



PSU 2.0

Leading with Compassion



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The cover features a composite image. The top half shows a city skyline with several tall, modern glass skyscrapers under a clear blue sky. The bottom half shows a lush green landscape with various plants and trees. In the foreground, several large, rectangular solar panels are tilted towards the sun, reflecting the light. The overall theme is sustainable development, combining urban progress with nature and renewable energy.

EDITED BY RADHA R. SHARMA

HANDBOOK OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGIES FOR ORGANIZATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

HANDBOOK OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Strategies for Organizational Sustainability

Radha R. Sharma

Sustainable development has garnered the attention of the global community when United Nations created Brundtland Commission in 1983 to suggest various ways to save the human environment and natural resources and promote economic and social development. Sustainable development is a way of organizing that an organization can function in the long term. United Nation's sustainable development goals provide a framework to translate these into solutions through responsible business and investment by incorporating the ten Principles of the UN Global Compact into strategies, policies and procedures, and establishing a culture of integrity which are expected to bring out transformative change and create enabling environment for doing business globally. Thus, corporate sustainability, to a large extent, would depend on the capability of the firm to function over a long period with sustainable relationships with the stakeholders.

The *Handbook of Sustainable Development: Strategies for Organizational Sustainability* provides guiding principles and diagnostic tools for transformation, generates knowledge about sustainable organizational designs, co-creating value with multiple stakeholders, managing diversity responsibly, ecopreneurship with entrepreneurial bricolage, sustainable business model, developing positive synergy, sustainability reporting and organizational transformation for sustainability which are pivotal issues to be addressed in management education and corporate world.



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Environmental and Social Sustainability for Business Advantage Collection

Robert Sroufe, Editor





Ranjan Kumar Mohapatra

Director (HR), IndianOil

Dear Readers of HR Vista,

Dry numbers or mere spreadsheet analysis would not get us close to the ethos that drives the Human Resource fraternity. HR is about a firm action-oriented focus, but it is also about putting an arm around the shoulder at times. HR is about leveraging data analytics for precise decision-making, but it is also about instinctive brilliance. HR is about rigorous adherence to discipline, but it is also about encouraging out of the box thinking and risk-taking. And HR Vista aims to capture this beautiful balance that makes HR Workspace one of the most vibrant corners within modern corporate premises.

Quite literally, Vista means a 'Pleasing View'. And that, in a very simplistic way, captures the very essence of this web magazine. We intend to leverage the extensive and empathetic HR focus of energy PSUs in the country to create a wellspring of knowledge that is enriching for the mind and pleasant for the heart. Through this e-offering, we intend to create a portal that allows the osmosis of pathbreaking ideas and inspirations within the PSU HR practitioners. In fact, we also intend to explore best-in-class content from industry-beyond-PSEs, academia and even in Media in the days to come.

We also intend to build awareness and nurture an analytical approach on issues of national importance, including statutes, orders, policy decisions and trends which have a bearing on the HR landscape. More importantly, HR Vista aims to strengthen the synergy between the PSU HR community through collaboration and engagement. This will be a two-way communication portal. While we would disseminate knowledge, we also seek suggestions from the entire HR fraternity in India and else were. And of course, stories of resilience, courage, creativity, and flexibility will be shared regularly to bring human strengths to the forefront.

HR is about touching the hearts through meaningful outreaches. HRiday se HR Vista shall aim to do the same.

Happy browsing!



Mr S K Bose

Editor-In-Chief, HR Vista

Executive Director (HR), IndianOil

The power of knowledge transference has transformed the globe more in more profound ways than even the Industrial Revolution. And, the key to humanity's eternal greatness lies in our ability to pool our knowledge.

The eMagazine comes to you with a variety of offerings. The content has been categorised keeping in my mind the readers' interests. You may browse sections according to subjects such as Talent management, Diversity and Inclusion, Employee Relations and so on; you may also browse the magazine as per type of content such as case studies, humour and trivia. All the contributions are cross-referenced for a seamless experience. HR Vista believes in being a platform for all ages and hence, the inaugural issue carries the perspectives from authors across different age groups – youngsters with an eye on future to the experienced folks with an aura of wisdom! I am sure this finely crafted blend will go a long way in nurturing leaders out of our readers.

Knowledge is nurtured in the realms of the human mind and soul, and the Human Resource fraternity has a direct stake in that process of knowledge creation. HR Vista aims to create a spring of knowledge for the Indian Energy PSU fraternity. I congratulate all the industry members for actively participating and converting this idea of e-magazine into reality.

The pandemic has significantly transformed the business landscape and placed extraordinary demands on senior business leaders. The disruptions and the technological advances have accelerated the way businesses innovate and operate. We have seen that many successful leaders have demonstrated unparalleled leadership to drive growth from new possibilities in the recent past. More importantly, they have navigated a complex business environment to cultivate a sustainable business model.

Such successful leaders demonstrated exemplary compassion towards employees, community, customers, and stakeholders by implementing people-friendly policies. They have also taken coordinated extraordinary measures to reach out to the community to overcome the difficulties during the pandemic.

We have also seen the accelerated progress of digitalization by several companies to cope with the demand-supply scenario. After all, Digital skill is a much-needed leadership competency today and in the future. The future of work will not be a world of Man Vs. Machine. It will be a world of Man Plus Machine. In the past years, China has published more than 35000 research papers on Artificial Intelligence (IA), whereas the US and India have published 25,000 and 15,000 research papers, respectively. Thus, the talented people behind the tech & machine and not the technology alone will drive the economy.

The collaboration amongst Industries on logistic support and authentic communication in regular interval by our leadership teams, at all levels have helped the employees and stakeholders immensely during the pandemic.

HR has played a significant role by driving the culture of compassion, courage, excellence, equity, and joy to overcome this pandemic. It is in this background that it was relevant to keep the theme of the inaugural issue as "PSU 2.0 – Leading with Compassion".

This difficult time has also given us space and opportunity to engage in creative writing and expressing thoughts. The e-Magazine will provide us with an avenue to reach out to a broader audience and engage more HR Thought leaders in the future.

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Living with the Invisible



By **Sandeep Sharma, IOCL8,**
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The corona virus is invisible, but its effects are visible everywhere. This virus is changing our lives radically without ever revealing itself directly. All of this is because an invisible virus jumped from a bat to a pangolin to a human and then on to millions more people. We do not know who we need to avoid and who we do not need to avoid, leading to physical distancing from everyone who is not in our household.

It has affected the lives & livelihoods of people across the world, causing untold suffering and dislocation. It has unleashed hopes for change in our society and has also made us more aware of our shared humanity, the value of strong local communities and the importance of our connections to nature. It has reawakened

people, to the way human activity affects the environment.

There is this invisible threat of a virus but then there are visible threats like loss of jobs, slowing of economy, effects on social, mental and physical development of children, physical & mental effects of COVID-19, which are affecting us.

Another invisible enemy is the misinformation and fake news about the virus. Authentic, concise, and effective communication of information about the virus is essential to combating its spread and protecting the public.

Many choices lie ahead as we grapple with the fallout of the pandemic. The decisions being made now in our families, communities and nations will have consequences for generation.

Why Our Goals Need to be to Live With the Virus

Our goals need to be to live with the virus because eradicating COVID-19 virus in near future is almost impossible. Till date we have achieved eradication of only one virus, that is smallpox in 1980. It took decades to get to that point.

Scientists and governments were only able to achieve this because of effective and stable smallpox vaccine which did not need to be refrigerated. It was also clear when someone was infected with smallpox, as lab test was not required for its diagnosis and this was a huge advantage in trying to contain the outbreak of smallpox.

COVID-19 may never go away but it is possible to live normally with it in our midst. At present vaccines & preparedness are the only two things which we cannot afford to ignore to come out of this crisis.

Theoretically vaccines provide us a tool to control the virus, as we had for measles. But measles is an unusually stable virus while COVID-19 virus is highly unpredictable virus, with emerging new variants, which may have the potential to evade the effect of vaccine and this impact of variants on vaccines needs to be carefully watched for.

The challenge therefore is to get ourselves updated with the latest information about the virus and keep our preparations two steps ahead of the virus. In this context it is better to learn living with the virus.

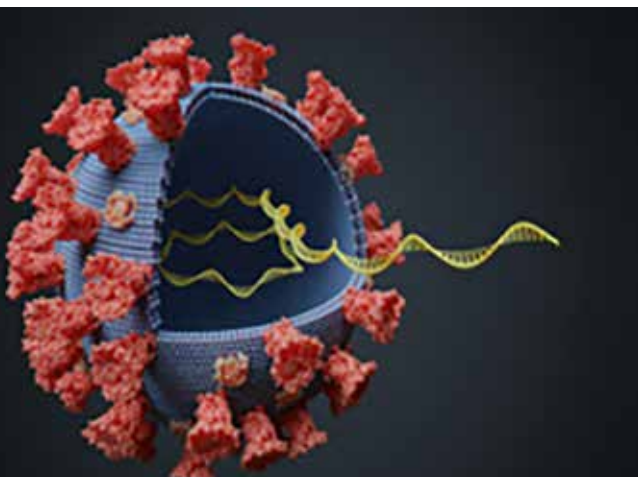
Therefore, our aim must be to manage with the virus and bring it to a tolerable level, and then suppress it to the point of elimination. We need to get to the point where we can “de-risk” COVID-19.

We can aim for a zero COVID strategy, but basically it means now, to bring COVID-19 cases close to zero in a territory and contain them there. Continued restrictions to get cases low, coupled with a more effective test, trace, treat and vaccination strategy can only suppress the virus and keep it suppressed for a prolonged period. But this affects our lives and livelihoods as restriction limits our travels and day to day life activities. short, focused lockdowns becomes inevitable when the cases again flare up.



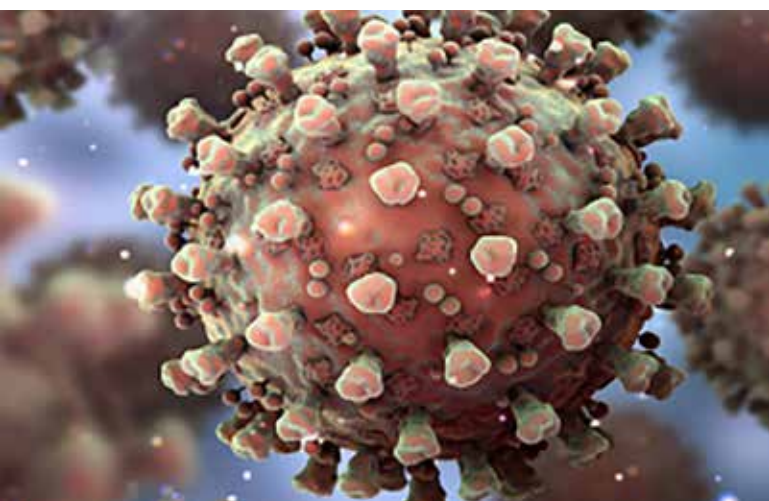
How to Continue Living With the Invisible Corona virus

1. Ensure Vaccination: Based on the indications from clinical trials of vaccines and recent experiences, it is evident that vaccines have a significant impact on infections and where they do not, they will at least help to prevent serious illness, hospitalizations, long COVID complications and deaths. If you are fully vaccinated, your risk of contracting COVID-19 and developing severe symptoms may be lowered thereby preventing overwhelming of the health care infrastructure
2. Have strict Policies for effective implementation of COVID Appropriate



Norms: People do not appreciate the risks they run and it goes against human nature for the people to shut themselves up in rigid isolation as a means of protecting others, they become complacent and often unconsciously act as a continuing danger to themselves and others. Strict policies & their effective implementation makes people adhere to COVID Appropriate Norms.

3. Assume that everything is infected: The presence of the virus in asymptomatic carrier and common public areas may create a problem, thus it will be the most crucial step to manage. The best way is to assuming that everything is infected, and we must follow zero contact policy for elders and immune compromised persons.
4. Redefine Social Norms: We need to be careful about people's behavior, as this is influenced by social norms i.e. what they perceive, that others are doing or what they think that others approve or disapprove of. Social networks can amplify the spread of behaviors that are both harmful and beneficial during the pandemic, and these effects may spread through the network to friends, family members & colleagues and may lead to increase transmission of the virus. The visual mapping of the transmission of this virus is thus the visual mapping of our habit's, interactions, personal and social behavior. So, we need to redefine our social norms, which define our social and human behavior and may prevent or put us at risk to COVID-19.



5. Strengthen Community Engagement: Stay prepared with COVID care resources by engaging local communities. This will help you in the times of need and when health care infrastructure is overwhelmed with local surge in cases.
6. Bring a Behavioral Change in your Lives: COVID crisis requires large scale behavior change and social and behavioral sciences can be used to help align human behavior with the changing scenario. Life could return to something like normal, if we bring a behavioral change in our lives, otherwise sustained restrictions will lead to huge economic and social costs.
7. Avoid Panic Buying: Because it affects those who are particularly vulnerable, and they may experience more distress in acute shortage of necessary essential commodities. This may lead to inequalities in access to resources.
8. Take care of Children: We need to open schools with precautions since schools are important for social, mental, and physical development of children. Studies show that one-year closure of a school leads to 2 years loss for children.
9. Go for Graded opening: Unlock is simply not removing restrictions but it is a gradient dynamic strategy which needs to be followed. We need to open outdoors first; parks and public spaces can be opened earlier. After opening two to four weeks of outdoor opening, indoors need to be gradually opened. Micro social behavior assessments must be followed by micro containment of affected areas.
10. Enlist & Ensure Precautions to be taken by Domestic workers/ Housemaids: This will ensure your safety towards the virus.
11. Stay Connected: As humans we love bond with other people we want to fit into our society and community. We desire a connection with our friends' family and even strangers as human nature. We love to socialize and communicate with other people.

12. **Stay Informed:** Stay up to date with new and updated developments on the COVID-19. Staying informed does not mean that you must follow the news all day. Check in a few times a day, stick to trusted authentic sources. Be sure to use your good critical thinking skills before making an opinion about a news item.
 13. **Be extra careful & stay alert:** It is said that you cannot hit what you cannot see but human being has evolved to respond to the real that exist. Considering our limited ability to fight this invisible, we need to be extra careful.
 14. **Limit you're Travels unless it is necessary:** Travel, like any other activity involves meeting other people and is not risk-free, even after full vaccination.
 15. **Setting a routine can be helpful:** In addition to doing your work make sure to schedule time for your physical and emotional health, sleep, fun, creativity, social connections, and stress relief.
 16. **Monitor your Health:** Monitoring your health and knowing the symptoms of COVID-19 can help stop the spread of the virus.
 17. **Effectively Manage your Co morbidities:** Co morbidities like diabetes hypertension must be effectively managed, immunity boosters and proper nutritious food plans must be followed. These supplements in diet can mitigate the risks associated with COVID-19. Proper diet can also decrease the risk of and help to control diabetes hypertension and obesity, which are considered as risk factors for COVID-19 complications. Key nutrients like proteins fats and carbohydrates support the immune system and can be obtained through fresh fruits, fresh vegetables, dairy products and healthy fats.
 18. **Take care of your Mental Health:** One of the central emotional responses during a pandemic is fear. An emotional response to a risky situation can influence thinking. The experience of fear and threat has ramifications not only for how people think about themselves, but also how they feel about and react to others. Mental health along with basic required protocols needs to be taken care of which includes our social behavior towards the virus. Our behavior must not affect others health.
 19. **Regular Physical Activity:** Regular physical activity benefits both the body and mind. It can reduce high blood pressure, help manage weight and reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke, Type 2 diabetes, and various cancers - all conditions that can increase susceptibility to COVID-19.
 20. **Ensure Appropriate and suitable Ventilation:** Ventilation must be improved and ensured at home & in offices. Opening windows and air circulation can dilute the concentration of virus in the surrounding atmosphere.
 21. **Invest in Health Systems:** Recognizing that the virus will be with us for a long time, we should also use this opportunity to invest in health systems, which can benefit all populations beyond COVID-19, as well as prepare for future public health emergencies.
 22. **Invest in Research:** We need to support and invest in research and development on therapeutic agents and vaccines for COVID-19 and related human corona virus diseases.
- Finally, whether we can live with this invisible enemy SARS COV-2 virus, depends on our acceptance, that COVID-19 will remain there in small geographical pockets and our collective behavior towards the virus must change. If all of us shoulder this burden together and follow above mentioned norms, our society will be safe. This is the only way we can keep ourselves safe from the invasive danger of this invisible virus and start normal living with new norms of life.

Disclaimer

The information shared, is solely intended, for the benefit of young industrial physicians & is contributed from the archives of what we have learnt from the views, thoughts, and opinions expressed by our great teachers. Any updates in the present context may please be verified.

Creating Compassionate Climates Through Resonant Leaders-

An Emotional Intelligence Intervention in IOCL , Marketing Division



By **M R Das,**
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By **Ashis Sen,**
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physical safety ⁽²⁾; in uncertain situations human instinct can cause leaders — out of anxiety of and needlessly making people anxious ⁽³⁾. Many other research talk about during the covid times

Covid-19 has been a disruptive force to businesses in India and has enhanced stress in people. Today 39% of the people in organizations in India suffer from stress as reported in surveys and reports of LinkedIn. (October 2020). Several other reports on employee stress have come up with similar results. The impact of positive climate for an employee in these distressing times is the most crucial element for performance and employee engagement. One has to show kindness and understanding⁽⁶⁾ for keeping sustaining engagement. The stress is further accentuated due to rising uncertainty due to the unpredictability of the impact and longevity of the pandemic. With the pandemic creating rapid and unpredictable change, and the challenges ranging from health to financial, multiple distractions abound. Mindfulness can mitigate these challenges significantly. ⁽⁷⁾

Research on Leadership during the pandemic gives us some significant insights. During this pandemic Leadership must share peoples' pain ⁽¹⁾, companies need to ensure their workers'

the need for leaders to be more empathetic, communicative, frequently share information, be pro-social and provide meaning in the work employees do. They also must consistently compassion. The need for deliberate calm and bounded optimism has been highlighted by McKinsey research ⁽⁴⁾.

