated by McCornack & Parks (1986). Empirically, truth-bias is the ratio of messages judged as honest to the total number of messages judged. In Levin's research, truth bias is always greater than 50 percent. Implications of truth bias include the veracity effect and the Park-Levine probability model. A citation for truth-bias and further documentation of truth-bias and its implications are available in Levine et al. (1999). Prevalence of Deception. Lying may be less common than reported in the literature. Most people lie infrequently compared to honest communication, and the distribution of lies told is highly skewed. Most lies are told by a few prolific liars making the average lies-per-day misleading and not reflective of most people. But all these theories on truth and deception can make us over suspicious about every statement made in a job interview.

Being over suspicious may make the job interview look like a Spanish Inquisition. A professional interview is one in which referees would have been spoken to; for which the preparation will require checking for consistency in statements. Questions whose answers cannot be verified are a travesty. Answers to questions about a candidate with over 20 years of work experience handling a leadership role in school and college in sport or extra-curricular activities are rarely verified. In the case of mature hires it is important to even verify claims about scholastics. An exaggerated self-appraisal about how the candidate describes his/her role in a past job or project, is important to sniff out. It is important that the interviewer does not get carried away by either the Halo or the Horn effect. There is sufficient literature and research about how appearance influences judgement, and how appearance can make us even more vulnerable to the truth bias.

A distinction between TDT and earlier narrations on deception is that TDT challenges the idea that the best way to detect deception is to pay attention to nonverbal and verbal "cues." Using cues make people weak lie detectors. Levine's research shows that how people appear can be misleading and that there are much better ways not to get fooled. Malcolm Gladwell in his book "Talking to Strangers", explains the examples on this subject based on how spies for years together, got



Crossed and ulterior transactions do not necessarily demonstrate motive or intention to deceive. There may or may not be any actus reus and mens reas in such cases of communication

away with lies. "We look people in the eye, observe their demeanor and behavior and draw conclusions".

I have seen that in a number of cases where a person has violated the Company's code of conduct, there is initial disbelief about the fact that "he/she could have done that". The person might look very innocent and timid but may have got away with such violations and when discovered, the person accused vehemently denies the allegations with a straight face. Because people are most often truth biased, message veracity is an important and often ignored determinant of detection accuracy. There are several reasonable explanations for people's relatively poor performance in deception detection.

- i) There is no behaviour or set of behaviours that infallibly distinguishes deception from truth telling
- ii) Research naïve people seem to focus on the wrong behaviours when trying to distinguish truths from lies
- iii) Peoples veracity judgements are often affected by a variety of systematic errors and biases

Successfully deceiving others can be addictive. Slightly exaggerated versions, some twists in a tale become a part of life. I have learnt the hard way. The best way to not get deceived by the quintessential liar is to constantly remember the Latin maxim and principle of caveat emptor. Another way is to use modern technology. The era of lie detectors and graphology is a bit archaic. Today, Artificial Intelligence (AI) can help in raising an alarm about the veracity of statements made by a candidate by checking for consistency in the persons social network profile, declarations made and testimonials. Algorithms can be written to crawl through data and throw up areas that need clarification in the interview process. But AI will fail in throwing up the results desired, if our own biases are baked into it. Hence a good blend of human judgement, an open mind and phygital (physical + digital) fact finding is important.

Judgement when translated into Hindi as per Google, is निर्णय which means decision, verdict, ruling, discretion, conclusion. Judgement as per the Concise Oxford Dictionary (COD) is *the ability to make considered decisions or come to sensible conclusions*. In decoding human to human communication, I would recommend carefully curating experience, with data & technology to reduce the probability of falling into a truth deception trap. To conclude, what we learn from Malcolm Gladwell in his book Talking to Strangers, is *Doubts are not the enemy of belief, they are its companion.* 🧐

Views in this write up are completely personal and do not in any way have anything to do with my employer, L&T.

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The unseen plight of the gig economy

The recent cases of Uber, Lyft, Taskrabbit, DoorDash and so many other app-based businesses are facing a backlash as the gig workers are demanding more benefits and equal rights as the full-time workers

By **Pragnya Sambit Acharya**
& **Dr. Lalatendu Kesari Jena**



As the world economy moves towards remote access and shared workplaces, the so-called Gig Economy workers or side hustlers comprise the majority of the workforce. Be it small startups or the Big Giants, gig workers are everywhere. It is a typical enhancement of a make or buy decision. Organizations are opting for temporary professionals over training their own employees for a specific skill set.

On the other hand, Gig workers were considered as people who could not land permanent jobs and had to pick available jobs to run their kitchens, which is a rather negative scenario as compared to the reality. This definition is changing rapidly as the economy predicts a 60 percent workforce share of these workers globally, with highly specialized skills. The other part of the workforce perceives these gig workers as people who have very low commitments and enjoy an easy-going life, working at their own pace and pleasure. There are other categories of gig workers that exist in the job market as well.

The Free Agents are workers who choose to be freelancers and the gigs they perform earn their bread and butter. The casual earners take it as a pursuit of passion and supplement their permanent earnings with it. The financially strapped gig workers which comprise of 30 percent of the gig workforce, are the ones who do



Many Swiggy, Uber Eats and Zomato delivery boys admitted to taking up the food delivery jobs only because they needed to support themselves till they could find proper employment. The daily workhours for these delivery boys are atrocious and their targets are extremely difficult

not willfully accept this form of employment and would rather have a permanent job. Apart from the financially strapped, the Free Agents do not have an easy path as the general perceptions illustrate.

TYPES OF FREELANCERS IN THE GIG ECONOMY

	Primary Income	Supplemental Income
Preferred Choice	Free Agents 30% (49 Million)	Casual Earners 40% (64 Million)
Out of Necessity	Reluctants 14% (23 Million)	Financially Strapped 16% (26 Million)

n = about 8,000 U.S. and European respondents
Source: McKinsey Global Institute. "Independent Work: Choice, Cessnecity and the Gig Economy." October 2016.

"Ubering" around the gig economy

The recent cases of Uber, Lyft, Taskrabbit, DoorDash and so many other app-based businesses are facing a backlash as the gig workers are demanding more benefits and equal rights as the full-time workers. The demands have risen out of the unprecedented struggles faced due to long working hours, no job security, low pay packages topped with less pay security, lack of availability of gigs and mainstream jobs, stereotypes by the lesser open societies on their nature of work, inhuman treatment by the

employers and absolutely no protection or rights. Governments are now concentrating on regulating the gig economy by holding companies accountable.

The AB5 bill is a classic example, which has now become a law in California. It has become a landmark initiative in protecting gig workers. Companies like Uber, Lyft, DoorDash have been using the tag of independent or contract workers to dodge responsibilities with regards to employee benefits and labor rights. The law aims at providing minimum wages and paid time off for these workers and easing their hardships to some extent. The Governor of California Gavin Newsom signed the bill on September 18th 2019, despite significant opposition from Uber and many other gig companies.

Survival of the fastest delivery

According to a survey by PayPal, 50 percent of the freelance workforce is engaged in the Information Technology Domain in India. It is a common trend for fresh graduates moving out of smaller towns and cities and taking up gig works to make ends meet till they land a permanent job. Many Swiggy, Uber Eats and Zomato delivery boys admitted to taking up the food delivery jobs only because they needed to support themselves till they could find proper employment. The daily work hours for these delivery boys are atrocious and their targets are extremely difficult. The 30 minutes delivery promise makes them drive rashly on the roads or lose out on their much-required commissions which were based on the number of deliveries completed.

With so many gigs available, the IMF statistics still show an appalling 30 percent of unemployed youth in this country and this is purely because of the temporary nature of jobs created by gig companies and even established organizations. India accounts for a very high number for outsourced BPO support facilities, which employ multitudes of workers on contract basis. MNCs in the category of E-commerce giants and IT companies are the major employers of these contract BPO workers. Amazon, Flipkart, IBM, Infosys, TCS, Wipro are the few big ones in the game. Apps like Dunzo, Swiggy, Uber Eats, UrbanClap and Zomato have become a one stop solution for gig workers and business owners alike to find work and workers on the go. Needless to say, the struggles of the Indian gig workers are no better but rather worse off as compared to UK and US.

Challenges that never end

The abuse of the gig workers is further aggravated by the venture capitalists

who would rather pour their money into organizations which are devoid of the employee liability and do not have the overhead expenses of managing a full-time workforce making it difficult for the regular employers to compete. Workers with specific high-end skills such as web-designing, consulting, financial planning and advisory, coding, software specialists, etc. also have their own wars to fight. With the market getting extremely competitive and competency building getting more expensive, there is always a fear of becoming obsolete or being overtaken by someone with better skills and cheaper price.

So many of these gig workers live on the edge with deadlines or the summon of an app, that they barely have any family time, social life or even a healthy life. The gig economy being at a very nascent stage is often less or misunderstood by the financial sector. It is very difficult for gig workers to get financial assistance such as loans and mortgages, as they have no stable

need for “finding themselves and settling down”.

The struggles of selling themselves is even more unreal. Gig workers are basically solopreneurs. They have to market themselves, handle the clients, manage the finances for running the show, manage the working capital involved without a regular income and all of this while still trying to stay abreast in the oversupplied talent market.

The inevitable future


On the brighter side, Gig Workers have provided a new dimension to how organizations operate today. Talent committed to passionate work is available on demand with customized solutions. It's not too late for organizations to re-engineer their talent management practices to incorporate the gig workers. With the advent of new technology every hour gig workers very are contemporary with the latest skills and provide much better services at

The IMF statistics show an appalling 30 percent of unemployed youth in this country and this is purely because of the temporary nature of jobs created by gig companies and even established organizations

income to show nor any business to their names, just a skill which is being used every now and then by some employer. Getting health insurances is yet another pain with no insurance companies extending benefits for gig workers due to the nature of their jobs. In short, gig workers and their families have almost no recognition in the society even for bare minimum amenities which are reserved for the “working class”.

Finding a sense of identity has also become difficult as gig workers are not able to associate themselves to the typical brands nor can they call themselves entrepreneurs. They are merely specialists with skills at call and the society at large has not evolved enough to accept them. The frequently asked question “what do you do for a living?” remains to be one of the toughest to answer. With multiple employers and skills and even more gigs, it is very difficult for traditionalists to understand that an artist who is a musician and owns a café has a stable life and often stereotype them to be unfocused, careless and in

much better costs. Building workplaces that would meet their requirements of time and space flexibility along with basic benefits such as medical coverage packages, rewards for outstanding services, minimum pay protection and a few more tangible and time bound benefits could do wonders in harnessing the gig talent.

Transforming workplaces will be unavoidable with the rapid changes in employment perceptions. The new era of Millennials and Generation Z is right at the horizon, awaiting its dawn. Organizations need to balance the diversity of their workforces to build a cohesive and sustainable environment that will suit the Baby Boomers to Gen Z crowd and as well as, the Gig Workers. 

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THE COST OF **PRESENTEEISM**

Why presenteeism is worse than absenteeism?

By **Anushree Sharma**

Glancing at his watch, Harold reluctantly leaves his seat to attend the weekly team meeting. People in the room can sense that Harold is not fine but impeccably brush their concerns under the assumption of the feud between him and his client. What followed next left everyone in the room flabbergasted.

Harold, aged 24, is an engineer at a multinational company. He loves his job; however, recently he was not keeping well. For some time he was experiencing sudden headaches, nauseousness, body aches. But he went to the office regularly and quietly lived with discomfort. Fast forward to the present day, Harold experienced a panic attack while he was in a meeting.

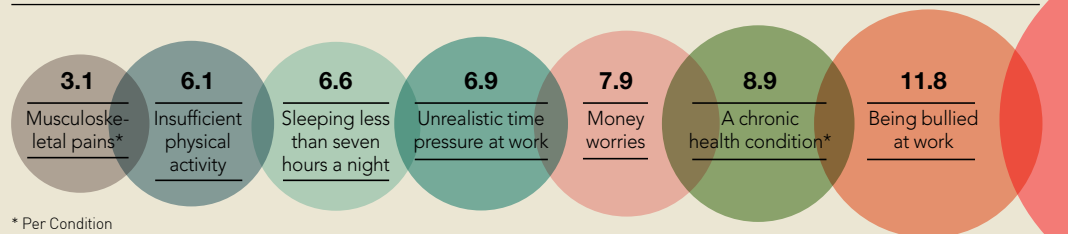
The story of Harold is inspired by all the employees who keep coming to work when they are not fit enough to do their jobs. Working when you are physically or mentally unwell is called presenteeism – and it is becoming commonplace these days.

According to a report by Vitality, more than 40 percent of employees said their work was being affected by health problems – a figure that's risen by a third over the last five years. It found that people are putting aside both mental and physical health problems to attend work. Some employers might wonder why presenteeism should be considered a problem at all. Experts say this is a dangerous way to look at things. The obvious risk that employees take with their health and that many ailing workers struggle with longer-term afflictions like depression will worsen if they go unaddressed.

According to a report by Vitality, more than 40 percent of employees said their work was being affected by health problems – a figure that's risen by a third over the last five years

Read this story of Chole Parker, sharing her experience with Vitality for their Health Report, 2019. When Chloe returned from maternity leave to her job as a Senior Associate at a London corporate law firm, she had just been diagnosed with postnatal depression. She kept silent about her condition and didn't inform her family members about it. Later, she informed about her depression to the human resources team at her firm, as well as the partner who was supervising her. The HR staff were "brilliant", she says, because the firm, externally at least, was "all about diversity and trying to keep women". But "at the coalface", she adds, her supervising partner reacted terribly. She was given accommodations such as being allowed to attend counseling

PRODUCTIVE DAYS LOST PER EMPLOYEE PER YEAR DUE TO ILLNESS & OTHER FACTORS



* Per Condition

Note: Productive time lost due to both Absenteeism and Presenteeism

Source: Vitality Health/Rand Europe; Britain's healthiest workplace survey 2016-2018

Asia is sitting on a public health time bomb, as the effects of long working hours, poor nutrition and sedentary lifestyles threaten to create poorer health outcomes for workers than their western counterparts

sessions mid-afternoon before going home early. Yet within “the culture of perfectionism that is a law firm,” says Parker, her supervising partner made it “very clear to me that he was not happy” with the situation. Eventually, she says, this partner became sharply critical of her and it just spiraled downwards to the point that she had a breakdown at work, was signed off sick by her doctor and never went back.

The once high-flying lawyer says she could now never rejoin the profession she was trained for. Chole and her employer paid the cost of neglecting her mental well-being. While Chole was aware of her mental health and still kept coming to office, the next story of Sarah Mitchell-Hume will reflect the current ignorance towards mental illness.

Sarah Mitchell-Hume didn't know anything about mental health when she had a panic attack

at her desk. She was two years into her career in engineering recruitment --a job she absolutely loved when she suddenly became unwell. Sarah was diagnosed with depression. “I felt pressurized to go back to work, even though I was signed off sick,” she recalls. “I was physically present but mentally I wasn't doing anything. And I'd just zone out, nothing was going on behind my eyes. I think I just cleared my inbox every day. It made me more ill. I should've been at home recovering.”

Aged 24, she was just starting her career when she felt like it had come to an end.

If you break a leg, it's clear you need time off. Having a mental illness or suffering from workplace stress can be harder to spot. But Vitality's research has shown that these are the biggest factors behind the growing problem of people turning up for work when they're not fit enough to do their jobs.

Why do people go to work when they are indisposed?

New technologies and improved connectivity have infiltrated global businesses which have led to the emergence of new ways of work. Depending on the industry, being present in the office is no more a requisite and being productive. Many workers are equipped with all the necessary tools which have enabled them to work from anywhere. However, with this freedom, a wave of mistrust has emerged where managers can't monitor and “micro-manage” their subordinated in person.