The research brings out the focus and skillsets needed of leaders in the pandemic must be if not different, several notches up on empathy, compassion, inspirational capability and information sharing.

IndianOil through its recruitment policies and reputation attracts candidates from top Technical institutes and Management institutes. The technical proficiency and subject knowledge of the executives would be the envy of most institutions in the country. While IQ is a threshold skill, it is now established that the soft skills like empathy, self-awareness, control, inspirational leadership etc are emotional intelligence skills and are causally related to superior performance ⁽⁹⁾

Immediately after onset of Covid-19, top management at IOCL had a simple mandate. We had to help our people to manage their stress levels in this pandemic to enable them to work productively and ensure their well-being. This is where under L&D group of Marketing Division conceived the commencing of the EI Intervention for our Location In-charges. This intervention was unique in many ways. The intervention was designed after extensive research and jointly crafted by L&D group of Indian Oil, Marketing Head office and ASCC.

We outline the Business Case hereunder.

The Business Case of Emotionally Intelligent Leaders.

Climate and Leadership Style -The Relationship: Interestingly, the workplace climate is causally related to the leadership styles adopted and practised by the Manager. The Manager could impact the work climate to 70% and the business results to 30%. The research that started at Harvard Business School has been carried on by HayGroup confirms the impact of leadership style to climate and climate to team performance. The diagram is reproduced below:

Figure 1 (Source Hay Group / Korn Ferry)

Research for over 5 decades conclusively establish that emotionally intelligent leaders



are the primary cause of good work climates.

What is Climate?

The Organizational Climate reflects the experience people have while working for their managers. This experience arises from how leaders' behaviours motivate and develop them. Managers behaviours should be contextual. Yet, resonant and positive styles of leaders are the primary pivots on which positive and productive climates revolve. Managers should therefore focus on learning the resonant styles and practice them most of the time. Google recorded similar findings through its project oxygen. Managers then must learn to develop and **practice twin focus -people and business results.** ⁽¹¹⁾ Christine Porath found **incivility from supervisors can lead to poor performance,** attrition, conflict amongst a host of other negative business results. ⁽¹⁴⁾

Gallup a pioneer in climate assessment lists listening to subordinates, appreciation, developing them, assigning clear goals and empowering people result in improved work climates and business results. ⁽¹⁵⁾

Research data finds **Indian Business Managerial/Leadership styles are predominantly coercive.** ⁽⁸⁾ This can result in toxic climates and resulting in withholding of discretionary effort by subordinates, leading to sub-optimal business results. In the last couple of decades people have commenced open voicing of dissent against toxic bosses which has led to increased attrition or open disgruntlement of employees eroding employer brand value and overall negative impact on performance and employee commitment. While this is a strong business case for empathetic leadership building, the need in 2020 when this intervention was launched had another particularly strong justification – Covid -19.

The Smell of the Place:

Professor Sumantra Ghoshal who was one of the world's foremost academicians in the field of HR. He was an officer at **IndianOil** and then joined to become one of the world's foremost thought leader in Management. His metaphor

for climate was “Smell of the Place”. He said that while the traditional organizations have compliance, control, contract and constraint. He hypothesised to be successful in the modern world the organizations need to be flexible, responsive, innovative and continually learning.⁽¹⁰⁾

To create an environment needed for a successful organization Leaders and Managers must practice Emotional Intelligence Skills and Competencies. This is an established Theory.

The Intervention:

The intervention was carried out by one of the co-authors to this article, Dr Ashis Sen. He had worked long years at Hindustan Petroleum, had worked in locations, had exposure in Projects and had also worked as Head of Capability Building at HPCL and L&T. He was arguably the most well-known expert on Emotional Intelligence in India and had worked in Fortune 500 companies pioneering initiatives in HPCL and on Emotional Intelligence at Indian Railways, Oil India, Tata Motors, Infosys and many other leading companies. He also had opportunity to work with legends like Daniel Goleman and Richard Boyatzis in the area of Emotional Intelligence. He had discussions with Richard Boyatzis on the modes and methodologies of Leadership Development at HPCL and had implemented his suggestions. The results had been stellar.

The Pedagogy and Instruction design was created to ensure that the following steps were followed (70:20:10 Principles):

- I. Learn the concepts of Emotional Intelligence (People must gather knowledge before implementation)
- II. Practice the learned action theories in the real world (Important to convert knowledge to skills)
- III. Conduct Sessions on Emotional Intelligence for Subordinates, Business Partners and Family (Social Learning)
- IV. Receive Feedback and **Coaching** Inputs (Coaching)



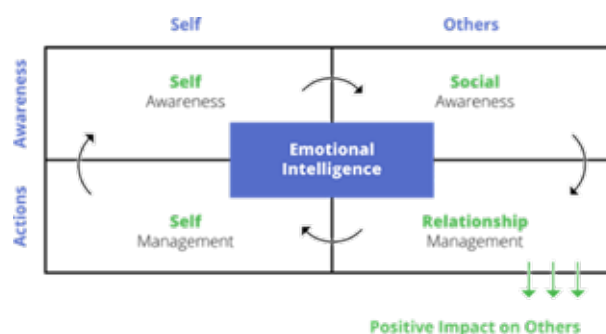
Figure 2

V. Amend/Continue Action Plans for Continued Action (Reflection and Theory Correction for Practice)

The pedagogy map gathers its strength from the **model for Leadership Learning (behavioural change)** created by Centre for Creative Leadership as shown in Figure 2 which emphasizes formal education and classroom training (10%) for knowledge input, 70% of real world experiences while practicing the skills associated with the knowledge and 20% through coaching and social learning.

The Intervention - Step 1 - Knowledge Acquisition

The EI intervention adopted the three-factor model of learning in a robust way.⁽⁵⁾ We had concept learning in 4 sessions on Emotional Intelligence- a) Emotional Self-Awareness b) Emotional Self-Regulation c) Social-Awareness and Empathy and d) Relationship Management. This was based on the Model Postulated by Daniel Goleman who is largely credited to have introduced emotional intelligence in the corporate world. The model is shown below:



Emotional intelligence is a broad term, even nebulous to many. We wanted to focus on the few competencies that would result in superior engagement of self and subordinates and improve team performance. This process helped us to zero in on the following competencies:

1. Emotional Self-Awareness
2. Emotion Regulation
3. Empathy
4. Relationship-Management

Emotional Self Awareness: Research has repeatedly validated the leaders who are aware of their emotions are more effective in emotion regulation, in creating positive and nurturing work climates, are more engaged in their work, improve engagement and productivity of team members and enhance levels of innovation.

Mindfulness: Some of the batches from IOCL were also given inputs on mindfulness as part of self-awareness. The concept of mindfulness developed at MIT Medical Centre, Boston has been found to immensely useful for Emotion Self-Awareness, Emotion Regulation, Empathy and Decision making. The process relies heavily on Buddhist Meditation and Indian Meditation principles.

Emotion Regulation: Decades of work on the variable's emotional intelligence and effective leadership conclusively establish the casual relationship between the two. Leaders must manage their emotions effectively.

Empathy: Leaders must understand the emotions of others. Influencing, guiding, supporting, helping, instructing, directing, enabling and empowering people are some of the leadership functions. Without understanding people these functions would be more course than empowering once we understand other people their emotions, we can help them to give the best by fashioning a response and the proposition that would meet their needs, but we do not understand their emotions and the context from which they speak we cannot have we do not have referent power to demand discretionary effort out of them.

Relationship Management Skills: The General Manager or Location in-charge functions as a coordinator for all events. He does not do marketing or production activities by gets them done through others. The person manages those who manage others or those who do tasks. Therefore, location in-charges, must interact to inspire, motivate, allocate work, deliver feedback and resolve conflict. Therefore, interpersonal and effective communication are non-negotiable skills.

The workshop helped them improve skills related to the above four competence clusters and then transfer and practice these skills and knowledge to his subordinates and others.

Step 2- Coaching Sessions- Sharing with stories of experiential learning and feedback

(Stories from the Pot Pourri)

After the EI Sessions, the batches received coaching sessions every month. Some of the photographs are exhibited above. During the coaching sessions, the Location In-Charges shared stories of implementing the learned concepts in their personal and professional lives. The sharing led to a ripple effect, where others were inspired to practice and share their stories of success.

Each story was a powerful narrative of change and spurring tales of transformation from colleagues. Each story had its contours, shades and contexts, yet the Emotional Intelligence competencies like self awareness, self regulation, willingness to understand the other person and help were repetitively manifest.





Business Results – Tangible and Intangible (Qualitative Results)

The stories that emanated in the sessions represented practice of the cognitively learned knowledge and skills on day to day professional and personal life. Examples and incidents viz. labelling of emotions, regulation of emotion,

mindfulness for stress management, empathy to create robust relationships gripped peers and colleagues in the sessions and also ennobled peers. The stories are narrations which bring forth both tangible and intangible benefits.

Some of the stories are brought out as under:

Topic: Empathy and Developing Others

Story 1

*I wish to share an incident from my professional life. Few days back I received a complaint against a officer. He was refusing calls from dealers and transporters. I called him and inquired on the complaint. He responded rather curtly 'I am extremely sorry sir, I cannot attend those calls as the dealers and transporters talk **in different manner**'. I realized he had some assumptions and beliefs which were playing on his mind resulting in his refusal to converse with our business partners.*

*In earlier times, I would have been angry with that approach. But this time, I said "**it's okay**". I requested him to share the reasons with me and in case a dealer is rude, he could also share that with me. He left my room in a pensive mood. However, in the evening before leaving office suddenly he came to my room and he said, '**Sir I am extremely sorry I spoke to you rudely**'.*

I enquired the reason. He replied 'I have a problem, I can't control my emotions. I speak to others when I feel I can control my emotions. But when these transporters and dealers talk, I feel pressurized, and something bothers me internally.'

I explained him that our objective is to satisfy our customers and converse with them and informing them is a major part of the process. The young officer replied that "It's not required to talk over phone as everything is digitalized these days and they receive SMS messages. Yet the dealers and transporters repeatedly ask for information

that is already available and this irritates me. Sometimes I block their numbers." I told him, "You need to control your emotions. That is what I have learnt in emotional intelligence classes". I had some half an hour session with him and helped him with the techniques of emotion regulation. I also educated him on the importance of listening and that everything cannot be automated. He understood and promised to work on it.

On frequent occasions, I also mention about pranayama and meditation to staffs whenever I interact with them, and I try to practice meditation and pranayama for 15 minutes daily. Meanwhile, there has been a positive change in the officer's behaviour and interactions. I find the change in myself too, particularly the intent of listening with an intent to help than criticize. The Emotional Intelligence training inputs are practical. I am proud to share this real story which brought transformation in a young officer and made me feel great too!

Topic: Emotional Self-Awareness, Emotional Self-Regulation and Mindfulness.

Story 2

I would like to record that after the EI training, three things hit me very hard; **labelling emotions, mindfulness and cognitive and emotional empathy**. I would like to quote few incidents in the past one and half months. I am working in a LPG Bottling plant. We were three officers to manage the high demand of LPG cylinders in this pandemic. We were working on all days **including Sundays**. Daily we were working 2 to 3 hours after office hours.

One of my young team member got transferred. His transfer orders were to Kerala. He is a married officer and his wife was working in Kerala PWD. He was delighted with the transfer orders and looked forward to joining at the new location soon. However, due to pandemic his transfer was

put on abeyance. He had been keenly looking forward to the transfer. The cancellation of the transfer frustrated him completely and he went on leave.

I tried to convince him, but he was extremely upset and disappointed. His leave was for 21 days. During those 21 days, I spent exceptionally long hours at the LPG Plant. My wife bluntly said, "Why are you coming to house, you better stay back at office itself!". I was very eagerly waiting for the 21 days to be over and my officer joining back. I could then take some rest.

He did not come back on the 22nd day. Neither did he call or communicate the reasons. Having attended EI program, I realized that I need to resolve this issue calmly. Anger would not help. I sent him a message on WhatsApp. He responded, "Sir, I came home and then lived 14 days in quarantine. I could not meet my wife and after that my wife came. Now she is in quarantine". He went on explaining and speaking. I patiently listened and said, "Okay fine, it is all due to pandemic".

"I realized if I shout on him, nothing is going to change except display of my frustration. I had resolved during the training need to increase my cognitive empathy. I tried to do that by trying to understand his perspective and viewpoint. So, in an orderly way I told him that you should at least give me a date when you will return. He gave me a reply and he joined the location. My understanding his perspective seemed to help him understand my plight and my struggles. He came back after a week. We have together met the high demands of domestic cylinders in the pandemic, ensuring people can cook their food without inconvenience and have healthy and good food. I am proud of that.

This is one incident I thought I myself handled in a much better way because of the EI training. Every moment when I get some feelings, I wanted to refer that bar chart, what is intensity of my disruptive emotion. Before I express, I label my emotions to know

what state I am in, so that I can choose how to respond. Many a times it's better not to react. This course has helped me to respond in lieu of reacting. I can proudly claim that I have stopped reacting !

Story-3

At Daman AFS where I am placed, there was once a time when my aviation bowser broke down. My normal reaction to such a situation is anger and frustration. The facts that not many maintenance service providers were available around and service had to be continuous were what I used as my excuse for anger.

But that was before I was a participant in the EI session. This time, when the breakdown occurred, my prime approach was to troubleshoot with calmness. The regular and dependable maintenance vendor was not available and the OEM charged a heavy expense for the repair. I managed my anxiety till the return of the regular vendor. I took all stakeholders in loop and managed the situation without a dint of frustration. The bowser was repaired once the vendor returned. This ensured a substantial cost saving without any loss of productivity.

I shared my experiences from the training with some of the blue collar workers we have, and they learnt some of the lessons. Sharing also helped me understand the concepts better.

Topic: Empathy

Story-4

The sessions on Emotional Intelligence helped me a lot. Let me talk on the lessons of empathy and listening actively. I earlier used to look at the TV and listen to my wife. After the sessions, I look at her and listen to her. A couple of days back I had my son's birthday. We had a video call with him. My son said instead of celebrating it would be nice if we can help some poor people. Here at Ambala,

there is a nearby leprosy community centre with 36 families. We went there with gifts of sweets, ration and clothing. They blessed us from the heart. Me and my wife were very touched. The day turned out so beautiful for us. When we help the needy, we have a special feeling.

On the professional front, . One officer from my team wanted to get a transfer to Panipat. He was unhappy with the transfer to Delhi. I listened to him with complete patience and understood his anxiety in terms of his posting during the covid 19 pandemic. However, I explained that IndianOil takes a holistic view and would use his skill sets in the best way possible. Parallely, sometimes in his presence and at other times in his absence I talked to higher ups to help him. He was doing a good work at Ambala and if he was kept happy, he would excel at the new location. My act of concern made him warm up to me and his trust levels rocketed.

Story-5

I have a officer at my location who is senior to me in age. He reports to me. Truthfully, I have been rude to him in the past. I do not usually listen to him and use harsh language while delegating his duty. In a meeting before everybody in one such incident, he said that when I talk to him in a harsh manner, he forgets what he wants to say. He said that with humility and without blaming me. I reflected and could understand how I have wronged him. I thanked him and self-reflected on improving my behaviour towards him and all my subordinates in general.

Story-6:

Emotional Intelligence was a new concept. We used to practice some of this. But the sessions made us understand the science in our approach. I have shared the lessons with many people. We have implemented the lessons at so many places. I have shared

the EI lessons with my team and have shared the recordings with L&D Team at Northern Region.

We have challenges. At times, we have work for 24 hours. I noticed that we used all the parameters generally that we had learnt in the sessions. What was missing was empathy. Many a times, we have officers who go back at 10 O'clock have to come back at morning shift. The EI sessions inputs encouraged me to have conversations with my team members to resolve conflicts on shifts and leave planning so that we could optimize our leave usage and have high levels of consensus on how to manage shifts without discords. Empathy and team effort did the magic



One of the participants conducting the Emotional Intelligence Sessions with his location officers.

Reflecting on Our Biases (Metacognition – Self Awareness)

Story-7

This story is from on my routine work in office. There is an officer who works with me on day to day basis, morning to evening. In life, we like some officers more than others. So I had this feeling about the officer that he suffers from knowledge, effort and commitment deficits. I used to counsel him on that. So recently I saw him inspecting the TT Locking system. The Tank Truck (TT) locking system is important and he was not doing his job properly.

I called him in to my office, with considerable irritation. The officer had been working for 2 years and his lack of knowledge and skills, bothered me. It appeared to me he was not taking his job seriously. Though I was seething with anger, I controlled my emotion. Though I was angry I remembered the emotional regulation techniques. Then I took him to the top of the tank lorry and showed him how to do the job.

From then on, he did the work on TT Lock System checking correctly. He said he was looking forward to someone guiding him and with my help, he learned the process properly. In return, I learned the need to regulate my emotions and check my biases, since those can lead us to erroneous decisions and actions. I have found emotion regulation and cross checking my assumptions as transformation catalysts and stimuli to change effectively.