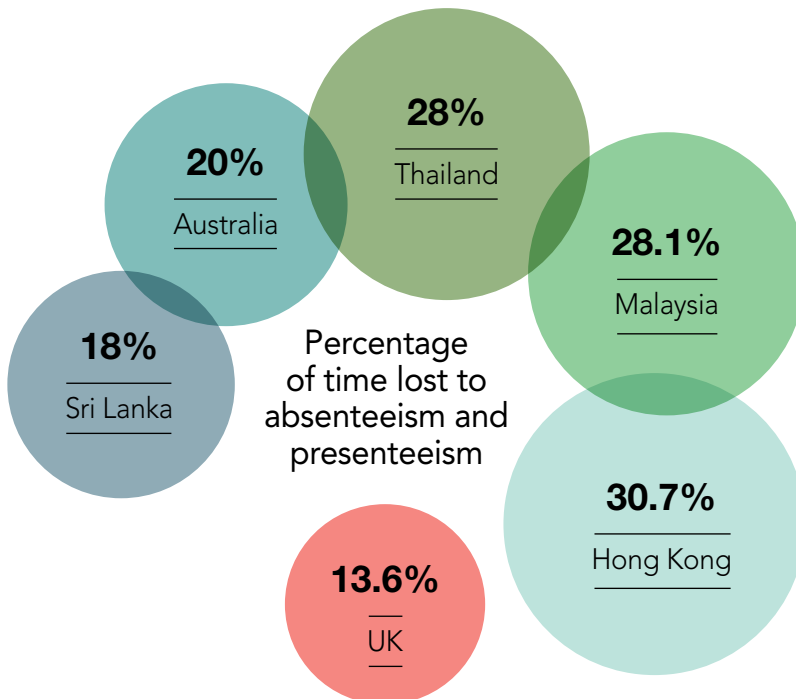
There still persists a stigma, commonly in the older generation that productivity suffers while working from home or remotely.

Sachin Khurana, Vice President & Chief People Officer at Happiest Minds Technologies, shares, “In a highly competitive corporate environment, unrealistic timelines and deliverables, meeting expectations from managers, leaders, and clients, employees are left with limited choice but to be present in office even if they are not keeping well. I see this as a reflection of the immature culture and leadership of the company rather than employee choice. These situations lead to a net loss for all stakeholders.” He also shared that the long term impact on the wellbeing and personal life of the employee and a big loss for the company in terms of higher medical cost, attrition, stress in the workplace, lower productivity, and negative impact on employer brand creating a challenge to attract good talent.

Similarly, the combination of distrust and the constant quest of maximum productivity have led some managers to view sickness-related absence with a critical eye.

In fact, according to a research study by Rise, presenteeism is more rampant in organizations that have recently experienced company downsizing or restructuring. Worried about their jobs, team members will tough it out in the hopes of proving their worth and value to their

ASIA'S WASTED WORKING TIME, 2018



Source: Vitality Health/Rand Europe

THE MOST COMMON STEPS THAT HAVE BEEN, OR ARE BEING TAKEN TO DISCOURAGE 'PRESENTEEISM'

Percentages of respondents whose organisations are taking steps



79%

Managers sending people home who are unwell



53%

Better guidance for all employees



37%

Training/guidance for line managers to spot warning signs



37%

Leaders role-modelling by not working when ill



30%

Investigating its potential causes, for example workloads



27%

Fostering a culture based more on outputs than inputs



21%

Reviewing our health and well-being policies



14%

Updating the organisation's attendance policies



5%

Introducing ways of monitoring 'presenteeism'



5%

Issue viewed as a priority by the board

Source: CIPD

management and leadership. The same report also highlights that employee with lower hourly wages or who work only on a casual/part-time basis is more prone to presenteeism. Team members with lower income would be unable to make ends meet on a smaller paycheque and therefore cannot risk missing days away from work. Because of their financial need, these workers come into work even when they should take a sick day.

The productivity paradox

Asia is sitting on a public health time bomb, as the effects of long working hours, poor nutrition and sedentary lifestyles threaten to create poorer health outcomes for workers than their western counterparts.

However, according to a CIPD report, presenteeism is potentially more harmful to individuals and companies than sickness absence. And it warns that employee wellbeing needs to be taken more seriously by business leaders.

The costs to business are well documented. It has been estimated that presenteeism costs US firms \$226 billion a year. In Japan, the cost of reduced performance due to working while unwell was \$3,055 per employee each year. In the UK, "impaired work efficiency" due to mental ill health costs \$790 per person each year, twice the cost of absenteeism.

But few companies are doing anything about it, with just under a third of those surveyed taking any action. Only 30 percent of those tried to investigate the cause of presenteeism.

Khurana shares, "In the service economy, innovation and customer experience are the only differentiators, and people are catalysts of these differentiators. It is the responsibility of the leaders and HR to ensure that practices like presenteeism do not become a new norm. We at Happiest Minds Technologies are addressing this

According to a CIPD report, presenteeism is potentially more harmful to individuals and companies than sickness absence. And it warns that employee wellbeing needs to be taken more seriously by business leaders

proactively through our Happiness Evangelism, Mindfulness, and other people initiatives. Our employees present in different geographies goes through the mindfulness training. They have access to counseling support, wellness initiatives which help them deal with these situations like presenteeism. These initiatives are institutionalized and have executive sponsorship and have a far-reaching impact on creating an open and healthy work environment."

What does it mean to show up at work? Is it the number of people in their seats clocking in their presence? Replying to emails as soon as they arrive in your inbox? We stopped using examples like these as measures of success. Presenteeism is a far greater concern for the modern people and culture pro—and unfortunately, it's a lot more challenging to monitor. To track presenteeism, you need to be in tune with your team and be able to recognize when they're struggling. More than that, your company must be willing to provide the tools and the time necessary for someone to recover, reset and returns to optimal productivity. As the research shows, it's worth it—both for the business and for your people. 🧠

Q & A

We can no longer find 'best practices'...

...We have to respond to the problems as we go,” says **Wiwik Wahyuni**, Chief Human Resources Officer, Home Credit Indonesia, in a recent interaction with People Matters. She discusses the importance of investing in building a high-impact learning culture and shares some key elements required to build such a culture

By **Drishti Pant**



The business ecosystem is becoming more competitive and with uncertain economic outlook and rapid technological disruption the challenges are further increasing. Amidst such competition and chaos, businesses need to see how they can not only survive and sustain but scale and excel in their space. For this they need to create a powerhouse of talent that helps them thrive.

The focus hence shifts to investing in learning and development of talent and building a high-impact learning culture. As a Bersin report pointed out, “The single biggest driver of business impact is the

strength of an organization’s learning culture.” However, culture is easy to talk about, but implementation and promotion of one is an elusive and a challenging task.

Wiwik Wahyuni, Chief Human Resources Officer, Home Credit Indonesia, in a recent interaction with People Matters discusses the importance of investing in building a high-impact learning culture and shares some key elements required to build such a culture.

Wahyuni, an HR professional with more than 20 years of experience has been working with Home Credit Indonesia as CHRO since a year now. In this interaction, she also shares key initiatives that have been

implemented in Home Credit Indonesia to drive a high-impact learning culture.

Here are excerpts of the interview:

Q Global and growth-oriented companies like Home Credit have to invest in building a high-impact learning culture to ensure they always stay ahead of the curve. Do you agree?

A Absolutely. Our ability to scale well in business hinges on our ability to leverage our collective learning to tackle the ever-growing complexity of today’s world, where we can no longer find ‘best practices’ to tackle our problems. Rather, it demands that we respond to the problems as we go, where according to the Cynefin Framework, the relationship between cause and effect can only be perceived in hindsight. Our ability to respond and iterate timely is key to prepare for the future of work and stay ahead of the curve.

A culture that promotes agility allows the organization to open up to its fullest potential

Q What do you think takes to build such a culture? What are some key elements of a high-impact learning culture, according to you?

A It is at times convenient to pretend that we have the magic bullet. But we don’t. However, I believe agility is the key element behind any organization’s sustainable business growth and success.

A culture that promotes agility allows the organization to open up to its fullest potential. As Josh Bersin once said, “Only when leadership and management is geared towards ability to learn, motivation to learn and acquisition + application of knowledge and skills can we, as an organization, sustain business outcomes from learning.”

As a lot of decisions and directions are made at team and product level, an agile culture in an organization empowers employees in three ways (as Daniel Pink suggests):

- Autonomy: People own their decisions
- Mastery: People feel they get better at what they do every day
- Purpose: People know what they're doing serves much higher cause to benefit the world around them

A With the agile setup, there are multiple stakeholders. It is the entire team who has to own the responsibility of building a high-impact learning culture, with commitment shared among all the individuals in the team.

The team has to collectively ensure that the skills and competencies required are well tuned to the mission they have, while the leadership would provide support, strategic direction, time for mentorship and coaching, learning budget, and tools.

A Support and Guide!

Strategic direction: Create a clear sense of the path the entire organization wishes to take, define what the business wishes to accomplish.

Coaching and mentoring: While this seems easy, it is actually hardest to do in reality. Beyond the rituals, we need to do much more to improve the quality of how we both coach and mentor, such that deep-seated concerns and feedback don't remain deep-seated. The learning impact is both ways when truly done.

Learning budget: When objective and targets for key results are aligned, it would be a lot easier to justify learning costs – especially those around high-impact learning methods like experience-based (job rotation, learning exchange, overseas assignment) and exposure (job shadowing, on-the-job learning).

Learning Tools: With personalized learning becoming more prominent in this setup, ensuring the right tools for aligning team/product objectives, performance and learning becomes critical.

A The first initiative that we launched was an agile transformation drive for the



With the agile setup, entire team has to own the responsibility of building a high-impact learning culture, with commitment shared among all the individuals in the team

entire organization. We let this process grow organically with the agile transformation team facilitating the movement from the ground up. Recently we started the first Budgeting and Funding stream and more streams are to follow organically.

We also led a Leadership Learning Series for First Managers & Middle Managers to ensure that the critical leadership skills are built as the business scales. We also routinely invite thought leaders in the industry and beyond to come and inspire us – the last one being Hamzul Suhaimi, ex-CEO of XL Indonesia.

We also invest in tools and technologies to enable a high-impact learning culture: Jira is used to manage transparency in backlog, task and work processes across the streams and teams. Even for performance management we have gone digital and use Aspire, a tool created in-house teams to give our workforce full freedom to make adjustments to their targets and goals as they shift roles or priorities aligned with business needs.

Q What are some global trends shaping the nature of work for Home Credit Indonesia and the sector it belongs to? How

➊ Digitalization! Process Automation!
Data Science!

For digitalization, we are focusing on doing interventions to stir behavior and mindset change. As we are in the process of automating most of our processes, it is absolutely critical that everyone in the organization is ready to adopt technology.

To bring in that change, we invite business leaders and HR teams to collaborate and understand both the business as well as talent needs. We also invest in upskilling our HR teams and ensure they are up-to-date with the recent trends in business as well as work space.

We're also building academies dedicated to Data Science and Tech. There is another ProDIGI Tech Academy where we plan to have three batches (20-persons each) of Tech talent development program each year, aimed at Business Architecture, Develops and Business Intelligence. We're now interviewing the 1st batch candidates. We also routinely conduct Tech Talk events for tech and data enthusiasts inside as well as outside the company to learn from one another. 



Gaming goals can kill businesses

Targets must match an organization's actual objectives

The presiding deity over executive target setting and pay for performance is Loki, the god of mischief. Most performance management and incentive systems assume SMART and equitable target setting an accurate and honest measurement of the results actually achieved. But what if the targets could be achieved without actually making the effort the end objective actually demands? Any worthwhile objective is too complex for its achievement to be measurable by one or two quantitative measures but (for reasons of practicality) we end up doing precisely that. We thus set up a system that is open to gaming and, when linked to high variable compensation and other rewards, it becomes extremely tempting to do so. Let me pick an almost trivial example with which every reader of this column is familiar. Whenever we are asked to lecture about training evaluation, we trot out the Kirkpatrick model¹ or one of its more recent avatars. Yet, the number of training days per person (an eminently gameable statistic, which can be raised without imparting much worthwhile training) is still the most frequently used KPI for training managers in India. Obviously, at the level of the organization, both the temptation and the impact of manipulation are of a much higher order of magnitude. This is where gaming skills are at a premium and their use leads to great divergence between the lofty original purposes of organizations and what they actually land up doing – and for which their people are munificently rewarded.

Games People Play - With Goals

The seemingly simple path to goal-setting is strewn with many pitfalls – both conceptual and practical. In 'Goals Gone Wild: The Systematic Side Effects of Over-Prescribing Goal Setting', four leading academics conclude with a damning indictment of goal-setting: "For decades, scholars have prescribed goal setting as an all-purpose



Real champions don't wait for targets to be set before gaming them. The target-setting process itself provides an enormous scope for making actual achievement far easier

remedy for employee motivation. Rather than dispensing goal setting as a benign, over-the-counter treatment for students of management, experts need to conceptualize goal setting as a prescription-strength medication that requires careful dosing, consideration of harmful side effects, and close supervision. Given the sway of goal setting on intellectual pursuits in management, we call for a more self-critical and less self-congratulatory approach to the study of goal setting."²

Similar concerns are behind a piece titled 'Stop Paying Executives for Performance'³ in HBR which emphasizes that:

1. Contingent pay only works for routine tasks
2. Fixating on performance can weaken it
3. Intrinsic motivation crowds out extrinsic motivation
4. Contingent pay leads to cooking the books
5. All measurement systems are flawed

The problem is compounded when the same individual (or organization) has some goals that can be accurately measured and others that can't. As John Roberts points out: "Providing comparably intense incentives for different activities becomes problematic... when the available

measures of the two tasks differ greatly in their precision or timeliness... Giving incentives for some desirable activities can then be a very bad idea because these become negative incentives for other activities that cannot be similarly rewarded."⁴ Thus "goals in areas where quantification is difficult often go unspecified. The organization therefore often is in a position where it hopes for employee effort in the areas of team building, interpersonal relations, creativity, etc., but it formally rewards none of these."⁵

Given these infirmities of goal-setting, it is not surprising that executives with high variable compensation linked to their target achievement are tempted to 'game' the system. Their efforts at manipulation are aided by the fact that accurate and timely measures are available for only part of the total desired performance (and that part becomes a decreasing proportion of the whole as roles – and firms – become more complex). In such 'synecdochic' (taking a part to stand for the whole) situations, Goodhart's Law has free play. As initially framed by Goodhart, the law states: "Any observed statistical regularity will tend to collapse once pressure is placed upon it for control purposes".⁶ Thus employees whose performance in a company is measured by some known quantitative measure, will attempt to maximize that measure regardless of whether or not this results in overall sub-optimal performance. As Bevan and Hood explain: "The extent of gaming can be expected to depend on a mixture of motive and opportunity. Variations in the motives of producers or service providers can be described in various ways, of which a well-known current one is LeGrand's dichotomy of 'knights' and 'knaves' LeGrand argues that governance by targets can turn 'knights' into 'knaves' by rewarding those who produce the right numbers for target achievement, even if it means avoidance or evasion and neglect of [the real objectives]."⁷

As Harris and Tayler put it in a recent HBR: "Of course, we all know that metrics are inherently imperfect at some level. In business the intent behind metrics is usually to capture some underlying intangible goal – and they almost always fail to do this as well as we would like. Your performance management system is full of metrics that are flawed proxies for what you care about."⁸ Simply put, when the effort and cost of achieving a proxy target is significantly lower than for meeting the real organizational objective which the surrogate represents, rational actors ignore the main objective in favor of meeting or exceeding the indicative target.