Reframing our Mindsets (Reappraisal):

Story-8

I want to share one story which is personal. Basically, we all know that schools are closed nowadays. I found my son used to spend around 7 hours 8 hours on the mobile daily. Before this program, I basically used to advise him that this will spoil your career. I would advise him not to spend so much time on mobile, He would not pay heed.

After attending this program, I realized that the way I was letting my assumptions and beliefs take over in the form of advice. So, I went to him and asked how he spends so much time on the mobile. I found that he was spending time on creative activities. I told him he had good potential and advised him to take free Python classes on mobile. He attended the python programs and nowadays he is learning Python Programming by watching YouTube videos and I am feeling lucky that he is attaining good skills. He has

made some good programs in Python, which is the advantage. His age is only 13 years, and he is good at programming now.

Topic: Managing Daily Stress :

Story-9

I work in Tikrikalan for the last one year. I had a smooth passage, but the last three weeks or so has been quite disconcerting. On TT locking systems we have been facing issues. Strict action including blacklisting often leads to agitations with transporters and my team has to face stressful situations. These actions often lead to meetings with higher officials. My team members also get agitated due to these stressful interactions, and we discuss how to manage our stress.

We had learnt in the session how labelling of emotions and mindfulness helps manage emotional intensity and stress effectively. I want to validate this point. In the past few years I do meditation and it helps. I now advise others to do it. Also, for stressful events the quick mindfulness exercise I learnt in the session is very helpful and helps manage stress very quickly and effectively.

The incredible support and the remarkable coordination extended by the L&D Executives were crucial for ensuring effective transfer of knowledge and promote the real-world implementation of the learned concepts.

The empirical evidence through story sharing was overwhelmingly positive. Coaching inputs during the monthly sessions were directed on the principles of positive psychology and social learning. People were appreciated for their good work and encouraged to plan further and the group agreed to practice some of the skills and practices of their peers. This is in consonance with the 70:20:10 learning principles.

Quantitative Results

The search for excellence is often two pronged. In this case while we had strong positive qualitative results, we were also prudent to gather quantitative results for ascertaining the benefits of the Emotional Intelligence Intervention. The Survey was conducted with a leading software earmarked for surveying purposes to ensure authenticity and to mine insights. The ethical principles of survey were followed. The survey questions were adopted from the principles postulated and theorized in the Kirkpatrick's Model of Evaluation of Training Results.

Survey Details and Analysis: (Responses of Direct Subordinates)

After more than 4-5 months the Direct Reports have filled a survey on the perceived improvement of behaviours and skills associated with creating better climates and better relationships. This was the aim of the study. They have scored on behaviours related to emotional self-awareness, emotion management, conflict resolution, listening, developing and coaching etc for their supervisors. The period ensured that the answers were stable and were not based on instances noticed over a few days or short period of time. The number of people who have responded are 104 which is an exceptionally large sample of the people impacted. Therefore, the results recorded here are representative of the results. The gender distribution of the responses against the survey is 80% Male and 20% Female. This would broadly safeguard the report from gender bias.

The questions were scored on a Likert scale which is best suited for the purpose of the research. The five point likert scale reads as under:

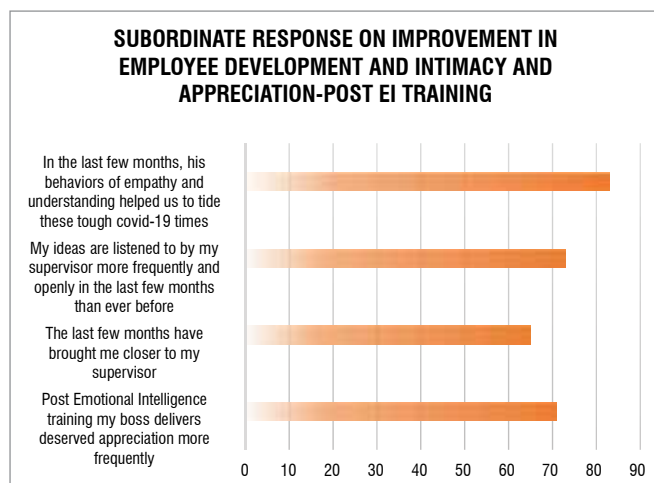
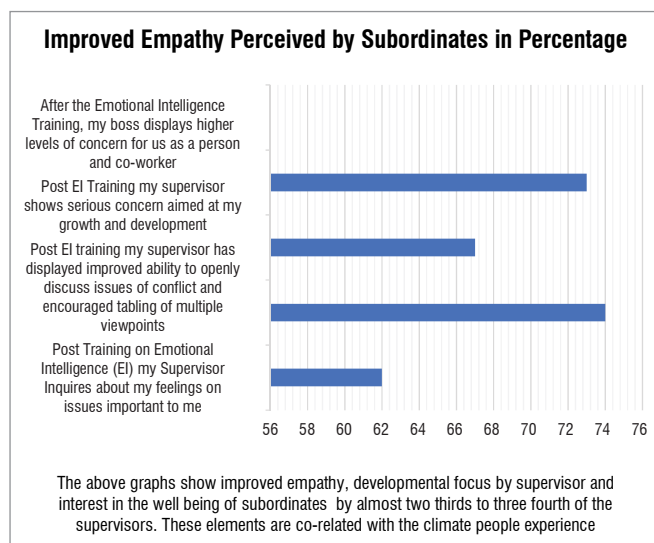
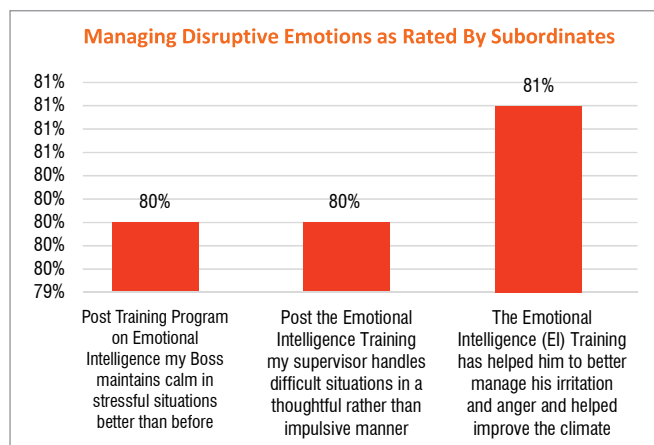
Completely Disagree 2- Disagree 3- Neutral 4- Agree 5- Completely Agree

The following table shows the survey items and the responses to them:

Sr No.	Survey Item	Agree% (4)	Completely Agree % (5)	Total% (4)+(5)
1	Post Training Program on Emotional Intelligence my Boss maintains calm in stressful situations better than before	37	43	80%
2	Post the Emotional Intelligence Training my supervisor handles difficult situations in a thoughtful rather than impulsive manner	55	25	80 %
3	The Emotional Intelligence (EI) Training has helped him to better manage his irritation and anger and helped improve the climate	42	37	81%
4	Post the training my supervisor has shared the learning on Emotional Intelligence with us	21	50	71%
5	Post Training on Emotional Intelligence (EI) my Supervisor Inquires about my feelings on issues important to me	36	26	62%
6	Post-training we have experienced higher levels of collaboration from teams led by his peers.	40	29	69%
7	Post EI training my supervisor has displayed improved ability to openly discuss issues of conflict and encouraged tabling of multiple viewpoints	38	36	74%
8	Post Training on EI discussions on performance is more often on issues than personality. He/She shows concerns for my feelings and viewpoints during discussions	30	37	67%
9	Post EI Training my supervisor shows serious concern aimed at my growth and development	31	36	67%
10	After the Emotional Intelligence Training, my boss displays higher levels of concern for us as a person and co-worker	34	39	73%
11	Post EI training my supervisor has more number of coaching sessions with me	29	22	51%
12	Post Emotional Intelligence training my boss delivers deserved appreciation more frequently	35	36	71%
13	The last few months have brought me closer to my supervisor	35	30	65%
14	My ideas are listened to by my supervisor more frequently and openly in the last few months than ever before	38	35	73%
15	In the last few months, his behaviors of empathy and understanding helped us to tide these tough covid-19 times	38	45	83%

Some Interesting findings from Subordinates Feedback

Significant Improvement in Emotion Regulation/ Management: Data shows that 80 to 81 percent of the subordinates agree or completely agree that there has been improvement in the Managers' ability to handle disruptive emotions like anger etc.



The Benefits of Self Assessment- A Pathway to Motivational and Self Directed Growth

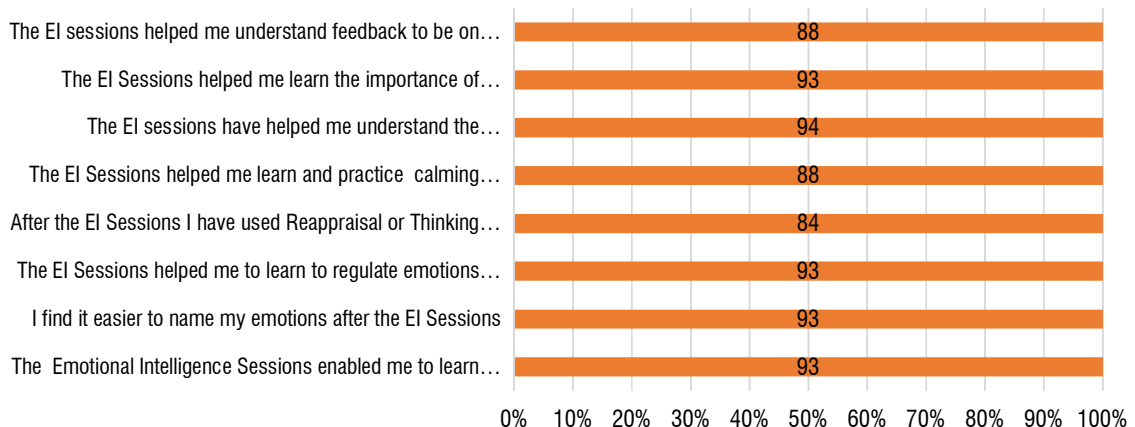
It is well documented and repeatedly established that the process of learning and self regulation is enhanced through the process of self-assessment. Students take responsibility and promote academic self-regulation. They manage their learning better with self assessment. (Pintrich, 2000; Zimmerman & Schunk, 2004). Self assessment is a key motivator for change as it involves awareness of the goals and monitoring one's progress. The coaching sessions primary aim was to foster goal setting, action to achieve the goals and reflection on the effectiveness of adopted strategies and changing them as required. Reflectivity is the capacity to manage own learning by evaluating ones progress, select approaches that make personal sense and this process seeds responsibility to commit to and sustain the learning agenda rather than agree or adhere to an external agenda and process.¹⁶

Self-Assessment Post EI Intervention by the Participants- Analysis (57 Responses)

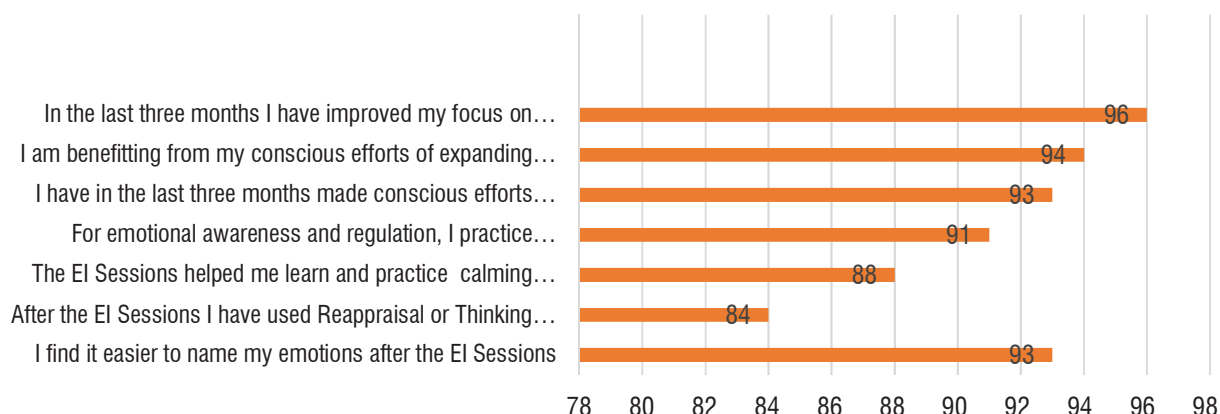
The Survey was conducted post the EI Intervention and the self-assessments collated. 57 participants responded with a distribution of 4 women and 53 men executives. It would to that extent moderate any gender biases.

Sr No.	Survey Item	Agree% (4)	Completely Agree % (5)	Total% (4)+(5)
1	The Emotional Intelligence Sessions enabled me to learn in a scientific manner the Method of Naming Emotions and its impact on Amygdala	46	47	93
2	I find it easier to name my emotions after the EI Sessions	47	46	93
3	The EI Sessions helped me to learn to regulate emotions by Reappraising the situation and thinking of the situation in a different way	44	49	93
4	After the EI Sessions I have used Reappraisal or Thinking of the situation in a different way to create positive emotions in me	40	44	84
5	The EI Sessions helped me learn and practice calming others in a tense situation more effectively	46	42	88
6	The EI sessions have helped me understand the Importance of Mindfulness Breathing to manage stress and become more productive at the workplace	42	52	94
7	For emotional awareness and regulation, I practice mindfulness	56	35	91
8	The EI Sessions helped me learn the importance of understanding other people's emotions and perspectives (Empathy) for Improving Business Results	51	42	93
9	I have in the last three months made conscious efforts to improve my network both within Indian Oil and outside	54	39	93
10	The EI sessions helped me understand feedback to be on issues rather than on personal deficits	46	42	88
11	I am benefitting from my conscious efforts of expanding my network	52	42	94
12	In the last three months I have improved my focus on coaching and developing subordinates	56	40	96

Self assessment post EI on significant learning



Self - Assessment - Practicing Emotional Intelligence Skills



Discussion

As can be seen in the Self Assessments on all issues 80 to 100 % of the Supervisors (Location In Charges) record practice and improvement in the EI Skills. **This shows high levels of acceptance of the concepts, commitment to practice to hone the EI Skills and use it regularly.**

It is also seen both from the stories recorded and the survey **data that the EI skills of the leaders have helped them repeatedly to manage their people during the stressful pandemic** much better.

The corresponding survey from the majority of the subordinates show very high levels of improvement in various EI Skills related to creating motivating climates. Thus there is congruence in self and subordinate ratings in improved EI Skills.

Recommendation

The theoretical template of EI Skills learning and Climate Improvement is robust and we believe it can be applied across PSUs, which have many similar elements in terms of culture and functioning.

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Health and wellness - From benefits to necessity

Physical fitness is not only one of the most important keys to a healthy body, it is the basis of dynamic and creative intellectual activity

- John F. Kennedy



By **Mr. Rajdeep Goswami,**
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Health and well-being in the workplace have become common topics in the mainstream media, in practitioner-oriented magazines and journals and, increasingly, in scholarly research journals. There exists a vast but surprisingly disjointed and unfocused body of literature across diverse fields that relates directly or indirectly to health and well-being in the workplace. These literature addresses health and well-being from physical, emotional, psychologic and mental perspectives. Because of the broad domain reflected in this literature, there is also considerable variation in the meanings and definitions attached to the term's health and well-being. Despite this lack of clarity, however, employee health and well-being in the workplace are important concerns that should continue to receive attention. In addition, these experiences also "spill over" into non-work domains. Workers spend about one-third of their waking hours at work, and don't necessarily leave the job behind when they leave the work site. Indeed, the overlap between non-work and work has become a popular research area, with the recognition

that a person's work and personal lives are not separate entities but, instead, interrelated and intertwined domains having reciprocal effects on each other. Health and well-being can refer to the actual physical health of workers, as defined by physical symptomatology and epidemiological rates of physical illnesses and diseases. The second is that health and well-being can refer to the mental, psychological, or emotional aspects of workers as indicated by emotional states and epidemiological rates of mental illnesses and diseases. Adding to these two person-related dimensions are the societal dimensions of health and well-being, such as alcoholism and drug abuse rates and their consequences. Diener (1984) has used the term "subjective well-being" to describe a person's overall experience in life and suggested that it essentially reflects a person's self-described happiness. First, well-being has been defined by external criteria as some "ideal condition" that differs across cultures. Second, subjective well-being has been labeled as life satisfaction because in attempts to determine what leads to the positive evaluation of life, researchers have discovered that this subjective form of happiness is a global assessment of the quality

of one's life guided by a person's own set of criteria. Third, the meaning of happiness is used to denote a preponderance of positive affect (e.g., being energetic, excited, and enthused) over negative affect (e.g., anger, disgust, guilt, depression) and this is how happiness is generally used. Aside from interactions with personality traits and other factors, stress per se is also recognized as an important component and major problem of everyday life-threatening individual, organizational, and societal health. Stress-related disability claims, for example, are now the most rapidly growing form of occupational illness within the workers' compensation system.

The nature of work is changing, and some changes may have a considerable effect on worker well-being. On the one hand, new practices that are being adopted to promote employee well-being (e.g., non-standard employment arrangements) can also foster team member engagement and improved performance, and the evidence base for the effectiveness of workplace wellness and health-promotion programs is growing. On the other hand, today's emphasis on technology, artificial intelligence, and robotics may create new challenges for workers' well-being and health. For example, the growing gig economy (i.e., a labor market characterized by the prevalence of short-term contracts or freelance work rather than part-time or salaried employment) means that workers are less likely to have many of the benefits of employment and more likely to have job insecurity than they did in the past, which can lead to increased stress and negative health outcomes.