A Universal Malaise

Gaming surrogate indicators is neither a recent nor a peculiarly Indian phenomenon. It is generally believed (though now contested by some historians) that Roman generals could hope to receive the honor of a 'triumph' only if the number of enemies killed exceeded 5,000. The effect on the conduct of battles and on the reporting of casualties can well be imagined. Centuries later, when England imposed the window tax (in 1696), it "was not intended as a window tax, but as a property tax, as a house was considered a safe criterion of the value of a man's property, and the windows were only assumed as the index of the value of houses"⁹ The response of citizens to evade the tax led to serious consequences. "... owners of dwellings attempted to reduce their tax bills by boarding up windows or by constructing houses with very few of them. In some dwellings, entire floors were windowless, leading to very serious and adverse health effects."¹⁰ Economists call this phenomenon 'the cobra effect' based on the British colonial government's attempt to curb the number of cobras in Delhi. The govern-

ment is said to have offered a bounty for every dead cobra. While this helped for a while, our smart countrymen soon began to breed reptiles for revenue. When the authorities realized this, the reward program was stopped, causing the cobra breeders to set the now worthless snakes free. As a result, the wild cobra population increased even more. An even more bizarre instance took place in Vietnam. When the colonial French administration wished to exterminate rats and offered people a bounty for each rat tail handed in, it led to rat tails being cut and submitted for the reward and the tail-less rats being used to breed more offspring.¹¹ A more recent example from the corporate world is the collapse of Fannie Mae which is significantly attributable to "Fannie Mae's compensation arrangements [that] richly rewarded its executives for reporting higher earnings without requiring them to return the compensation if the earnings turned out to be misstated, thus providing incentives to inflate earnings."¹²

Having established the ubiquity of the target manipulation malaise, perhaps we can still claim some pride of place for India

The core organizational objective most HR departments are expected to meet is to provide an adequate number of suitably skilled and committed people and to create a working environment that makes them productive, innovative and happy over a sustained period of time



by virtue of the early training we give our youngsters in aiming for the highest marks in examinations rather than for mastery of the discipline itself. With friends, teachers and guides telling children to study just for exam excellence, it is no wonder India is a favorite in the World Cup Championship for Corporate Gaming.

Real champions don't wait for targets to be set before gaming them. The target-setting process itself provides an enormous scope for making actual achievement far easier. For instance, the almost ubiquitous use of measures which set targets relative to the previous year have a reverse-ratcheting effect. A year when performance is low, for whatever reason, makes future target achievements that much easier. The gaming consists in pushing past and future negatives into an already bad year and conserving efforts for the years when they convert to targets being exceeded significantly. Another variant is to take on targets that should have been the minimum requirement for that

are sacrificed at the altar of short-term profits. I shall not multiply illustrations but anyone who has ever worked in industry will recall goal gaming variations that were no less creative than the ones named by Beethoven after Diabelli.

Of course, target distortions don't happen only at the individual level. Unions sometimes play a major role in the progressive 'flaccification' of targets (and making the engagement of permanent workers very unattractive in the process). A huge manufacturing unit that I was closely involved with became thoroughly uncompetitive over the years because the union had acquired consultation (read veto) rights over the establishment or change of the standard times ie the optimal time determined by Industrial Engineering for any given element of a work operation. Completing the task faster than the standard resulted in higher incentive payouts. By refusing to allow tightening of the standards when new equipment or automation was introduced, the union not only

I wonder how well such a drill-down would reflect on the HR effectiveness of (for instance) our software majors which frequently claim credit for restraining or reducing employee turnover. But surely, I hear some naïve readers say, composite anonymous scores, such as those yielded by engagement surveys and 360° feedback, can't be fudged. While researching this article, the most innovative ideas I heard from my senior HR friends were for improving engagement survey scores (without necessarily enhancing engagement). Those ways of gaming engagement scores will have to be held over for a future column. Or, even more lucratively, converted (after suitable euphemization) into a juicy consultancy offering!

Not by Bread Alone

Defeatist as it may sound, the first requirement for minimizing the manipulation of targets is to lessen the reliance on the variable compensation with which they are linked. We rely on target-linked monetary rewards to carry far too much of the heavy-duty carrying load for motivating people. Once a lucrative variable compensation scheme is in place, we tend to leave it on autopilot, inviting the same kind of malfunction as when faulty sensor measurements couldn't be overridden and brought down two Boeing 737 Max aircraft. There are at least four other contenders for primacy of place over strong monetary incentives in unleashing motivation. They are:

- Organizational purpose
- Inspirational leadership
- Intrinsically exciting work and
- Multiple options to learn and grow

As we have noted earlier, the problem with powerful monetary incentives for individuals is greatly compounded when jobs consist of multiple tasks (as is the case for most corporate jobs, particularly at middle and senior levels), not all of which can be measured with the same degree of precision and timeliness. One can be more aggressive with introducing strong incentives for uni-goal roles, with minimal team dependence, such as some field sales jobs. Baron and Kreps¹³ provide a useful check-list for identifying where strong individual incentives should be eschewed. "In general, pay for performance is less likely to be effective:

- The more complex the technology
- The more ambiguous the tasks
- The more the culture emphasizes cooperation
- The more the strategy centers on hard-to-measure quality or emphasizes innovation

Difficult trade-offs arise when those being evaluated have the ability to manipulate or obscure the data on which performance evaluations are made

role and then getting rewarded for reaching that threshold.

Of course, the bread and butter of target gaming is to find ways of minimizing effort and maximizing ratings once proxy targets have been established for critical objectives. When such primacy is given to production volumes, quality short-cuts, neglect of machine maintenance and excessive usage of consumables are among the many negative side-effects. Making sales volume both the kharif and rabi crop invites pests such as curtailment of advertising investment, sacrifice of margins, ignoring customer complaints and, of course, dumping. Dumping on dealers, distributors and retailers is a particularly hardy and noxious weed which has brought the fortunes of many a company low, yet which has reappeared, year after year, on corporate acreage ever since I started my career more than four decades ago. Even when production and sales are substituted by profit as the prime measure, the problem is merely elevated by one level. Now it is investment in research, new product introduction and upgradations of people and plant capabilities that

made it unattractive to invest in improvements but gradually drove capacity expansions to other units that were not plagued with such handicaps. Gaming has serious consequences.

Before my HR friends get too pious about these instances, some introspection will reveal that HR has at least two gaming innovations for everyone our line colleagues ever thought up. The core organizational objective most HR departments are expected to meet is to provide an adequate number of suitably skilled and committed people and to create a working environment that makes them productive, innovative and happy over a sustained period of time. When this goal is broken down into surrogate sub-targets like number of people recruited, cost per recruit and number of training programs held, all the issues (covered in the previous paragraph) of poor quality, short-termism and getting inordinate rewards while neglecting (or even liquidating) assets, rear their heads again. As for attrition, as a group HR head, whenever I looked at such a statistic for each business, I insisted it be broken down by rating and tenure.

- The more tenuous the connection between inputs and outputs
- The more one can rely on the intrinsic motivation of the workforce
- The more workforce diversity and/or technological diversity will encourage perceptions of inequity or illegitimacy in a pay-for-performance regime
- The more the general social culture, and the specific culture of the workforce, militate against 'crass monetary distinctions'."

The same authors point out the additional dangers when there is a mechanistic linkage between target achievement and variable compensation payouts. "Difficult trade-offs arise when those being evaluated have the ability to manipulate or obscure the data on which performance evaluations are made. If the performance evaluation scheme is formulaic, the firm is inviting a great deal of attention to and (attempted) manipulation of the numbers on which the formula is based."¹³ Even at the cost of introducing an element of subjectivity into the process, such gaming can be minimized by delinking the hard connect between target achievement measurement and performance rating as well as between the rating and the quantum of bonus or merit increase. "When an employee's contribution to firm value is not objectively measurable, it often can be subjectively assessed by managers or supervisors who are well placed to observe the subtleties of the employee's behavior and opportunities. Even if such subjective assessments of an employee's contribution to firm value are imperfect, they may complement or improve on the available objective measures."¹⁴ Supervisor judgment (including an assessment of how far real organizational objectives have been attained and whether any long-term goals or values have been contravened along the way) must intervene at both points in the sequence of events. In judging whether target achievement is adding to organizational capabilities or liquidating them, supervisors should be aided by information from disaggregated engagement surveys, 360° feedback and other qualitative data that HR gathers through its employee interaction programmes.

Another way to reduce individual gaming is to link bonuses to collective performance though their traction in pulling individual motivation is doubtful given the lack of line-of-sight between effort and outcome and the 'free rider' type of problems in any but the smallest groups. All the same, company-wide rewards can be highly efficacious for non-economic reasons which build a sense of belong-



ingness from bottom to top rather than just furbishing the fortunes of a few. "The economic arguments against rewards based on large-group performance take no account of the symbolic content of such reward systems, which can powerfully affect the extent to which the individual internalizes the welfare of the entire organization."¹⁵ I believe Telco (now Tata Motors) was the pioneer in Indian industry when, in 1980, it offered convertible bonds to ALL employees, gave them loans on easy terms to buy the bonds and ran a campaign to educate workers who had never owned shares before. While clearly not the only reason, this was certainly contributory to the feeling of belongingness and ownership that characterized the Telco workforce for years thereafter.


To revert to the issue of gaming prevention, nothing can substitute for the continuing vigil of the target setters, evaluators, HR business partners and checking agencies like Internal Audit. For the highest levels these roles have to be discharged almost entirely by the independent directors on the NRC. When they are incompetent, susceptible to optical wool coverings or complicit, we get scandals such as Satyam and IL&FS.

McNamara's Fallacy

All things considered, is the use of misconceived surrogate targets, that can be easily exceeded or fudged, such a serious matter? To take a non-corporate example again, many historians believe the magnitude of the US disaster in Vietnam was partly due to pursuing metrics that were not germane to what should have been its primary goal. As a result, the world's most powerful superpower had to ignominiously retreat

from its conflict with one of the puniest and poorest nations in the world.

"When the last helicopter rose above the American embassy in Saigon on April 29, 1975, the US had been winning the Vietnam War for over a decade. The data said so. The strategy had been driven by a simple hypothesis, proven by history: Wars were won by inflicting damage on an enemy until they surrendered. The Pentagon set up metrics to measure that progress, the primary data point being kills (dead enemies), which was reviewed as an absolute number and expressed as a ratio against our own dead. The bigger ratio, the better the war was going, and Viet Cong casualties were generally 2x or more those of Americans dead.... The approach was led by Robert McNamara... It was also wrong..."¹⁶ "Preoccupied with searching for and destroying enemy formations, the Americans overlooked that much of the Vietcong's power derived from its political organization in rural villages and hamlets of Saigon... Reducing the Vietcong's fighting power had not diminished their political influence within the local hamlets and villages. Killing the enemy was one thing. Defeating him politically was something altogether different."¹⁷

Charles Goodhart would have smiled. Pursuing a misconceived proxy goal can be very costly indeed. Gaming corporate targets may not lead to as many deaths as the war in Vietnam did but it can be equally fatal to the health and success of any commercial enterprise. 

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Are data-driven decisions the best decisions?

We conducted a study on several organizations and leaders in the industry to find out the decision patterns of the leaders in their organizations and determine whether their decisions were based on data or instinct. Here are some insights

By Reetu Raina & Mansi Chandra



Reetu Raina



Mansi Chandra

The use of advanced data analytics in organizations' decision-making process has increased tremendously over the recent past. Businesses are now focusing on making a data-driven decision-making culture a reality across all levels of their organizations. As a result, data-based insights now form a critical part of the day-to-day decisions. It is used to provide both predictive and prescriptive suggestions needed in critical decision making. However, the question of whether organizations can rely entirely on data in their decision-making processes remains unanswered. Here, we examine whether data-driven decisions are the best decision and understand the role that certain factors like empathy, emotional intelligence, and intuition play in the process.

Steady growth of binary logic

The human brain comprises of two sides: the left and the right side. While the left side is analytical, the right one is creative. Technology has continuously proven that the logic/analytical (left) brain can create wonders. Even the latest advancements in technology continue to support this analogy. However, a more in-depth analysis of the human philosophy indicates that nothing is purely rational.

On the contrary, the rationale can only be justified based on the social context that human nature is a bundle of emotions, and the right balance of emotions is the precursor to a robust rationale.

Technological progressions achieved over the years demonstrate that binary logic can create unprecedented advancements. As such, binary logic is one of the essential capabilities of the current generation. It brings out the realization that what cannot be measured cannot be managed and has developed the need to measure and track everything. Many organizations now believe that they cannot achieve anything that is not measured and tracked. On a broader perspective, the world is an embodiment of human beings that lacks binary logic. Instead, it is mostly built just on contextualized logic.

Organizations create a multitude of systems and processes to build strong foundations and grow big faster. Apart from providing self-service solutions and increasing automation, these systems and processes open a large pool of data. Companies that excel in binary logic put much emphasis on such data. In most cases, the data helps in recognizing patterns and predicting the future based on existing inputs from systems and processes. However, it becomes problematic when senior management and



leaders start looking for data in every work irrespective of its applicability. Eventually, data and metrics tend to become the core of such organizations rather than a problem.

When data starts driving decisions, organizational soul gets lost

Using the right information is beneficial to the organization's decision-making process. However, giving more attention to only data or intuition can result in more hurdles than progress. For instance, when the HR teams spend an excessive amount of time measuring employee experience, their time for improving the experience becomes limited.

To bring some insight on this issue, we conducted a study on several organizations and leaders in the industry. The aim was to follow the decision patterns of the leaders in the organization and determine whether their decisions were based on data or instinct. The study also closely monitored how the stock market works because it is one of the most data-driven and linear logic-dependent fields.

The research considered three scenarios or decision patterns of the leaders as a part of the study. They include an evaluation of decision-making based:

1. Purely on data
2. Solely on experience/gut/context (maybe counter-intuitive to what the data indicates)
3. On a mixture of data and experience/context/gut

Purely data-based decisions

Purely data-based decisions are made based on the analysis of the available data without the use of intuition. One of the domains that work entirely on data is the stock exchange. Typically, the rule of thumb in the stock markets is that if you make a long-term investment, you are bound to gain. For you to win in the short-term, you need to know the right times to enter and exit the market. This begs the question of how does one know when it is the right time to enter or exit. The typical response to this question is that one will know when to enter and exit based on the market mood. This brings forth another question of what is the "market mood" in such a hard-coded data-driven industry.

To explain this paradigm, let us consider the following example.

The market efficiency theory states that if markets are rational, the pricing for all securities will be close to their fundamental value. This value is based on the premise that all investors have equal access to information. Unfortunately, prices of securities/markets do not always behave in the same way.

Stock experts usually use mathematical algorithms to make precise predictions on security prices. The algorithms predict the prices based on past performance, outlook, and current information about security. However, history is full of instances where even in the presence of accurate market data and mathematical models market experts have failed to predict stock market crashes.



Using the right information is beneficial to the organization's decision-making process. However, giving more attention to only data or intuition can result in more hurdles than progress

Although such crashes were primarily associated with market sentiment, among other reasons, variable factors may not be directly related to the crashes. This may suggest that logical projections are not always accurate, even in a field where data is readily available and mathematical models of prediction are commonly used. Apart from the availability of data, other factors like market sentiment or mood also play a crucial role in determining the outcome.

Several stock markets crashes have occurred over the past 22 years, with SENSEX experiencing the biggest crash between 2007 and 2008. An analysis into the event begs the question of whether the crash was purely driven by data (correction of prices) or based exclusively on the market sentiment. After the crash, it took SENSEX almost three years to regain its initial position. Could market sentiments have lasted that long or was there empirical data that sustained the crash?

The same trend was replicated in 2010-11, where the SENSEX dipped but regained its position only after 2-3 years. In 2015, SENSEX declined once more and regained its position within a short time. Does this mean that bullish sentiment is like a wave that pushes up all stock prices when it comes and similarly crashes the market when a bearish wave starts? It also leads to the fundamental question of whether decisions in the stock market are made purely based on data, or is there a much more significant influence of human sentiment?



In an organizational setup, leaders rely on data in making critical decisions and implementing the plan. However, the implementation process requires an understanding of the contextual realities

The same argument can also be used to analyze the decision-making process in the world of sports. Comparing players purely based on score may not always help identify the better player. Apart from scores, other variables like which team the player was most effective against also matter in choosing players. For instance, a medium score against a commendable opponent may be a better indicator of potential than merely a good score against medium opponent.