A lot of simple ways can be incorporated to help focus activity on **engaging** everyone on the issue of wellbeing in the workplace to remove stigma around mental ill health, **educating** managers and wider workforce about mental health awareness and **embedding** good practice and the right support processes. There are 5 major workplace wellness statistics that every employer should know:

- Wellness programs improve employee health behaviors

- Wellness programs reduce elevated health risks
- Wellness programs reduce healthcare costs
- Wellness programs improves productivity
- Wellness programs can decrease absenteeism

Employee wellness. What was once a segment of the benefits package offered to employees, has today become a non-negotiable priority for businesses that hope to sustain and grow in the long run. Fueled by the outbreak of the coronavirus, people safety is now accompanied by severe warnings to address the mounting mental health concerns, over and above the physical well-being of employees. While holistic wellness had begun to make its relevance felt across businesses much before the pandemic, what has emerged as the most critical component of the wellness umbrella today is mental wellness.

Microsoft's latest Work Trend Index report brought how the pandemic impacted well-being at work globally with five key findings:

- The pandemic increased burnout at work – in some countries more than others
- Causes of workplace stress differ for Firstline and remote workers
- Six months in, there are more communications and fewer boundaries
- No commute may be hurting, not helping, remote worker productivity
- Studies show meditation can fight burnout and stress during the workday

According to the report, over 30% of first line and information workers stated the pandemic has increased their feelings of burnout at work. The report also highlighted that everyone is experiencing this time differently—44% of those in Brazil are feeling more burned out compared to 31percent in the US and 10% in Germany. In terms of how longer workdays impact feelings of burnout—workers in Australia saw the highest increase in workday span in Microsoft Teams (45%), with a medium increase in burnout. While workers in Germany

saw very little change to workday span or feelings of burnout. Among all the surveyed markets globally, India was found to have the longest workday span. According to a CDC report, "During the first quarter of 2020, the number of telehealth visits increased by 50%, compared with the same period in 2019, with a 154% increase in visits noted in surveillance week 13 in 2020, compared with the same period in 2019." How these numbers and healthcare benefits for scale and evolve will unfold in due time.

From organizations like Oyo, L'Oréal offering an extended weekend on Independence Day, to Google offering an extended weekend with Labor Day, several organizations stepped up to the occasion and recognized the need to value the mental well-being of employees and give them an extra day-off. Some even introduced a new working culture with 'Meeting Free Days' and no calls after 7 PM'.

Satyanarayanan Visvanathan, SVP and Head of HR (Global) & Corporate Quality, CSS Corp, highlighted the importance of building minds that are focused, empowered and fit and shared a host of initiatives that the organization undertook. "Our exclusive CHEER framework (where 'C' stands for Communicating with employees, 'H' for Highlighting their accomplishments, 'E' for Energizing them, 'E' for Engaging with them, and 'R' for Recognizing and Rewarding them) and initiatives to ensure multi-channel employee connect and employee assistance, not only puts a smile on our employees' visage but heightens their mental strength.

Deloitte's 2021 Global Human Capital Trends report states, "The incorporation of well-being into work must be done symphonically, championed by leaders at every level and in every function if it is to make a meaningful difference. As technology becomes ingrained in every aspect of how people work, technology leaders will face a growing responsibility to work with HR and the business to ensure that those technologies, and the workflows

and processes that complement them, are designed and executed in a way that promotes worker well-being."

Well-being overall has a direct impact on every single part of an employee life cycle, recognizing its importance and making wellness programs an indispensable part of every workplace should be integral for every organization. With several fitness and wellness apps and websites available in the market that might discourage employees from availing organization led programs, it becomes a concern for organizations on how to then redesign and promote key initiatives to demonstrate a positive impact of investing in wellness initiatives. However, it is evident that initiatives alone cannot foster a supportive environment for mental well-being. There needs to be an undeterred focus on creating a culture that promotes and enables wellness, while also being respectful of those who are willing enough to be vulnerable and open, and trust the workplace for honest conversations.

From a work design perspective, it appears that a majority of the organizations are planning infrastructure, policies and culture for a hybrid workplace, with both remote work and return to office being important constituents. How employers ensure employee wellness for a distributed workforce through these uncertain times, keeping wellness holistic yet focused, will determine their ability to build a healthy and productive workplace, one that isn't just profitable and gets the job done, but one that has a purpose, with sustainability - of both people and business - at its core. With high hopes, let's walk towards achieving this balance.

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Personal Strategies to Improve Well-being

CALM ki baaten



By **Anubha Gupta**, Sr. Manager, Human Resources, HPCL
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Title: Personal Strategies to Improve Well-being - **CALM ki baaten**

Purpose: To attain a state of social, physical, mental and spiritual well-being.

Methodology: To improve well-being by living a calm life. For having calm in life, we need to understand and adopt CALM, which represents the need to Connect, to be Active, to keep on Learning and be Mindful.

Analysis: All human beings derive energy i.e. capacity to work from four main dimensions- Social Connections, Physical Activities, Lifelong Learnings and Mindfulness. "C"- the first letter of CALM, reminds to connect to all and make life meaningful. "A" - the second letter of CALM, inspires to be active and to keep ourselves healthy. "L"- the third letter of CALM, motivates to keep on learning and grow in life. "M" - the fourth letter of CALM guides to be mindful and live in the present moment.

Conclusions and Implications: Connection with others make us feel secured, supported and valued. Physical Activity increases capacity to improve the functioning of body. Learning is about gaining new knowledge, developing new skills and having new experiences that enrich our lives and is vital for mental wellbeing. Learning feeds curiosity and keeps the mind active and engaged, keeps us updated and helps us cope up with the change. Mindfulness helps us being present and stay cognizant of where we are and what we are doing without being overly reactive or overwhelmed. It nurtures our ability to recall dispersed mind to a wholeness with which we can live fully every moment of our lives.

With this holistic approach for Social, Physical, Mental and Spiritual well-being, we can aim to attain CALM and thus happiness and well-being in life. Calm ki baaten - are harbingers of well-being, calm and happiness. To have a calm life, we need to embrace all four dimensions of Calm ki baaten and strike a fine balance amongst these. Neglecting any of them may not enhance overall well-being and quality of life. Calm ki baaten provide us the solid foundation upon which we can build a happy and flourishing life.

Personal Strategies to Improve Well-being

CALM ki baaten

I still remember the day.....it was 3rd Feb, 2020 when I reached Karjat to attend my first basic lab organized by ISABS. Being in the lab was quite a different experience for me. This space provided me a unique opportunity to know my own feelings. One of the insights, I got during the lab was that being physically fit is not enough for one's well-being. Our thoughts and feelings also play an important role in our well-being.

Shortly after the lab, I went to Lucknow for some official work. When I checked in my hotel, receptionist at the counter asked me whether I have travelled to china in last one month. I was a bit surprised but then she told me about Covid 19 and asked me to sign on the declaration as a part of hotel's policy. When I entered in my room, somehow, my mind started thinking about the virus only because I was alone and there was nothing much to do. As I am an asthmatic patient, I could not sleep properly and a "fear of unknown" ingrained very deeply in me. I realized that I was not at ease at all.

After coming back to Mumbai, I cancelled my long awaited trip to Mathura and Vrindavan to celebrate Holi festival from 7th March to 15th March because of fear as Covid 19 reared its head in India. 16th March onwards, I was travelling to office with a full coverage of face, which was of course very suffocating for me so I applied for a long leave to avoid travelling to office. I was very well aware that my job profile does not require my physical presence and my work can be done from home so I requested for my leave with a promise that I will do work too from home. But this idea was too new to get accepted in my organization. I had no choice but to live with my fear. From March 23rd, 2020 onwards, we all got WFH. Though we were allowed to work from home, my fear was far from over as Covid 19 cases increased multifold in India and around the world. We were isolated and confined to our homes with

limited resources. Social lives became a thing of past, outdoor physical activities came to a halt and my mind went into upheaval never seen before.

All this forced me to think and find ways to achieve calm in the chaos. Through my interactions with my family, colleagues, friends and relatives and experiences of lock down, I came to the conclusion that a properly balanced all dimensional well-being is the key to have a calm life. And I created my own framework of well-being named CALM ki baaten, which helped me not only to understand but practice all dimensions of well-being.

Most of us feel that achieving success, being better than the rest, and aspiring to do what nobody has done before – these are the things that we all must strive for. We usually dream of a happy life, full of personal and professional recognition, of great luxuries that we can afford and often believe that life has to be this way only. We are so obsessed with getting what we want or what is expected of us that we forget many things that are along the way. In this quest, sometimes we forget our personal relationships, neglect our physical health, get mentally affected and often we disregard our spiritual side also.

"CALM ki baaten" is a strategy to achieve calm in life through holistic well-being. Over the years of my experiences in personal and professional life, I have developed this unique, self-sustaining approach, which helps me to live with calm in chaos. This is my personal strategy, which I have embraced to improve my own well-being.

By understanding the importance of what four letters of CALM represent and by embracing that in my life, I am better equipped to manage the complexities of life, which arise anytime. The two most essential pillars to understand calm ki baaten are "self-love" and "self-responsibility", which means loving and caring for all the aspects of self and taking responsibility for our physical health and managing our own thoughts, behaviour and emotions. **CALM ki baaten** is an effort to let people know that we

all can aim to attain **CALM** in life by Social, Physical, Mental and Spiritual well-being,

Verse 66 of Chapter 2 of Bhagavad Gita says “अशान्तमय कुतः सुखं”. It means, “How can there be happiness without calm?” This verse clearly brings out that to live a happy life, CALM is very important. It is my opinion backed by keen observations of life that the road to achieve calm in life begins with all dimensional health- a state of being well in all respects.

The **World Health Organization (WHO)** also defines health as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. This is consistent with the **biopsychosocial model of health** conceptualized by **George Engel** in 1977, which depicts the interactions of **Bio (physiological), Psycho (thoughts, emotions and behaviour) and Social (socio-environmental and cultural)** factors in determining the health outcome.

There are several theories of well-being such as **Hedonism, Eudaimonism, Desire Satisfaction Theory, Objective List Theory, Value Fulfillment Theory, Self-determination Theory, Subjective Well-being Theory, PERMA** etc. but they all define well-being in terms of our actual psychological states and do neglect physical health. Through Calm ki baaten, I have shared my findings that well-being is the active pursuit of activities, choices and lifestyles that lead to a state of complete health, which extends beyond physical health and incorporates many different dimensions that should work in harmony. These dimensions are:

Social: Connecting with, interacting with, and contributing to other people for social well-being.

Physical: Having a healthy body by doing physical activities for physical well-being.

Mental: Engagement with the world through continuous learning for mental well-being.

Spiritual: Searching for meaning and purpose in human existence for spiritual well-being.

Interestingly, the word CALM itself provided me the roadmap to the calm in life, which talks about four key dimensions to improve our well-being and live a calm life. These dimensions are key skills for adaptive and positive behaviour that enabled me deal effectively with the demands and challenges of life. They also helped me become more active and productive human being.

Each letter of the word CALM is important and signifies one of the four dimensions of well-being.

“C” reminds me to connect to others and make my life peaceful. The man, having natural human need to belong, cannot survive without connections. To connect is important for our social well-being.



Connect for Social Wellbeing

“A” inspires me to be active and to keep myself physically healthy. By being active, we may decrease the risk of diseases. Activity is important for our physical well-being.



Activity for Physical Wellbeing

“L” motivates me to keep on learning and grow in life. Staying updated to cope up with the change is essential for our survival. Learning is important for our mental well-being.



Learn for Mental Wellbeing

“M” guides me to be mindful and live in the present moment. Mindfulness helps me stay conscious of where I am and what I am doing without being overly reactive or overwhelmed. Mindfulness is important for our spiritual well-being.



Mindfulness for Spiritual Wellbeing

Scientific research and thousands of years of human experience back the importance of these four dimensions of well-being. These dimensions lead us towards achieving a Healthy and CALM life. I derive energy and peace from my Social Connections, Physical Activities, Life-long learning and Mindfulness.

Let us explore all four dimensions of personal well-being in detail:

Connection

C, the first letter of CALM, stands for connection - the act or state of connecting, association and relationship. It is the first dimension to improve my personal well-being. By connecting with others, I have been able to make my life much more meaningful.

When COVID first hit, I realized the importance of connect with people around me- my own family members staying together 24/7 and ready to support, my friends staying away

but always keeping in touch with me, all my office colleagues who have been very supportive during work from home situation, my close relatives enquiring about my well-being, my neighbors who have always been helpful during the crisis, my security guard for arranging grocery, my milk delivery man, my driver who has dropped me to office as and when required.

When I think of these social connections, I realize how important these connections are in my life and how they have strengthened me every day. Developing close relationships with them has been very important for my well-being. Physical isolation does not have to result in social isolation. Finding time in each day to share with others in family or with close ones via phone, text, video call has been beneficial for my personal well-being.

Connection means to be close to others and share their happiness, grief, concerns, hopes, ups and downs of life. It is also the experience of feeling loved, cared for, and valued. Good connections have always given me an opportunity to share my positive experiences with others and provided me emotional support. To connect with others is like an energy exchange that has the power to deepen the moment and build trust with each other.

Sometimes connecting with people's pain leaves me feeling challenged and exhausted and sometimes too many contacts make me feel not properly connected to anyone but by making choices and consciously attending to the connections I make, I become more in control of my life. I seek out positive connections to balance time spent with suffering of others.

Why?

Having other people in our lives matters to our quality of social well-being at every stage of life. Human beings are social animals. We do need to connect with others in order to address or satisfy some of our **physical, psychological and social needs**. We thrive in groups, which provide us with an important part of our identity, and teach us a set of skills that help us to live our lives.

We all need to experience a deep **connection between two people** like two friends, loving partners, or family members where both feel loved, listened to, and understood and each individual is able to be entirely be present in the moment when spending time with one another. We also need a feeling of **belonging to a social group** like group of close friends, a tight-knit group of colleagues, or a religious circle, which provide us support and guidance whenever required. Feeling socially connected is very important for our survival.

How?

I have been able to connect with others by simply **listening** to them. By paying attention to what others are saying and understanding them creates a strong bond. I try to be present, if I really want to connect with people and make them feel comfortable. I also show that I have been listening by giving sincere compliments or advice.

One other way is to find some micro-moments in my life is **by attending** to people who are close to me. They may be my friends, family members, office colleagues or people that I care for. I just make some more regular connections with them via text or phone call. I always try to have my meals either with family at home or with colleagues at office. I tell stories/jokes/ share my experiences/spend quality and fun time with my near and dear ones. I also try to make new social connections by making a smile, an eye contact or simply say "Hi" or "Hello". All these are simple tips for making relationships.

I have created some meaningful connections, by **appreciating the similarities and respecting the differences** with others. There will always be differences between human beings. Being able to deal with differences is the key. Instead of tolerating, I develop an interest or curiosity towards traits that are new or different from my own. I appreciate and recognize the differences and manage them effectively.

Volunteering for a cause like teaching to underprivileged children has also been a way

to connect with others and boost my happiness by providing a sense of purpose to my being.

Relevant Studies

1. Research has shown that social connections not only impact our mental health, but our physical health as well. A review of 148 studies (308,849 participants) indicated that the individuals with stronger social relationships had a 50% **increased likelihood of survival**.
2. Dr. Chris Peterson- a Professor of Psychology at the University of Michigan- summed up his research on positive psychology in just three words- **Other People Matter**.
3. Emma Seppala of the Stanford Center for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education, and author of the 2016 book "The Happiness Track," wrote, "People who feel more connected to others have **lower levels of anxiety and depression**. Moreover, studies show they also have **higher self-esteem, greater empathy for others, are more trusting and cooperative** and, as a consequence, others are more open to trusting and cooperating with them.
4. Brene Brown, a professor at the University of Houston Graduate College Of Social Work, specializes in social connection, said in an interview "A deep sense of love and belonging is an irresistible need of all people. We are biologically, cognitively, physically, and spiritually wired to love, to be loved, and to belong. When those needs are not met, we don't function as we were meant to." We may think we want money, power, fame, beauty, eternal youth or a new car, but at the root of most of these desires is **a need to belong, to be accepted, to connect with others and to be loved**.
5. According to Matthew Lieberman a professor at UCLA, the importance of social connection is so strong that when we are rejected or experience other social pain, our brains "hurt" in the same way they do when we feel physical pain. **"Social and physical pain are more similar than we imagine"**.

In today's increasingly isolated world, it is very crucial to form healthy relationships and establish deeper connections with those around us. Developing close relationships and socializing with friends, family and others, is important for good health and wellbeing. With hearty connections, I have been able to maintain my social well-being. I have developed the ability to communicate with compassion, cultivate meaningful relationships with others, and maintain a support network that helps overcome my loneliness.

For me simplest mantra to connect is ->

Listen More, Judge Less

Activity

A, the second letter of CALM, stands for Activity - the state or quality of being active. It is the second dimension to improve my personal well-being. By being active, I am able to make my body much healthier. Activity encompasses all intentional movements that burn calories. It can be quite light movement, like just walking around a little bit in my office or at home. It can be moderate activity like yoga or stretching or can be quite vigorous activity like running or playing sports. To be active is to indulge in any kind of physical activity on a regular basis. By being active, I am able to maintain my physical well-being.

This letter of CALM always reminds me that physical well-being is not just the absence of disease but it includes all healthy lifestyle behavior choices. With physical activity, I avoid preventable diseases and live in a fit body.

Why?

Any movement of the body is good for our health. Our bodies are built to move. We all need to keep our body active. Being active is important for good health at all ages. Scientifically it has been proved that fitting more and more activities in one's daily schedule not only improves health but also enhances the quality of life. Physical activity affects our mood positively. It helps prevent and reduce depression, anxiety and stress. It also helps achieve and maintain a healthy weight and

blood pressure. Physical activity reduces rates of cardiovascular disease and decreases the risk of getting some cancers. It strengthens our heart, lungs, bones and muscles for increased energy and strength.

How?

By moving more and avoiding sedentary lifestyle, I have increased my physical activity as much as I can. I have minimized the time spent sitting each day by moving around in the office every hour, which has made me more energetic. I usually go to my colleague at their desk and talk to them as far as possible rather than emailing or phoning them.

Walking is one of the most straightforward activity for anyone of us. I try to stand up and walk around throughout the day as much as possible. I attend almost every phone call while walking only. **Regular stretching** is also very effective for body movements. It offers the best benefits as we age and keep our body parts **flexible** like shoulder, neck, back, knees etc. I do this stretching after every half an hour. Push-ups have long been the symbol of optimal fitness. **Push-ups** can be done by anyone anytime.

Adults need at least 150 minutes of moderate **aerobic exercise** like brisk walking or 75 minutes of rigorous exercise like running or an equivalent mix of both every week. I spend minimum 30 minutes daily on my physical activity and more is always better. It is also fine to break up exercise into smaller sessions as long as each one lasts at least 10 minutes.

I also try to do **strength training** that works on all major muscle groups—legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders, and arms—at least two days a week. Strength training may involve lifting weights, using resistance bands, or exercises like push-ups and sit-ups, in which body weight furnishes the resistance.

Jogging, running, cycling, swimming, gardening, gym, yoga, all sports are good as long as we keep moving. We can mix and match all physical activities to suit our health, abilities, personal preferences, and daily schedules.

Relevant Studies

1. A study published on March 7, 2017, in Cell Metabolism found that people aged 65 to 80 years who did interval training, including walking workouts, reversed age-related deterioration of muscle cells and **improved muscle power**.
2. Even just a little activity - both at home and at work - may **reduce risk of hospitalization**, suggests a long-term observational study published May 6, 2020, in BMC Geriatrics. Also, people who were inactive or became inactive during the study had the highest risk of being hospitalized. The take-home message: **Stay as active as you can, whether it is a brisk walk most days of the week or just vigorous housework. Even a little activity protects your health.**
3. One recent study found that doing light physical activity (preparing a meal or strolling through a park, for example) may **lower the risk of cardiovascular disease** among women in their early 60s and older.
4. An observational study published Aug. 8, 2018, in the Journal of the American Heart Association suggests that even light physical activity, combined with less time sitting, is associated with signs of **better heart and blood vessel health** among older adults.
5. The more physically active you are, the **lower your risk of high blood pressure**, a study in the April 2017 issue of Hypertension suggests. Researchers pooled data from 29 studies involving a total of more than 330,000 people, about 20% of whom had high blood pressure. They examined the association between high blood pressure and leisure-time physical activity (walking, dancing, or gardening, for example).

There is a link between staying active and well-being. By making sure that I regularly move my body, I look after my physical health.

For me simplest mantra to activity is ->

Move More, Sit Less

Learning

L, the third letter of CALM stands for Learning - the act or process of acquiring knowledge or skill. It is the third dimension to improve my personal well-being. By learning, I am able to make my life much richer.

To learn is to gain new knowledge, new skills and new experiences. Learning is also about challenging ourselves to do something different or improve upon what we have done before.

With continuous learning, I am able to maintain my mental well-being, which is the state in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.

Why?

By learning, we make our life much richer.

Learning is essential to our existence. Just like food nourishes our bodies, information and continued learning nourishes our minds. We have a deep need to learn, to make sense of new things in the world around us, to discover how things work. We need to be open to new experiences, ideas, and allowing ourselves to know what we encounter in the world. If we are engaged in learning, we feel better about ourselves. We also have self-confidence and self-esteem, greater sense of hope and purpose in life and have a greater ability to cope with stress and anxieties. Learning helps us view the world from a range of perspectives, makes it easier to adapt to new situations and inspires creativity within us.

By learning new things, we know more and grow more.

How?

There are many different ways to bring learning into our life. I have fitted learning into my daily routine, and I am always open to different experiences.

I usually read a book, learn from lectures, media, webinars or online courses. I also learn by

having a conversation with new people. Learn by travelling has always been my favourite type and I enjoy learning by acquiring my own personal experiences. I learn by teaching to underprivileged students, by helping them with their homework and by knowing something new from them. I also learn by joining a new course or social group or hobby class.

I have also learnt by trying something new, taking a different responsibility and by exploring anything of interest on "How To" videos on YouTube or Google.

At work place, I keep on learning at by taking on a new role, new assignment or new job. I seek out opportunities for professional development like participating in basic and advance labs. I also attend seminars, conferences and join online courses to upgrade my skills. Today internet is making it easier for us all to keep on learning in new and interesting ways. We may set a new challenge and may achieve the same.

Relevant Studies

1. A Pew Research survey in 2015 found that: 73% of adults consider themselves lifelong learners and 74% of adults participate in activities to **advance their knowledge** about something that personally interests them.
2. Tom Hood expressed a neat equation for **dealing with change**: "In a world of rapid change and increasing complexity, the winners will be those who can keep their $L > C$ i.e. their rate of learning must be greater than the rate of change and greater than the rate of their competition."
3. Deloitte's Global Human Capital Trends 2016 report emphasised the importance of developing learning approaches that "enable people **to develop** themselves every day".
4. "To keep up with the speed of business and innovation, today's workforce environment demands a culture of "continuous learning," a fundamental understanding of creative and innovative ways of thinking, combined with the desire to **learn new skills.**" Mentions Ryan D. Burgess, director

of Ohio's Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation.

5. Alan Tuckett makes the point that "learning throughout life makes sense. Research shows it is **good for our health, our wealth, our civic engagement** and our family's future prospects. It prolongs our independent life and enriches our quality of life."

Learning new things can be fun and help us to find mental well-being in our life. We should keep learning and keep reflecting.

My mantra for learning is ->

Ask More, Assume Less

Mindfulness

M, the fourth letter of CALM stands for Mindfulness - the state or quality of being mindful or aware of something. It is the fourth dimension to improve my personal well-being. By being mindful, I have been able to make my life much more enlightening.

To me, being mindful is to focus the attention on the present moment—and accepting it without being judgmental. It is being aware of my thoughts, bodily sensations and feelings and also being aware of outside environment.

With mindfulness, I am able to maintain my spiritual well-being, which can mean something different to everyone.

Why?

According to a study from Harvard University, people report being happiest while their mind is not wandering from what they are doing. When our mind is wandering, we are not paying attention to what we are doing. This results in more mistakes, less efficiency, and less enjoyment. Secondly, when we are not paying attention, we might be wishing to experience happiness resulting from the imagination, but this only gives us a very superficial experience of the life we are actually leading and never leads to a stable and deeply satisfying level of wellbeing.

By focusing on the present moment and being in "Here and now", we reduce thoughts and maintain a level of calmness. Simply remaining

grounded in the present moment and focusing on the breath, following relaxing guided imagery and visualizations or silently repeating a mantra activate the parasympathetic (rest and relaxation) branch of the autonomic nervous system, allowing the body to recover more efficiently from acute and chronic stress.

Mindfulness increases the mind's ability to concentrate and remain focused. It also increases the feelings of compassion and kindness towards others. It also helps in reducing stress and anxiety.

How?

We become mindful by developing the skill of bringing our attention to whatever is happening in the present moment.

During the day whenever I get time,

- ✓ I observe my breath- starting with one breath to two breath and then three and four and so on.
- ✓ I feel my body sensations and notice each part of the body in succession from head to toe.
- ✓ I observe my thoughts from a distance and try to focus on positive thoughts while sending away negative ones.
- ✓ I get familiar with and understand my feelings.
- ✓ I do notice all my senses- sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and touches around me without judgment and let them go.
- ✓ I also use my senses to notice the presence of others – their smell, touch, voice, smile and laugh. By observing more and without getting lost in thoughts, we are more mindful.

There are several mindfulness practices like observing the breath, body-scan and practicing yoga asanas while attending to movements and body sensations, and walking meditation etc.

Relevant Studies

1. Stress-related health problems like **anxiety and depression might be treatable** with meditation according to a meta-analysis of 47 studies.
2. Meditators who went through an eight-

week mindfulness training program had significantly **more** flu **antibodies** than their non-meditating peers after they received a flu vaccine, according to a randomized controlled study by Richard A. Davidson and Jon Kabat-Zinn published in Psychosomatic Medicine.

3. A 2017 study looking at brain function in healthy, older adults suggests meditation may **increase attention**.
4. A study published in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences found that the default mode network (DMN) of advanced meditators was not as active, suggesting seasoned practitioners may experience **less mind wandering** and a resting state closer to a meditative one: able to shift out of ruminative thoughts with more ease and carry out tasks with less distraction.
5. Research suggests that meditating can increase respiratory sinus arrhythmia, the natural variations in heart rate that happen when we breathe that indicate **better heart health** and an increased chance of surviving a heart attack.
6. Researchers in a wide array of **mental health** situations have found that adding mindfulness as a fundamental part of their treatment strategies has proven to be essential in treating conditions such as obsessive compulsive disorder, borderline personality disorder, and drug addiction, and is also helpful in the prevention of chronically relapsing depression.
7. Focusing on the timing and pace of breath may help direct attention and **boost mood**, says a new study in the Journal of Neurophysiology.
8. A review of 23 studies examining the benefits of mindfulness-based programs in the workplace found that following training, employees felt less stress, anxiety and psychological distress, and experienced **greater overall well-being** and sleep quality.

Science shows that when we are attending to something intentionally, even if it is a great piece of food that we are eating, reduces the

thinking brain. It is also enjoyable to notice the small beautiful things in life. This could be a flower outside or laying down and looking at the clouds. There is something enjoyable about being present. Creating this space helps restore spiritual well-being.

My mantra for mindfulness is ->

Observe More, Worry Less

Conclusion

An individual's well-being is what is ultimately good for them. Calm ki baaten explains four types of behaviours or everyday actions people can and should do to help themselves in staying socially, physically, psychologically and spiritually healthy. These are very simple steps to improve well-being. All four of these suggestions are easily achievable and applicable to anyone's life regardless of their circumstances. Power and value of this simple concept lies in finding ways that work for us, consistently taking action and noticing the difference after adopting healthy behaviours. It then becomes possible to sustain our commitment to living a healthier and most satisfying life. As we develop our strengths, we also become more resilient and are more able to deal with the challenges as and when they arise.

Small improvements in wellbeing can increase our ability to lead a more fulfilling life. Each action in the CALM ki baaten can make a positive difference to our life. We already are doing some of these actions without being aware of it. To get the most from CALM, we

need to try to combine all of them on a daily basis. We can link one action with other actions too. We may connect with others while doing an exercise. We may be active while learning something new in a hobby class. We may keep on learning while connecting with others. We may be mindful by noticing how we are progressing at our new skill or how we are walking, or taking notice of how the people we connect with are doing.

We attain optimal health and thus CALM in life at every stage, if we are able to:

- ✓ Connect with people to achieve social well-being
- ✓ Be active by giving body the attention it requires for physical well-being
- ✓ Learn about ever evolving world to achieve mental well-being
- ✓ Be mindful of present moment to justify spiritual well-being

Together, these four actions take care of all dimensions of well-being thus making life calm and much more gratifying. The path of transformation by adopting CALM may not be easy but it definitely brings satisfaction and benefits that affect entire life. Key is to stick to it, and take small actions every day that add up to big improvements up over time. We slowly come to know that calm emerges from our thoughts, actions, and experiences - most of which we have control over. We all can aim to attain calm, wellbeing and happiness in life by our own actions.

“
Happiness is not something readymade;
it comes from our own actions.

- Dalai Lama

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Never let success get to your head and never let failure get to your heart!



Ask any Indian about the most memorable sporting moments of the recent times and India's historic Bronze medal win in the Men's Hockey at the Tokyo Olympics is going to be on the top of the list. And this has been possible because of the incredible Indian Men's Hockey team.

In what was the most important game for the Indian men's hockey team in over four decades, our very own **Simranjeet Singh** scored twice to help India beat Germany 5-4 and win their first Olympic medal in 41 years.

Simranjeet Singh represents the new generation of Indian hockey players that know what it takes to succeed at the highest level. He was part of India's junior hockey team that won the World Cup in 2016 and the Men's Champions Trophy in 2018.



By **Manjusha Kanwar**,
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The promising young hockey forward opens his heart to the readers of HR Vista, in conversation with Manjusha Kanwar and Naveli Singh.

Q: *Simranjeet, it's a complete honor to be interacting you today! First things first, tell us how are you feeling? I know you would have been asked this question a thousand times. But we would still like to know how are you really feeling after the Olympic win?*

S: I am elated. Since the time I have landed in Delhi, the number of celebratory functions that I have attended is more than the number of functions I have attended in my entire life. After this tournament and especially with the medal win, the amount of love that I have received is unbelievable. I had only heard about this kind of love and regard for hockey, but this is the first time that I saw it and felt it.

Q: *I can completely understand the feeling. You and the entire team has regenerated the love for hockey in this country. As a fan, watching the sport has also been exceptional!*

Was this feat of being at the top an easy one to accomplish or were there some challenges that you faced?

S: As the saying goes, the bigger the dream, the harder grind. Our team faced its own set of challenges on our path to victory.

Before the pandemic hit, we were training at a camp in Bangalore. When it was announced that the Olympic has been

cancelled due to Covid, we were already at the peak of our training and had put in a lot of efforts. We were very disheartened because there was a lot of uncertainty about the fate of Olympics and other scheduled tournaments.

With the entire nation in lockdown, our training camps were also suspended. We were not allowed to use the grounds and were asked to isolate in our rooms. The paucity of space in our rooms didn't allow much of hockey practice but tried to make the most of what we had. We followed the schedule set by our coaches which majorly including workout confined to our rooms. We had virtual meetings about the game since we couldn't go to each other's rooms. To be away from our families, isolated in our rooms, not being able to even practice hockey on grounds, it turned out to be a very difficult time for all of us. We couldn't even meet our teammates living in rooms next to us. A lot of things were going through our minds. But we did not lose hope and did what we could to keep ourselves physically and mentally fit. Irrespective of the rumors going around the team firmly kept the belief that Olympics would happen, and we are going to Tokyo to win.

We started practicing on grounds when the conditions started improving. Sports Authority of India also helped us a lot. We got a tour to Belgium and Holland right before the Olympics, which greatly buttressed our preparation. We could analyze our own team's standing with respect to other teams. As you know our Olympic semi-final was with Belgium and the Bronze medal match was with Germany. Our recent encounters with both the teams helped us understand the structures in which these teams played, the strategies they follow, their strengths and weakness. In our Bronze medal match with Germany, we implemented a lot of our learnings from our previous match, which finally helped us win.

After returning from Belgium, we continued with our camp till we finally received the confirmation news about Olympics.

Q: The way you have won this battle and came out physically and mentally stronger is really a lesson for all.

Tell us Simranjeet, were there sacrifices that you had to make in your journey?

S: Emotions of any player are attached to their family. I left my parents' home when I was in Class V to train in Punjab and came home during breaks. But in those 1.5 years at Bangalore camp, we had to stay away from our families for a very long time and that too isolated in our rooms. So, a point comes that you are at the verge of breakdown. We knew that if we go back to our homes in between, the team's practice routine would be disrupted. We realized that to represent Indian at such a major event, we must be ready to overcome any challenge that comes our way. So, we worked hard to overcome those emotions and concentrate on our games. I feel that the strength that you achieve once you are past such a difficult phase is unparalleled. Those 1.5 years were also very instrumental in building the team's mutual understanding. By the end of the lockdown, the team had become a family.

Q: So, when finally, the news came that Olympics is happening, the team would have breathed a sigh of relief. What happened next?

S: We were indeed relieved that the Olympics were happening. But I still had my share of Ups and Downs before reaching Tokyo. When the initial list of 16-member squad was announced for the Tokyo Olympics, my name was not in the main list. I was a part of the reserved list.

I was disheartened at first. Every player feels that they deserve to get selected. I also felt that my name should have been in the main list. My coach understood my disappointment and counseled me saying that in any circumstance, the team's

interest has to be the priority. When I tried putting myself in the Coach's shoes, I accepted the situation in a better way. I understood that it was a tough call for him to select only 16 players out of 33 and that I should support him in the decision. I put my complete trust in him. I was still holding out hope that I would still be going to the Olympics and that I might get a chance to play.

Q: Then how did you end up becoming a part of the main squad? How did things change for you?

S: Actually, the International Olympic Committee changed the rule and countries were asked to pick an extended 18 members squad for the Olympic due to prevailing conditions. With few days remaining for our departure, the coach called us one night into a huddle and told that the 17th and 18th number players were also going to be in the main list of players. It was a huge surprise for me. Kind of unbelievable. Only when my teammates started congratulating me, did I realize that something good has happened. I felt extremely positive at that time.

Q: That's amazing! Hardwork pays in surprising ways! I think Covid had both a positive and negative effect on your journey?

S: I agree, the harder you work, the luckier you seem to get. I think when you suffer a lot to reach a stage, and when you finally achieve your dream, you tend to forget the unpleasant phase. This is what has happened with me as well. All our struggles during the time of Covid were forgotten the moment we achieved this feat.

Q: How was your experience at the Olympic village? There were very strict protocols this time. Were they beneficial for you or

did they hinder your game in any way?