The first step of the decision making process usually involves gathering of data. When a company is trying to become more efficient, it will first collect data on its expenses and operations. The main challenge may be choosing the overheads to focus on and connecting data collected to the organizational design. Once adequate data has been gathered, the company analyzes the data and makes the most feasible decision. Even though data is the starting point of a decision-making process, it does not always enable optimal decision-making when used alone.

Decisions based purely on experience/gut/instinct/context may sometimes appear to be counter-intuitive to what data indicates

Strictly gut-based choices are justified by an instinct that develops in the sub-conscious mind.

After the mind has absorbed all the data and information from past experiences, it moves to the decision making stage. While such decisions may appear as if they are purely based on instincts, the rationale behind the decision is based on insights. This is usually the case when much information is floating around in the ecosystem. However, a purely gut/instinct decision is generally made in the absence of perfect knowledge or when the decision-maker cannot access it.

Multiple examples demonstrate how some people have been driven by their instincts to create billion-dollar organizations. When starting, they lacked enough data to prove that their ideas were worth pursuing. They relied on their gut feeling about their thoughts and chose to pursue them. Over time, such purposes grew into successful products taking significant positions in the market. For instance, when Steve Jobs was the CEO at Apple, he used to say, "People don't know what they want. You need to create an experience for them." During his leadership at the company, Steve challenged the concept of market research and past data. This led to a revolutionary way of thinking and subsequent introduction of a wide range of products including iPad, iPhone, MacBook, and more. Many people have also launched businesses and products based purely on their gut feeling. Among them, some have already faded and exited the market, and others are thriving as big brands.

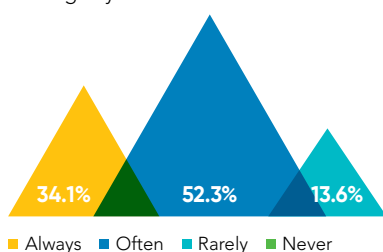
Decisions based on data and supported by experience/context/gut

Google is the frontrunner in any discussions where data forms a significant part of the narrative. Since its inception, Google has made data available to the world. The basic premise of the company's success is that the decision-makers follow their data. A critical look into the company's operations also reveals that they also use data alongside contextual reality. This has helped them to transform some of the basic organizational processes like hiring altogether. For instance, a top-ranking college degree or glowing recommendations are not a requirement for one to be considered for a position at Google.

Over the last couple of years, researchers have focused on the different hiring processes and their outcomes for both academic and commercial considerations. On its part, Google has conducted several studies on the topic and designed its own recruitment process. Unlike other recruitment processes, Google does not consider conventional attributes like a college education, experience, or references of candidates before hiring them. In contrast, the application process starts with the evaluation of the CV based on specific guidelines. The focus is on the alignment of skills and experience with the job description. The candidates are required to share details like their role in the previous organization, measurement of success, and their scope of work. The guidelines help in standardizing the selection process by making it easier to evaluate CVs from varied domains.

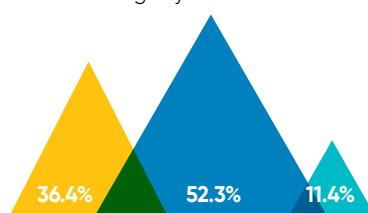
BASIC ASSUMPTIONS FORM THE PREMISE FOR KEY DECISION MAKING

Are there any basic assumptions taken into consideration when your organization is making key decisions?



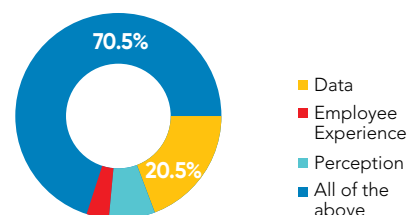
PAST & FUTURE MARKET ANALYTICS CRUCIAL FOR DECISION MAKING

Does your organization consider both the past data and future market analytics before making any decision?



NEW PROCESSES ARE BASED ON DATA AND PERCEPTION

When designing any new process to improve operations, your organization banks on:



By introducing a new employee hiring and selection process, Google has challenged the traditional way of recruiting employees. It has launched an evaluation process that helps to understand the ability of a candidate to perform in a given current context. The Google People Analytics Team conducted a statistical analysis, which deduced that four interviews were enough to predict the suitability of hiring a candidate at Google with 86% confidence. The study also revealed that the brain teaser puzzles were not a good predictor of a candidate's performance once they came on board.

Amazon also uses a similar approach in making data-based decisions. When Jeff Bezos was evaluating new ventures for DE Shaw, he came across a set of data showing that the usage of the World Wide Web was growing at an unprecedented rate. His speech at Princeton in 2010 stated, "I came across the fact that Web usage was growing at 2,300 percent per year. I'd never seen or heard of anything that grew that fast, and the idea of building an online bookstore with millions of titles was very exciting to me." Although he collected data about the World Wide Web, online book store never existed at the time. He used the data to start an online book store, which he combined with his instinct about the future of shopping globally. Eventually, this combination led to the creation of a company that is known as Amazon today.


Findings of the survey

A survey on the use of data in decision-making was conducted on a sample of 70 respondents. Based on their responses, it was found that decisions are not made based only on the available data. Decision making is also based on the specific situation and qualitative factors like employee perception and organizational context. The graphs show a summary of the survey.

Conclusion

In an organizational setup, leaders rely on data in making critical decisions and implementing the plan. However, the implementation process requires an understanding of the contextual realities. As such, decision-makers need to consider both the available data and contextual facts before

It is important to remember that humans can create the best machines, but the best tool cannot create great humans. Therefore, instincts hold the same amount of significance as data in the decision-making process and can make the difference between success and failure

implementing a plan. Although binary logic and data help leaders and organizations to make a predictive decision, they lack the context that the future holds. Therefore, the use of data should be limited only to the extent in which it is meaningful rather than making data the center of everything. When making a decision, gut and context must be combined with data to implement measures that improve corporate performance. It is also important to remember that humans can create the best machines, but the best tool cannot create great humans. Therefore, instincts hold the same amount of significance as data in the decision-making process and can make the difference between success and failure. 

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Past Month's events

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 hosted the L&D Annual Conference 2019 in Mumbai. This year, the conference brought together the latest trends, innovations and best practices under one roof and which helped the leaders foster right mindsets, design processes, and put enabling structures in place to build a future-ready workforce. Global thought leaders and experts came 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. We had an amazing line up of speakers which included Gurucharan Das, Author, Commentator, Public Intellectual and Former VP & MD, P&G Worldwide, Dinesh Deo, Chief Executive Officer, JLT, Raghav Bahl, Founder & Chairman, Quint and Founder & Former MD, Network 18, Manavi Baveja, Head Apac- People Development, Uber, Charandeep David, Head Of Learning And Development (Sob) and many more.

Tweetchat L&D: The shift from intervention to reinvention

ORGANIZER: People Matters
DATE: 22nd October, 2019
VENUE: On Twitter
THEME: As a precursor to People Matters L&D Annual Conference 2019, we had successfully hosted the Tweetchat where global leaders, CEOs, CHROs, and L&D heads came together to deliberate on key priorities for the L&D function to deliver and make an impact amidst a slew of new technologies and changing business models. Speakers who joined us where Ashish Vidyarthi, Founder, Ashish Vidyarthi & Associates, Avid Miner, Actor; Raj Raghavan, Senior Vice President, HR IndiGo (Inter-Globe Aviation Ltd); Dr. Madana Kumar, VP & Global Head-L&D, UST Global; Preethi Rao, Training Effectiveness Specialist, C2C Consulting along with Ester Martinez, CEO & Editor-in-Chief, People Matters.

The Tweetchat revolved around the most critical thing that the L&D function needed to do to enable organizations to reinvent for tomorrow. The discussion also revolved around how learning can move from being a mere intervention to a tool to power reinvention. The future of learning is about making an impact. We had different viewpoints which suggested the reasons for enabling it in a better way.

Webcast: Executive Presence for HR Leaders

ORGANIZER: People Matters & XEd
DATE: Thursday, 10th October 2019, 2:30 PM - 3:30 PM IST
VENUE: Online
THEME: The session identified the key components of Executive Presence, why they are important and how to put them into practice within the everyday working environment.