S: When we were leaving for the Olympic, we had a meeting in which people with prior Olympics experience were asked to share about the kind of distractions that one should be wary of. Our seniors told us that at a platform like Olympics, there are plenty of avenues that can take you away from your goal. From availability of multiple cuisines in dining area to gaming centres, shopping malls, sightseeing, medal celebrations by co-sportspersons, the list of distractions was long. We had to be focused and we had to be extremely disciplined.

When we reached there, we found out that the Olympic committee had strict protocols in place due to the pandemic situation. In addition to wearing mandatory masks and maintaining social distance, nobody could leave the Olympic village. Secondly since it was extremely hot, our coach had instructed us to remain indoors during the peak hours of 9am to 4pm so that we don't exhaust our bodies.

So, all the protocols were indeed very beneficial for us.

In addition to the rules imposed on us, we as a team also decided to avoid any kind of distractions till the end of the tournament irrespective of the results. A sportsperson is nothing if not disciplined.



Q: Simranjeet you have shared so many episodes of your life with us. In the recent times, you have undergone so many ups and downs. From the heartbreak of missing out on the team to starting a pressure game for India at the Olympics, you stood on the pitch having gone through a series of emotions in a span of few days. How do you deal with these different kinds of pressure and how do you maintain your mental peace?

S: My mantra is to live in the present as much as possible. I try to not brood over the past or anticipate about the future. I do believe in planning, but I am flexible enough to mould myself as per the situation at hand. I have a strong belief in the Almighty and that helps understand that there are things beyond my control. For example, when Covid happened and we were away from our families for a long time, I tried to focus on the bigger picture. I kept my balance knowing the fact that the situation was beyond anybody's control. I concentrated on the things that I could do and that was practice hard. I am an optimist by nature. So, with the belief that the turn of events that have occurred are God's will, I just kept moving forward.

Q: To achieve this level of mental strength at such a young age is exceptional. Who is your support system, both on and off the field?

S: My coaches and my teammates are the people I discuss my On-field issues with. If I have to discuss anything off-field I reach out to my family. I am blessed to be surrounded with a great people who have been with me through thick and thin.

Q: In addition to your mental strength, you are also known to be one of the most skilled players in the team. I am sure there would be several split-second decisions that you have to make on field. How do you keep yourself ahead of the game?

S: Hockey is like a 24 X7 obsession for me. So, whenever I am not playing, I like to watch a lot of sports videos. One learns a lot through observation also. Through



these videos, I try to observe different players and the strategies that they follow during the game. I try to keep myself in their place and visualize what would I have done in this situation or what could have been done better. This frequent analysis of different game situations stays with me and helps me a lot during the actual game. So even when I am not playing the game, I am continuously thinking about it.

Q: You know I have interacted with a lot of senior hockey players and whenever I ask anybody about you, the response is surprisingly the same. Everybody tells me that Simranjeet is dependable, focused, obedient, well planned and a great team player. What do you have to say about this? How do you manage so many qualities and remain so humble and grounded?

S: I met with a terrible accident during 8th standard. I had to undergo knee surgery and was on bed rest. I had to be away from hockey for a very long time. That was the duration when I learnt a lot. I developed a reading habit and a lot of it was self-help content. I tried to figure out the qualities required for a team sport like hockey and tried to inculcate those qualities. As time passed, I kept those learnings close to me.

Then in 2014 my then coach Harendra Singh sir helped me a lot in this area. That was also the year when I had started playing International Hockey in the junior

category. Harendra Sir taught us that these qualities are indispensable to become a complete player. I just whole heartedly followed my coach's instructions. I kept instilling the qualities that were beneficial for the team and parted ways with the ones which were not.

When I joined Indian Oil, I had a lot of examples in front of me. I always tried to learn from the senior players at IOCL and continue to learn from them. I tried to emulate their qualities. Like Deepak Thakur Paji, Devesh Chauhan Paji and Prabjot paji are very well planned. They all are great team players. I look up to them not just for their hockey skills but also how they carry themselves, the way they stepped up for their teams and scored goals during difficult times. They all are an inspiration for me.

Q: We feel so proud that our fellow IOCian has achieved this incredible feat!

How do you feel being a part of a PSU in general and IOCL in particular? What are your sentiments for the corporation?

S: It's really an honor for me to be associated with PSPB and to be a part of the Indian Oil family. Indian Oil has a major role to play in the fact that we have been able to secure a podium finish in Tokyo Olympics. I would like to explain it further. Players like us stay in camps for long periods of 12-14 months. During this time when we are away, Indian Oil takes extremely good care of our families not just financially but in all possible aspects. With a reputed and secure job to take care of you, the

focus remains just on the game and we don't have to worry about a thing. It also makes me feel more confident and gives me a clear mindset during my trainings and tournaments. What Indian Oil is doing for us and our families, gives us the motivation and push to strive for the best in our game.

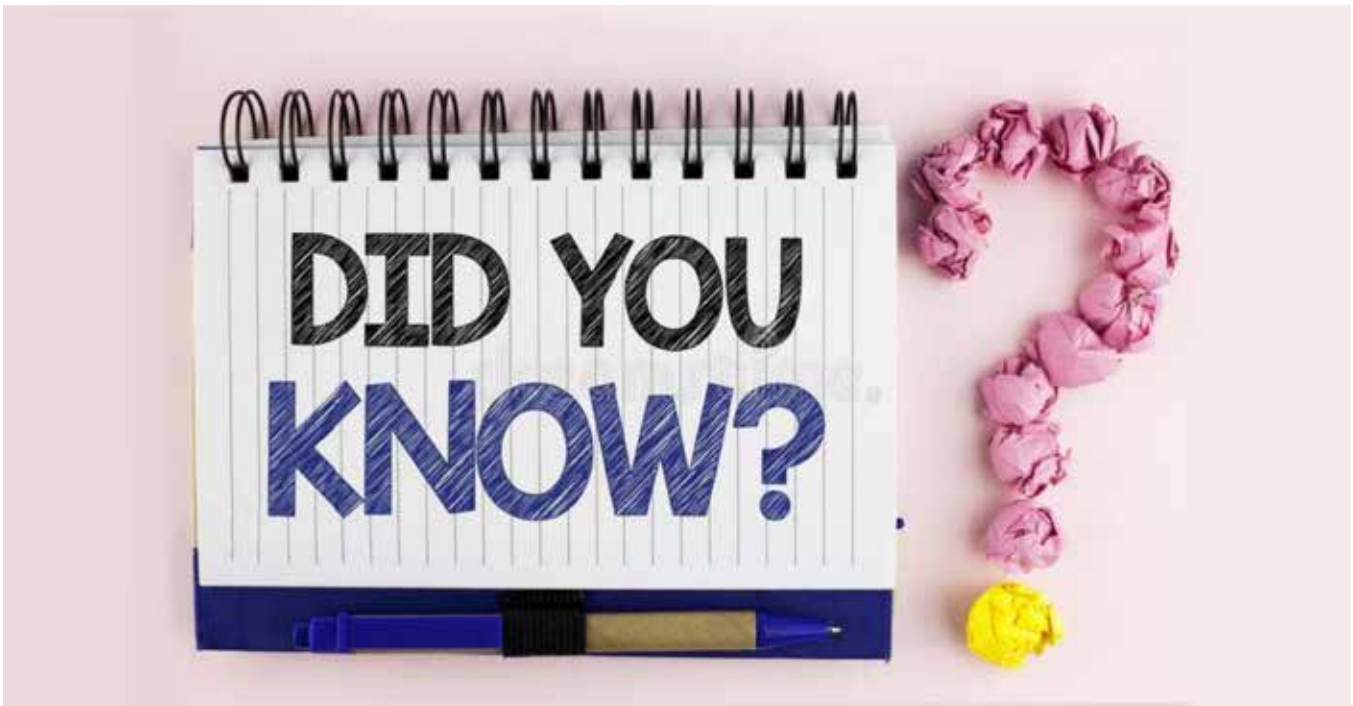
M: We hope that you keep striving for better and bring many more medals for the nation.

You know Simranjeet, when we discussed about your exceptional qualities, we see all necessary leadership qualities in you. There are many other such examples. Our previous Sports Minister Mr. Rajyavardhan Rathore was an Olympic Medalist. Do you think sports persons can be good leaders?

S: I agree Ma'am. Sportspersons can become very good leaders because sportspersons are by nature fair and helpful. They are very positive and give their 100% for the task at hand. They generally do not believe in adopting shortcuts. Most of the sportspersons have seen both failure and success in their lives. The quality of fortitude further makes them fit for a leadership role. They know how to not take success to mind and failure to their hearts.

M: Simranjeet, what is your idea of Leadership? Is there a message that you would like to give to aspiring leaders in various fields?

S: I believe to lead in any field, you must leave your self-interest behind and put the interest of your people first. If you wish to be a Leader, you must be completely selfless.



1. Leonardo Da Vinci is credited with writing the first resume.
2. The word 'boss' is Dutch, meaning 'a master'.
3. Fridays are the least likely sick day. People are much happier and more likely to fulfil their duties on a Friday.
4. Around the world, workweeks can range from under 40 hours to close to 50 hours. Denmark's full-time employees work an average of 37.2 hours per week. the lowest among the most affluent OECD countries.
5. Dave Ulrich is known as the father of Modern HR.
6. **10th October** is observed as World Mental Health Day with an objective to raise awareness of mental health issues and to mobilize efforts in support of mental health.
7. All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC), the oldest Trade Union federation in India was set up as early as **1920**.
8. Japan has funny ritual at called a 'pachi pachi meeting' (clap clap meeting if translated literally) every time a newcomer joins, or someone leaves the department. The person says something, and everyone rhythmically claps at the end.
9. The most unique but enticing custom of Netherlands is the 4-day working week.
10. In Brazil, during Big games like the FIFA world Cup, every Brazil match day is a half-day or a holiday!

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A life beyond metrics



By **Amit Gupta**,
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Recently, I met a gentleman during an informal interaction; we were guests to a common friend. We introduced each other; and as he, a senior Corporate executive, explained about his work, I listened patiently and asked some curious questions. As soon as I spoke and told him that I was handling a part of HR activities, he said, nonchalantly, "Oh! HR!" followed by a long 'Hmmm' and then, "I know what HR does."

Aah! That has been a common refrain that I had often heard from colleagues, but it was for the first time that a stranger had reacted that way.

It was an introspection moment for me as I looked back into my years in business functions and now in HR.

In business, one is governed by key performance indicators and other measurement systems that are tied to benchmarks under various defined periodic plans. However, in HR, many activities beyond cost and headcount do not find a place in traditional efficiency-based view. These include change management, engagement, development, deployment, conciliation, work environment and so on.

And when someone reacts dispassionately, "Hmm, I know what HR does", perhaps the perception is based on metrics only.

There is indeed a life beyond metrics!

Personally, on account of my changing roles, I have experienced a transition from business metrics to people metrics and of course, beyond metrics.

A famous watchmaker, known for its Museum wristwatch, builds its advertising campaign around the slogan "Don't Let Numbers Define You", a pitch that embraces and promotes identities and existence beyond the limits of numbers. The COVID onslaught has triggered many a change in the organisations' perspectives towards the profit motives. People related matters have gained ascendancy and suddenly, the narratives around triple bottom line (profit, people, planet) have increased.

To increase the bottom line either by cutting cost or by increasing revenue, one plans and executes through the minds of people. However, there is a larger construct that goes

behind all these business strategies, a construct that is often latent – a sense of purpose!

When the entire nation was under lockdown, people in our front-force moved out of their homes, with all precautions, and made unparalleled efforts to ensure that the energy supplies to the nation stayed uninterrupted. These people – the valiant humans - displayed an extraordinary zeal and delivered a record 33.11 Lakh LPG cylinders in a single day, braving the pandemic. The business output would be measured in the number of cylinders delivered, however, the outcomes of smiles generated on customers' faces, the force behind the employees and stakeholders and the sense of satisfaction they draw goes unmeasured and sometimes, unnoticed.

Instilling a sense of purpose, crafting and sustaining an organisational culture, and weaving values among each and every employee (and stakeholder) are some activities

that may not be defined in numbers but are undertaken silently.

My mind was filled with a lot of possible replies to the gentleman's remarks. However, retaining me composure, I preferred to share a story with him. I said,

Sir, just like we are meeting for the first time, once, during a tour of NASA headquarters in 1961, John F. Kennedy encountered a janitor mopping the floors late in the evening. Kennedy asked him casually, "What are doing here so late?"

The janitor responded, "Mr President, I'm helping put a man on the moon."

As I paused, I could see the discomfort and perhaps, something else in the gentleman's eyes. He defied the COVID constraints for a moment, shook my hand strongly and uttered, with concern and appreciation, this time

"I know what HR does!"

Training



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Compassion and the compassionate leader at workplace



By **Shubhra Hajela**, Genpact
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"I remember the first time I was being interviewed for the Operations leader role. The company had its office in Indore and I was flying from Delhi leaving my family and a job of 10 years to understand the role, discuss the job, and its deliverables, with Satish, the HR site leader. Everything seemed good but moving from Delhi and bringing my family to Indore was just too much. I was not convinced and then on the night when I was flying out, Satish said, "Priyank, the truth is that you will get better roles and higher compensation packages, but this site needs you. I am sure under your leadership; the teams will flourish, and we will be able to march ahead. Will you give us a chance?"

That conversation changed the way I looked at my role and it's been 3 years now; I have loved every moment of working with Satish. I guess, we all love working for people who can be honest and vulnerable with us. Satish is one such person. He is no nonsense and totally authentic. It's remarkable that he is so in touch with how

employees at the site are experiencing and is willing to go that extra mile to make them feel heard and values. It is rare to have someone who is so genuinely involved with the wellbeing of their team members."

-Priyank Chandra, Ops leader, IT Services Company

There is a very popular saying, 'people don't leave their jobs, they leave their bosses' and if they can't physically quit, they mentally quit. The fact that quality of relationship between bosses and employee affect work experience is not new. No wonder, in a Deloitte millennial survey (2016), 7700 millennials from 29 countries shared their expectations and responded that for a business to have a long-term success, it should put employees first and build relationship based on mutual trust and integrity. The need to be heard, respected and to be empathized with, undoubtedly is increasingly becoming a 'pull factor' for employees, especially in the volatile, uncertain

world of today. Herein lies the need to be compassionate, to develop compassionate leadership and cultivate a supportive culture.

In the present article, I will briefly touch upon a foundational understanding of compassion, share few findings on what compassion can do and lastly talk about how it can be cultivated by leaders. In doing so, I limit the scope of the article.

What compassion is and why is it a critical element in effective leadership?

An old Indian proverb says, 'Nothing grows under a banyan tree', that the huge tree towers so high and spreads its branches so wide and with such thick foliage that the sun cannot filter through to nourish the tiny seedlings below.

The same can be said unfortunately of many strong and visible leaders who drive and achieve overarching production metrics but fail to nourish their teams that look up for support to flourish. A solution to such conditions can be offered through following and developing compassionate leadership that presents a shift from the western notions of individualistic, heroic view of the leader to one which is characteristically Indian- a leadership that is shared, distributive, empowering and adaptive.

So, what is compassion and what does compassionate leadership do? Defined in many dictionaries, compassion is a deep desire and sense of knowing or "awareness of the suffering of another coupled with the wish to relieve it" (Merriam Webster – Online dictionary, n.d). Interestingly, Indian culture, has a long tradition of compassion, where being moved by the pain of others lies at the heart of all religion, spiritual practices, and ethical considerations (Armstrong, 2011).

Does it then mean that as Indians we are naturally inclined to compassion or that we are more compassionate than people from other cultures? While there is no conclusive evidence supporting or contradicting this statement, studies show that cultural priming does influence what we expect from others in various

spheres of our life- personal, professional, at home or at work (Bhagat, McDevitt, & McDevitt, 2010). From an organizational perspective, we expect our supervisors, managers, leaders, and team members to be compassionate. Infact, so critical is the need to feel understood and supported that perceived compassion in supervisor's behavior is linked with lowered risk of burnout and stress (Rynes et al.2012; Rajeswari et al.2020). Similarly compassionate dealings within the team have been linked with better employee engagement, increased loyalty, trust, and interconnectedness. The study further noted that compassionate leadership is correlated with 27% reduction in sick leaves and 46% reduction in disability pensions (Williams, 2012) suggesting a strong link between compassion and financials of a company.

Yet, another group of studies especially on compassionate responding has been strongly related to promote healing and building quality relationships (Frost et al., 2000; Grant, Dutton, & Rosso, 2008). These studies show that compassion demonstrated during crisis at critical times such as after 9/11 (Dutton et al, 2002) or after Taj Mumbai terrorist attack (Mohapatra & Wilkinson, 2021) or now even during COVID (McKinsey & Company, 2020) is fundamental in determining organizational resilience and psychological wellbeing of employees.

McKinsey goes a step further and suggests leaders to be more compassionate during the pandemic times when COVID 19 has triggered sensitivity and distress. Under such circumstances it prescribes a leadership behavior that (a) proactively creates space to attain keener awareness of what is going within and around themselves (b) is bold in exhibiting vulnerability (c) demonstrates empathy to better identify what others and self are feeling and thinking (d) and demonstrates caring behavior.

Can compassion be learnt?

Yes, compassion can be learned, and it is fair to assume that if you have read the article

so far, you have all the intention to practice compassion. Passmore (2019) suggests that compassion can be consciously cultivated by focusing on three vital spheres – (a) working on our capacity to be kind towards self (b) being mindful of others (c) by unleashing a compassionate culture.

Practices and trainings based on self-kindness has been found very effective in situations demanding high emotional work- for example in occupations like counseling, teaching, social work. These practices build heavily on compassion directed towards self, particularly when self-experiences doubt, failures, uncertainties, or suffering. Let's imagine a situation, an employee prepares well for a client presentation, but during the presentation the client comes across as aggressive and uncooperative and the deal falls off. The employee blames self undoubtedly feels low and is clearly distressed. Chances are that he/she might be ashamed, confused and might fall into the cycle of self-defeating thoughts. This is a time when he/she can benefit from practice of compassionate self. Two techniques most strongly associated with it are mindfulness and meditation. Mindfulness and meditation include a conscious attempt on the present-the thoughts, feelings that occupy the mind at that moment. By engaging in moments of inner stillness can one enjoy strength, clarity and regain composure and acceptance of authentic self. Doing this regularly helps train the mind to notice self and others in a non-judgmental, accepting manner, a skill that can be easily transferred to under conditions of stress and challenge.

Once, self-compassion is learnt, the next step is to turn compassion towards others and the initial step in doing it is through developing empathy- experiencing the world of other the way they do. Skills that people are trained

to develop empathy include active listening, focusing on the crux of the story and practicing empathy by seeking active feedback. In a study conducted on counselors, empathy training focusing on these three components increased client comfort, their readiness to improve and benefit from counseling and elevated their overall satisfaction with counseling (Kumar, 2010). The same has been studied as an effective intervention when developing compassion in nurses and in staff dealing with in-patient care. Both these work situations not only calls in for emotional regulation, client care but also compassionate responses that influence job outcomes and other experience (Su et al, 2020; Sinclair, 2016).

The third component involves cultivating a compassionate culture by 'walking the talk'. As adults, we learn more by observation than direct training, so having leaders work as role models is particularly effective when the objective is to reinforce an emotional culture that is rife with compassion. Many practices help in forming a compassionate culture- regular townhalls, informal employee connects, open door policies, formal procedures and practices seeking and studying employee sentiments have been found very useful.

Conclusion

Compassion is essential when we think of building positive work experiences. Of course, we have companies which have harsh people management practices, but they still earn huge profits, but stop and think for a moment, would you like to work for such a company or would you like your child to be treated poorly by an inconsiderate boss? You might be motivated by seeing how you respond. In the words of Simon Sinek, "let us all be the leaders, we wish we had."

HR at New Normal Work Stations - Future of Conduct and Discipline



By **Anindya Chattopadhyay**,
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Prelude

Since the arrival of the Covid19 Pandemic, the industrial landscape in India has been witnessing unprecedented changes in respect of carrying out business processes differently. The virus at its onslaught, not only crippled the Nation but also threatened Industrial communities and its stakeholders by eroding the revenues, heightening psychological fear among workforces, uncertainty regarding the return of normalcy in near future. The threat to public sector undertakings in India was of a little different nature. Unlike other business houses like Software, BPOs, Telecom etc., these multi-product multi-divisional undertakings were engaged in mammoth manufacturing activities, procured raw materials from a

basket of countries. In respect of its very nature of carrying out business transactions, fewer people working in these undertakings had the exposure of working remotely and running the businesses from home which the visionary leaders of PSUs identified long back. This understanding was translated into action by converting the PSUs into information system savvy organizations. Various tools like very private network (VPN) connections were provided to employees to access company portals from home and access to SAP, strong policies on subsidy/loans for buying desktop/laptops were devised, mobile application-based software for employees was launched, online-based approval systems for expenditure etc. has been placed. During the last couple of years, we have seen Maharatna PSUs devising self-learning portals, organizing web-based functional quizzes, recognizing learners at different forums. Investment of Capital in form of constructing world-class learning and development centres with video conferencing facilities were executed to carry out cost-

effective functional meetings across the country and to connect employees and learned faculties across educational institutions for online classroom exposures.

Against this backdrop, the Covid19 pandemic hit India with unprecedented ferocity and PSU workforces responded to this threat with the utmost professional and competitive way.

An aspect of Conduct and Discipline

Successful adoption of new normal norms arising out of a pandemic by the majority of workforces is the success story of a resilient HR of Public Sector Undertakings. With the proven capability of carrying out work from home by the majority of the employees, the new Mantra of Flexi home working has come up with new opportunities and challenges for Human Resource practitioners. The attractive proposition that the business can be performed cost-effectively while working from home had made management thinkers excited enough to devise new ways and means. But with the heightened opportunities, the danger is also lurking in the dark.

It begins with the fact that like all real-life offices, work from home set up is also required to conform with accepted conduct and discipline norms on part of both employee and employer, between peers, colleagues, members of a team, manager-subordinate etc. in a day to day working. Keeping in mind that discipline is a controlled behaviour and conduct is related to the act or method of controlling, PSUs must be future-ready to include provisions of approved behaviour and misconduct suitably in their Conduct, Discipline and Appeal Rules.

To understand the conflict situation at the virtual office, we need to delve into the psychological aspect of people while working from home. The reference point of evaluating each other takes a new dimension when the setup of real-life office shifts to the home front. A few causes of conflict (depicted as challenges) are,

Challenge 1: people are experiencing social isolation at home.

Challenge 2: manager, subordinates are not sure of productivity levels.

Challenge 3: distractions in a home office.

Challenge 4: merging boundaries between home and work life.

Challenge 5: workers are not fully ready to work from home concept.

Challenge 6: undue long hours of work.

Challenge 7: The notional aspect that people are not working at home.

Challenge 8: Mental harassment and subtle biases against selective employees.

The Conflict

The level of conflict arising out of the above factors can be very damaging for the organization as it will lead to unwanted IR issues and low employee morale. As the Corporations are presently not ready with the draft of adequate monitoring of WFH approved behaviour and remote working rules, this may only complicate the issues of alleged harassment. The identification of mental harassment in a virtual workspace is a gargantuan task because it is sometimes subtle and implied and difficult to prove in a quasi-judicial Inquiry process. The terms like ableism (discrimination in respect of abilities), ageism (discrimination in respect of age) are fast getting popularity as harassment tools in the digital workspace.

Adoption of new technologies may be somewhat slower for older employees, which can invite ageist comments and harassment and sometimes failing to work remotely due to lack of working tools or installation issues may bring bullying remarks comparing someone with a disabled person. This is where the human resource functions of PSU 2.0, should act proactively with a mind of compassion. It has become the need of the hour that the mindset of the remotely conducted meeting manager, group members are to be shifted radically in

line with the compassionate psychological traits.

What we can change

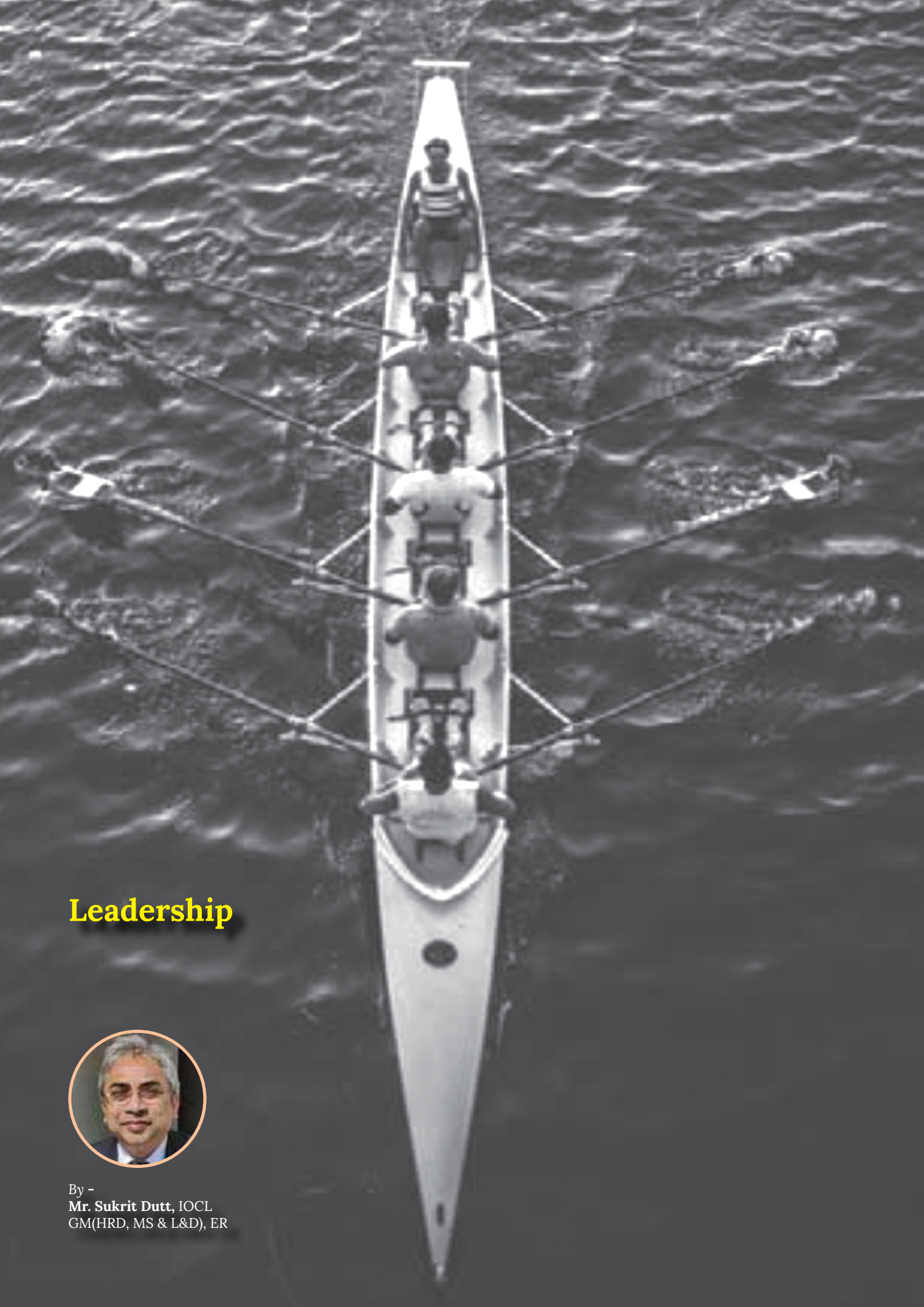
Confusion and misplaced ideas can only be eradicated by organizing extensive digital workshops on the subject of expected behaviours in a virtual workspace. Breaking the prototype wherever possible by intermittent ice-breaking sessions can include a silent member of a group in the mainstream discussion. This will lessen the tension in a group by leveraging the potential of the left-out members who earlier perceived themselves as side stage actors. This will create an equitable structure where everyone can place their story without fear of harassing remarks.

Prioritizing work-life balance by promoting a sense of autonomy and trust is the need of the hour. Almost all employees work more effectively when they feel a sense of autonomy and trust. The concept of availing entitled leaves gets blurred while working from home. It is where HR is required to intervene to ensure that leaves are availed by employees and they

are not overworked. Creating a culture where employees generally communicate in public, open channels increase accountability and reduces the likelihood of harassing actions or comments. Similarly including more people in video meetings and email threads can make sure that technology itself is as inclusive as possible to employee needs.

Along with cutting down the root causes of conflict, the future HR must devise new systems and procedure to effectively deal with disciplinary issues arising out of these conflicts. The stepping stone would be to suitably include work from home and digital harassment clause in the Conduct Discipline and Appeal Rules. The necessity to be an information system based HR is the need of the hour to place a trouble-free, well-monitored, all-inclusive digital propriety platform for all functional group.

At the end of the day, Human Resource for PSU 2.0- leading with compassion is human first and resource later.



Leadership



By -
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Effective leadership is central to any organization and more so in these uncertain times, resilient leaders are now more important than ever before. Authentic and Transformational leadership is a process whereby leaders engage with and influence employees by paying attention to their needs and raising their motivation and providing ethical framework for decisions making. Such leaders help employees to fulfil their potential by enabling them to reach their goals in a way that benefits employees as well as the organizations and the society. Whereas Transactional leadership just focuses on the transactions between getting the work done and getting rewarded.

Employees need to know their goals and what they can achieve when they meet those goals, but if leaders only focus on transactions, then performance will never be exceptional, and it will just be an average performance. Employees require meaningful engagement which Transformation leaders can offer. Some pseudo-transformational leaders may be charismatic and make people achieve their own goals and not provide right guidance that is needed for reaching the organisational goals. Leaders may have their personal style and strengths but essentially there are five skill sets which connect them and the way they position themselves in relation to other people.

First one is building trust by creating yourself as somebody that people actually want to follow.

Second area is about 'values' to help and guide the Employees using ethical frameworks for decisions and choices that people make.

Third area is encouraging others and motivating people when times are hard and transformation leaders can enable people by giving them the resources needed and not an empty hope. It is one trait which effectively all effective leaders have. They are driven to 'achieve' beyond expectations of their own and everyone else's. The most important thing here is to 'Achieve'.

Fourth is encouraging innovative thinking by challenging the status quo and looking at the things from many different perspectives.

Fifth is enabling people by empowering them to take decisions on their own. Generally, organisations are busy on day to day fire fighting and there is time constraint to empower people for decision making. Even if training people for decision making takes time, effort, and resources but in the long run it is beneficial and especially at the time of crisis, where people are already trained to take decisions on their own.

The transformational leaders provide Employees environment where they can psychologically feel safe to 'speak up' and are not rejected or marginalised, so that no good ideas are missed and lost in the organisation.

The purpose of the Corporates/company is no more maximization of **shareholders** value only, It is now Maximization of the **Stake holder's Value**. Transformational Leader takes his decisions by considering the Interest of all the Stake holders. They motivate the Employees by bringing clarity about the Corporate Purpose, so that the Employees can align their individual Purpose with the Corporate Purpose.

In these trying times, the 'alpha-male' Leadership Style is not Effective and are replaced by Compassion and Empathy by Transformational leaders. The very word Empathy seems un-business like, out of place, amid fire-fighting tough realities of the marketplace. But Empathy is, thought fully considering employees feelings, along with other factor in the process of making intelligent decision, and is not to be seen as soft-approach by the Leader.

The transformational Leaders are Inclusive and encourage diversity at workplace. They encourage Gender Inclusion and also inclusion of non-dominant groups.

The transformational leaders exhibit courage and Integrity, the two most strongest predictors of leadership qualities, to bring about change in the organisational culture.

HR Management Issues and Emerging Global Trends

Reflections on Global Oil and Gas Industry



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Oil and Gas (O&G) sector is one of the core sectors in India and has a very significant linkage with the entire economy. The industry caters to more than two-thirds of the country's primary needs and it can be said beyond doubt that the industry has played a crucial role in putting India on the world energy map. (Source: India Brand Equity Foundation — IBEF website).

The energy demand of India is anticipated to grow faster than the energy demand of all major economies on the back of continued robust economic growth. The country's share in global primary energy consumption is projected to increase by two-folds by 2035. (Source: IBEF website). Considering the same, the oil and gas sector is poised to play a very pivotal role in India's energy security.

During the past decade, significant developments have affected the Indian O&G market, with vast consequences for the industry players, which include a focus on cost, efficiency, and speed of operations. These developments have posed enhanced uncertainties and challenges for the workforce in the Organizations operating in the sector.

The main challenges associated with HR practitioners in Indian O&G sector include the following aspects:

- Large segments of workforce reaching retirement age, and with potential recruits remaining scarce, replenishment of skills and knowledge repository has been a huge challenge.



- Rapid Technological developments and globalization challenges.
- Diversity, Localization and Inclusion challenges as Organizations are going to explore new avenues & new geographies.
- The overall employment industry is witnessing significant shifts with the rapid rise of Open talent economy. As the O&G industry witnesses extreme pressures on account of the financial fronts due to fluctuations in the price of the oil market, freelancers and contingent employees are going to play an important role in the future. Another significant challenge is pertaining to multigenerational workforce.

There has been a continuous change in the workforce as well as pattern of working over the past several years. Some pre-dominant disruptions which have redefined the workforce include:

Earlier Paradigm	Existing Paradigm
Work from 9 to 6	Reap collective intelligence
Control information	Reap collective intelligence
Physical presence	Virtual presence
Controlled culture	Flexible culture around work-life balance
Common needs and one size fits all	Personalized experiences
Work in silos and division of labour	Collaboration and multidisciplinary teams

The sector is evolving with an overall focus on efficiency and continuous improvements. HR professionals play a critical role in driving these internal activities as well as in the growth and expansion of an organization.

KEY EMERGING HR TRENDS AT GLOBAL OIL & GAS GIANTS

The future of HR in the O&G realm will be different and quite challenging. Today, the turbulent environment in the business world is described as VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous). Considering the challenges elaborated in previous Section, it was considered prudent to explore the critical emerging HR trends followed by the organizations in Oil and Gas sector. (The details regarding HR practices have predominantly been gathered through the secondary data resources available on the Company websites, Annual Reports & Sustainability reports).

One important aspect which is common to almost all the major O&G organizations is that HR is gradually shifting its role in the Company to a proactive Internal Consultant. These Organizations periodically monitor and review their HR practices to meet the changing landscape of business. At ExxonMobil, the Review practice has been institutionalized and senior leaders of the Company make it a must to attend these sessions to share their knowledge and experience in formulation of key policy changes required in management of human capital.

Key HR management trends being followed in Global O&G giants to smoothly mitigate the challenges are mentioned below.

1. Challenge - Knowledge base Erosion

The challenge of Knowledge base erosion due to is being tackled by the Global Oil & Gas majors through effective implementation of the following initiatives:

a) Knowledge Management: There is a requirement of institutionalized Knowledge Management (KM) system to be in place within the Organizations to combat the depletion of Knowledge repository.