This session included a mix of the latest research, thought leadership and behavioral neuroscience with easy to apply, practical tips for any HR Leader who wishes to improve their personal impact, executive presence and personal brand.

The speaker for the session was Dr. Angela Muir, Business Psychologist & Professor of Organizational Behavior, XEd, who discussed the aspects of the behaviour-based model of Executive Presence. Other points of discussion were about ways to create a feeling of trust and value between self and others for better long-term relationships. The session also discussed various ways to develop and sustain a powerful personal brand that is consistent with one's values and behavior.

Meet My Workplace with Reliance Nippon Life Insurance

ORGANIZER: People Matters & Workplace by Facebook
DATE: Tuesday, 1st October 2019, 3 PM - 4 PM IST
VENUE: Online
THEME: Indian organizations are leading the world in building amazing places to work and we want to help

showcase this to the world. We hosted the webcast in association with Workplace by Facebook. The speakers for the session were Ashish Vohra who is the Chief Executive Officer at Reliance Nippon Life Insurance where he shared a few tips and fundamental knowledge about building a great place to work in India. The webcast

also revolved around different ways of connecting decentralized branches and frontline employees to one strategy and to each other. Training is an integral part of every organization's employee development. The session helped in understanding the method of scaling training instantly and cost-effectively.

Upcoming events

Learning for the Future

ORGANIZER: People Matters & ACCA

DATE: Chennai: Thursday, 21st November 2019, Leela Palace,
Hyderabad: Friday, 22nd November 2019, Taj Krishna

TIME: Time: 08:30 am to 11:00 am

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. The future is uncertain, it's fast, and it changes rapidly. And to grow under such volatile conditions requires a dedicated effort to learn quickly, implement that learning rapidly, and adapt constantly to be ready for the future. 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. As per the report, the two key concerns which have become extremely relevant in today's world are 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 become 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? To discuss these questions and learn how some of these companies have been able to solve these challenges, HR and L&D leaders from diverse industries will come together for this breakfast roundtable organized by People Matters & ACCA.

HOW TO REGISTER:

By invite only

People Matters TechHR Singapore 2020 Conference & Workshop

ORGANIZER: People Matters

DATE: 19th - to 21st February 2020

VENUE: Marina Bay Sands Convention Centre, Singapore

THEME: The future is on everyone's minds. What lies ahead and what will be its impact on people and work? How can we be future-ready by design? It is these questions People Matters TechHR Singapore 2020 will explore and hope to find the answers to. People Matters TechHR Singapore 2020, Asia's largest HR and WorkTech conference is back in a bigger and bolder format. Themed around 'By Design', the conference will examine the purpose of technology, its impact on business, accelerating change in talent practices as well as the way in which we architect digital culture while keeping an eye on what technology brings to the fore. The conference will also stimulate conversations on completely rethinking how we run our business, how work gets executed and how we create seamless experiences for our customers and employees. Speakers like Jason Averbook, CEO & Co-Founder, Leapgen, Cassie Kozyrkov, Chief Decision Scientist, Google, Nora Manaf, Head, Group Human Capital, Maybank, Nadiah Tan Abdullah, CHRO, S P Setia Berhad and more will share with us their thoughts. Additionally, the week also includes certification workshops on 19th February and the keenly anticipated People Matters Study Tours across some progressive companies in Singapore on 21st February 2020.

HOW TO REGISTER:

<https://singapore.techhrconference.com/register>



High Tech vs. High Touch: Empowering HR to be strategic leaders

ORGANIZER: People Matters & Skillsoft

DATE: 13th, 14th & 15th November 2019

VENUE: Gurgaon, Bengaluru & Mumbai

THEME: As HR leaders increasingly embrace technology to support the entire workforce, they worry that the more automated and digital HR operations get, the less human they would be. While HR leaders wish to make a shift from an operational role to a strategic role with more automation, there is also a fear that human insights will be replaced with digital IQ. With this debate between High Tech vs High Touch in their minds, they seek to find balance between the two. HR leaders want to learn how they can gain more value with digitization without losing the human touch. To reflect on the question, "Will technology make HR less human?" and to discuss how technology can be used efficiently to not replace human insights but to empower them, People Matters and Skillsoft have organized this roundtable discussion. We will deep dive into the various opportunities that technology holds and learn how HR leaders can strike a balance between High Tech and High Touch and empower themselves to become strategic business leaders. This roundtable discussion will help HR leaders to understand how technology can empower them to become more of a strategic leader in the organization.

HOW TO REGISTER:

By invite only

Blogosphere » BY PEOPLE MATTERS EDITORIAL TEAM

Let's take a look at some of the major Hollywood bosses who have left an impression on us through their leadership qualities, superpowers, and commitment to the greater good

Boss Types: From reel to real life

The good. The bad. The ugly. Bosses are the ones who see us through it all—especially when we spend at least eight hours a day in the office!

As employees across the globe celebrate Boss's Day, let's take a look at some of the major Hollywood bosses who have made a memorable impression in our minds, either through their leadership qualities, charisma, or ability to change mindsets.

The new-age, open-minded, and empathetic boss: Jules Ostin from *The Intern*

The founder and CEO of About The Fit, an up-and-coming online fashion company in Brooklyn, New York, Jules Ostin is this open-minded and approachable boss who seemed to have not only embraced the new ways of working but is also leading them. She has created a quirky workspace and even cycles in office occasionally! She believes in leading by example and has left the culture of hierarchies behind.

The glue aka Superboss: Nick Fury from *Avengers*

Nick Fury, as Director of SHIELD, spotted the Avengers strewn across galaxies and brought them together. In HRspeak, it is often said, 'hire the right person or don't hire at all!' Agent Fury single-handedly recruited the top 'talent' and convinced them to fight for a common cause. He tapped into their strengths, helped them overcome their distractions, and kept them "assembled" in order to protect the world.

He empowered his team to respond to dynamic and challenging situations even if it meant straying from accepted norms and set procedures.

The honest boss who's got your back: Marty Baron from *Spotlight*

Marty Baron, currently the Executive



Editor of The Washington Post, has been a living legend in the field of journalism as the editor who guided the Spotlight team at The Boston Globe in their investigation of the Catholic Church to reveal the widespread cases of sexual abuse that had not been previously brought to light. His character was played by Liev Schreiber in the Oscar-winning movie Spotlight.

As a movie character that is based on a real-life boss, who is merely doing his job as an editor of a renowned news agency, Marty Baron's work at The Boston Globe is a reflection of the kind of tenacity and perseverance that a good leader must possess, especially when leading a team through tough times. He is objective, open, and honest about the realities of the market conditions and about his opinions regarding the projects that his team is working on.

The boss who knows your true potential: M from James Bond movies

"Take the bloody shot", one of the most famous lines from 'M' in the James Bond movies. A leader needs to make tough decisions and Judie Dench, who played the fictional character of 'M' the Head of MI6 is a classic example of such a leader. She was alert and always had a grasp of the bigger picture. She is one of the few bosses who understands the true potential of not only the ones reporting to her but also her peers.

M plays a vital role of being the boss who boosts the morale of seemingly strong characters such as James Bond.

An unconventional boss: Jordan Belfort from *The Wolf of Wall Street*

The Wolf of Wall Street, a film by Martin Scorsese is a prime example of financial corruption, excess, and corporate greed. It's the rags to riches to rags story of a hotshot, real-life New York stockbroker, Jordan Belfort (played by Leonardo DiCaprio), who conned his way through life, starting at the bottom of the Wall Street pecking order and by the 1990s making millions selling worthless stocks.

However, we could not help but admire his ability to rally the troops, and inspire exceptional performance. Known for his ruthless business practices and questionable personal infliction, Jordan Belfort motivates and encourages his stock broking employees to achieve excellence (which, according to Belfort, can be measured in riches).

It's a wrap

Movies are nothing but a reflection of real life. Now that you've taken a look at these reel life bosses, look around you - perhaps, you have a movie boss right there in your office! ☺

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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