In the words of CEO- Schlumberger, Mr. D.E. Baird "We must become experts in capturing knowledge, integrating and preserving it, and then making what has been learnt quickly and easily available to anyone who will be involved in next business decision".

Schlumberger has in place The Schlumberger Knowledge Center ("The Hub"), an intranet and internet enterprise information network. The InTouch Knowledge Hub offers a single electronic interface for exchanging information between the field and its technology centres. It is a real time tool that helps capturing, managing, and sharing operations-related knowledge with the intent of faster and more reliable services for customers, accelerated product development, and significant financial benefits.

Further, Interactive sessions with the employees are facilitated at regular intervals in the Company to promote interpersonal effectiveness, exchange ideas and bring down the barriers to communication.

Other Oil Giants have also adopted and institutionalized KM initiatives. Through these initiatives, **British Petroleum (BP)** has estimated that knowledge sharing has cut its costs by -\$700 million. Shell has estimated that KM initiatives has saved the company over \$100 million a year. Shell's KM Lead manager mentions that

his experience of practice suggested that, in terms of the terms of value gained, 85% was derived from interpersonal discussion on the Knowledge management forums and only 15% from the knowledge base available in the portal.

b) Career Management: It is noted that the Oil majors are actively carrying out Career Management of employees through planned Job rotation and linked Talent initiatives among the employees.

At **Schlumberger**, Job rotation policy is implemented to give the engineers hands on experience on different work modules. Flexible lateral job rotations are offered to employees across segments to succeed in making each personnel a generalist and a specialist at the same time. At **Saudi Aramco**, the Job rotation and linked training initiatives are carried out in a planned manner online. **Aramco** has carried out more than 25,000 job rotations in support of employee development plans.

c) Mentoring: Mentoring is also one such intervention which the Oil Majors have started adopting for effective transfer of knowledge. British Petroleum has in place 'Mentor match', a one-year annual program which provides one-to-one mentoring to the identified high-potential employees to ensure them for development of Leadership positions. This program is in addition to the 'Accelerate', a global program to support employees as they transition into leadership roles. Two-way mentoring is also in novice stage in the Organizations.

2. Challenge - Digital First Challenges

Today, the world is being transformed by technologies that are redefining customer expectations, redefining industries, deriving new business models and changing the way people work.

Robert Bolton, Global People and Change Centre of Excellence, KPMG, states that "Although it may not be happening quite so quickly with O&G sector as in other

industries, technological disruption is already underway, HR executives in O&G don't have the luxury to sit back and wait to respond. They need to begin systematically planning what the workforce of the future needs to be, and shape their strategies to create that workforce."

In the Oil and Gas sector, Technological transformation is focused on emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Robotic Process Automation (RPA) and the Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT).

Two major trends towards combating the Digital challenges include the following aspects:

People Analytics : Use of Big data & Advanced Analytics to accurately predict measurements, outcomes and insights for better decision making

Digital Transformation: Technologies being extensively used for HR services: Tailored career development, Digital onboarding, Employee & workplace concerns

Leading organizations within the O&G sector are starting to effectively use Data analytics to help identify, recruit, retain, and develop skilled talent. By blending internally available data with external statistics and information related to the labour supply, HR leaders are positioning themselves to manage changes brought forth by volatile operating environment. Further, the Organizations are increasingly opting for video interview processes. The same gives them access to a wider talent pool of candidates, specifically in case of contractual positions, as well as leading to monetary savings.

The digital tools are enabling HR with the means to deliver individualized, just-in-time, and forward-looking interventions, while artificial intelligence and automation has begun to release HR from transactional services and simple judgment- or expertisebased tasks in these Organizations. The HR teams are increasingly de-emphasizing past data and working towards

the availability of Real-time data for all the Department heads. With the help of HR Analytics tools, the Organizations are going for Targeted retention plans and succession planning.

ExxonMobil, in order to attract top talent as well to better connect with prospective employees, has developed Digital recruiting application which is available to both recruiters and candidates on mobile devices. Prospective employees can access information on the company, potential career paths, and benefits before they talk to recruiters. This allows interviewers to maximize their time with candidates, focusing on the most important concerns of job candidates.

The Oil & Gas majors are also finding innovative ways to capitalize on the benefits of Virtual Reality (VR) technology for training and simulation purposes. Shell is using virtual reality techniques for deep water safety training to its employees.

Baker Hughes is deploying VR technology to simulate oil and gas facilities in training rooms. It offers a higher level of clarity during training programs.

Considering technological advancements, Telecommuting option has also been in practice at the Organizations. **At ExxonMobil**, Telecommuting option is available for certain positions (Administrative and Marketing positions). Some campuses of the Company like Houston campus, allows employees to avail work from home option. ExxonMobil designs and regularly organizes Disease prevention and control programs in assistance with Healthcare institutions to address health risks associated with Virtual workplace.

However, combined with virtual workspace is cyber security problems. At Shell, considering the increasing role of digital technologies across the business as well as HR operations, cybersecurity attacks could cause significant harm to the Company in the form of loss of productivity and loss of

intellectual property. Hence, the employees and contract staff are subject to mandatory courses aimed at protecting against cyber threats. Similarly, at **ExxonMobil**, in 2018, all of the employees completed webbased cyber security training to help them identify and respond to potential cyber security risks and to reinforce safe behaviours.

3. Challenge - Inclusion and Cultural adaptability

The Organizations are today facing challenges associated with Diversity, Localization and Inclusion as they explore new avenues & new geographies. Global Talent markets are becoming increasingly complex as diverse employees bring own expectations regarding collaboration, adaptability and accountability. To combat the challenges posed due to the Inclusion and cultural adaptability, the Global majors have embarked various initiatives as detailed ahead.

Shell has started an initiative called "I'm Not OK" to promote open and honest conversations of employees about their mental health to enable them to get the support they need while struggling with work performance. Further, at **Shell**, specific Employee Network Sessions are conducted, wherein, female senior management engage with women employees informally to provide them an opportunity to communicate about gender-specific topics. Senior management involved in these engagements exercises note the opportunity to enrich their understanding of the female perspective within Shell as well as the depth of talent and effectiveness of Shell's Diversity and Inclusion initiatives.

Talent management team at **British Petroleum** has collaborated with Disabled consultancy groups to increase connect with the prospective disabled employees of the Organization. The exercise helps the recruiters to understand the specific requirements of prospective disabled candidates in the overall hiring process.

At ExxonMobile, Inclusive Policies are in place that encourage diversity. The emphasis is to ensure that each employee's suggestions are valued as Diversity breeds Innovation.

4. Challenge - Engagement of New Workforce

As the Organizations are bracing up for an increased mix of Millennials in the workforce and considering that the future workforce will not be tied with geographical office boundaries, an increased emphasis is being given in these Organizations on measures of employee engagement. Today the Millennials are representing more than half of the workforce.

The predominant themes involving future workforce include the following aspects:

- Fluid teaming: Teams form and dissolve on a timely basis; individuals work across many such projects over period of time.
- Loose hierarchies: The organization is built around tasks and projects, rather than rigid hierarchies.
- Instant feedback: Performance management is crowd sourced in real time rather than being conducted through an annual conversation with a single manager.

In order to monitor productivity issues and keep track of the employee engagement, **British Petroleum** monitors employee opinion annually via 'Pulse' survey. In order to improve engagement scores, **British Petroleum** has launched global commitment program for minimum mandatory parental leaves for parents. The policy has been established through employee forums, including working parents' forum in place at the Organization. BP also actively carries out mandatory training in Diversity and inclusion for its senior leaders.

Creating positive engagement through a culture of continuous improvement is a top priority for HR professionals at BP.

The company places greater emphasis on driving continuous improvement in skills and capability. **BP** has in place 'Competency-online', an online tool wherein employees can access the skills and competencies required for a particular role in business units. The tool also guides the employees for acquiring such competencies. Personalized career paths are also available for key employees to provide tailored development.

At **Saudi Aramco**, over 60 percent of Company's workforce is composed of Millennials. To ensure that this generation is actively engaged and unique voice of this generation is captured, Young Leaders Advisory Board (YLAB) is in place. It acts as a bridge between the youth of Saudi Aramco and its Executive management. The team comprises of part-time young employees who remain embedded in their home departments and provide ideas and insights directly to senior management as well as engage with other young employees on the changes taking place throughout Saudi Aramco. The CEO Youth Town Hall meeting is also organized by the YLAB team, giving Millennial the chance to engage with CEO directly.

Considering the key practices and trends being followed at the Oil and Gas giants to combat the four key challenges faced by them, as elaborated above, we — the Indian O&G HR fraternity are expected to continuously relook the existing strategies which have helped us to succeed in the past, in order to remain competitive and succeed in future. As HR functions gradually become automated to cater to multigeneration workforce in our Organizations, we- the HR specialists need to broaden HR thought process as well as need to grasp the overall business strategy in place at our Organizations. All signs indicate that going forward, HR practices in the Indian O&G sector will look dramatically different and the HR leaders will not only help in executing business decisions; but they will also help in making those decisions.

The Labour Codes and the Indian oil Industry: The Act, The Fact and the Impact

Manpower trends in Indian Oil Industry : An outlook

“
There are decades in which nothing happens for days
And then there are days in which decades happen.
- John F. Kennedy



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The Indian oil industry has been the benefactor of the country's development since independence. The impact continues today, as India presents itself as the third largest consumer of energy in the globe. As one of the eight core industries in the country, the dynamics of the oil and gas industry has been one of the major influencers of other cogs of Indian economy.

As of December 01, 2020, India stood tall as the second largest refiner of Asia with oil refining capacity at 259.3 million metric tonnes. Private companies own about 35.29% of the total refining capacity in FY20. Again with increase in crude oil imports, and the predicted increase in Natural gas Consumption, the industry does not move towards a slump in the near future. The Indian Oil and gas industry strives to reach a parance with the global scenario with leveraged use of technologies and competitive business structures.

With technology and other forces, comes a regulation of manpower in the Oil and Gas industry. As per the report shared by ET Energy world, Permanent workforce employed

by India's state-run oil and gas companies has declined 13 per cent in the past 15 years through 2017 to 110,000, an analysis of oil ministry's data on manpower strength of the sector's Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) shows.

Also, taking into account contractual workforce too, the overall employee strength across 12 PSUs remained stagnant between 2002 and 2015, growing a mere 0.30 per cent. Even then, the manpower employed in the "Foreign Experts/ Expatriates/ On-Contract" category rose over three times to 24,140 in 2014-15 from a mere 7,213 in 2002.

Presented here is a snap form the MOPNG's manpower analysis for the central PSEs in different segments:

(Figures in Number)

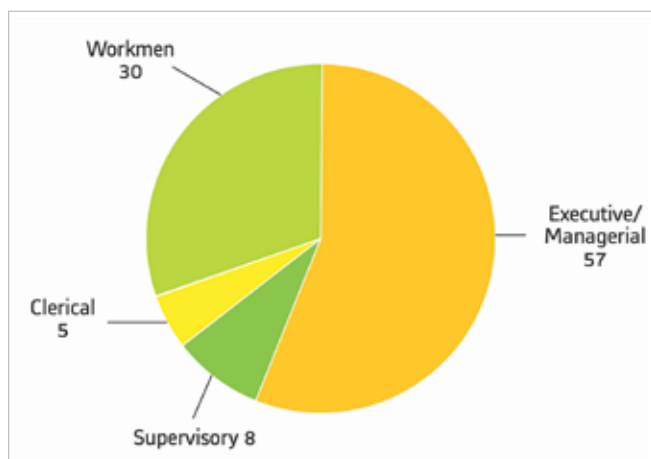
Sector	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 (P)	% Share of Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Exploration & Production	32388	32850	33455	33150	31823	31019	29987	28.9
Refining	25689	25233	24693	25038	25198	25690	25322	24.4
Marketing	32220	31094	31260	30698	29994	29657	28380	27.3
Pipelines	4985	5087	5384	5689	5869	6101	6204	6.0
Research & Development	2015	2126	2101	1986	1960	1898	1842	1.8
Others	15751	14329	13720	13492	13033	12368	12097	11.7
Grand Total	113048	110719	110613	110053	107877	106733	103832	100

Note: Figures exclude 'Expatriates/Foreign Experts/on Contract' manpower

P:Provisional

Source: Central Public Sector Enterprises

The % breakdown of manpower across various profiles of work is also notable:



The above studies show that the labour in oil industry is well accounted for. Being a core industry, the approach to different technical processes in the Indian oil sector along with the legal compliance frameworks is well regulated and forms an integral part of the corporate culture. Hence it would be wrong to state the diversity of labour laws governing the state of well being and prolonged welfare of the labour class misses to impact any class of workers in the Indian oil industry.

The labour laws with complete inclusion of the acts, rules and by laws, implied or expressed, have been complied by the different units of the oil industry. With much practices in place, it brings us to the analysis of the impact of the upcoming labour codes on the Oil industry, particularly in terms of the changes they bring.

The new decade brings with a sea change in the labor law scenario. With the merger of 29 labour laws in to 4 labour codes, this has brought in a more simplistic approach in doing business. The coverage of unorganised sector has broadened and employment avenues have been positively impacted. Through the following analysis, the impact of these codes on a systematic, highly compliant and organized oil industry is analysed.

Changes in Labour Codes and Their Impact on the Oil Industry

Presented here are some major changes that labour codes have introduced and how its impact is laid out on the Oil industry.

Code of wages:

The code on wages is a sub Sumption of 4 wage acts and would impact the il industry in the following manner.

A. Minimum Wages Related Changes

The minimum wages act is not applicable to the Oil industry. However in the regular nature of the business oil companies usually have the construction of roads, bridges and buildings under their perview. This scheduled industry has the maximum minimum wages allocated for it by the government.

However the new wage code forgoes the concept of scheduled industry and the minimum wages shall be regulated into 4

categories-unskilled, semi-skilled, skilled and highly skilled added with geographical area specific provisions. Again the National Floor Wage has been empowered to have a binding effect, according to which different states shall have different national minimum wages. The same shall be revised by the appropriate government, which in case of Indian oil industry is the Central government, in an interval not exceeding five years.

Henceforth, with the code taking effect there shall be a minimum wage applicable to the oil industry. The same wage rate shall be differently applicable to different states/regions and have to be accordingly adhered to.

B. Changes in line with Payment of wages

- i. The ceiling limit of Rs 24,000 as per the Payment of wages Act, 1936 has been removed following its subsuming into the new labor codes. According to the Payment of Wages Act, 1936 the amount of authorized deductions shall not exceed 50% of the total earnings.

Previously since the ceiling of the payment of the wages act was at Rs 24,000, nearly all employees of the oil industry were barred from its purview and the deductions could have an adverse value over the earnings, affecting the 'take home' pay. Now with the revoking of the ceiling, the Act becomes applicable to all employees of the Oil industry thereby ensuring a legally mandated payment value to employees across all rungs. This is also inclusive of the deductions made towards payment to any cooperative society (accounting which according to the Payment of Wages Act, 1936 could go upto 75% of total earnings).

Therefore the benefits and compensation structure has to be restructured in the oil industry, where major deductions like PF, income tax, loans and advances have all to be accounted in a ceiling of

50% only. Further with the uniformity in the definition of wages, the BENCOMP(benefits and Compensation) Structure has to be relooked upon considering the following from the 'wages' definition:

- a. Fines and instalments not to exceed 3%
- b. Inclusion of Basic, DA and RA
- c. Exclusion of Bonus, HRA, PF, Over Time, Commissions (like the conveyance allowance, PRP, PLI), gratuity, retrenchment compensation, etc.
- d. Total Deductions, excluding gratuity, retrenchment compensation and retirement benefits, not to exceed 50% of remuneration

Entertaining the above the wage value shall be arrived at which shall be taken for calculating ESI, PF, Gratuity, Bonus, etc.

- ii. Again the Payment of Wages Act, 1936 kept the provision of payment of Wages for a month by the 7th and 10th of the next month depending on the strength(1000 or above). The new code curbs the practice and has only one date, i.e., the 7th of next month by which wage for the previous month has to be paid.

Ideally in marketing, pipelines and R&D based locations the eligible manpower strength does not exceed 1000. However oil companies with large setups like refineries need to revisit the Payment dates to 7th.

C. Changes in line with the Payment of Bonus

The ceiling for Payment of Bonus stood at Rs 21,000 as per the Act. The universal cap has been removed with the advent of Code. The cap shall now be decided by the appropriate government, in case of oil industry that being the Central Government. Once the new ceiling is fixated by the central government, the Oil Industry will need to revalidate the scope – for contract labours and its employees alike.

Further an act of sexual harassment has been added to the list of misconducts against which an employee shall be held disqualified for receipt of bonus if convicted for an action involving a way of sexual harassment.

Again, the ultimate onus of payment of Bonus to the contract labour rested with the Principal employer as per the Payment of Bonus Act, 1965, however the contradicting judgements by certain high courts kept it as a grey area. The new code has clearly brought out this provision. Hence Oil Companies need to, as a preventive measure itself, ensure timely payment of Bonus to the contract labour by the contractors. Although newly enforced by the court, the practice has already been prevalent in all major CPSEs.

D. The welcome Switch from Inspectors to Facilitators

The inspectors as per the Wage Acts have now been introduced as facilitators. The ICFs (Inspectors-Cum-Facilitator), unlike the inspector, shall be assisting the employer achieve better legal compliance. This is a welcome change for a diversely spread oil industry where many Location Heads would be benefitted with the right compliance advice, rather than a penalty for non-compliance.

Further e-inspections are to be introduced making the process more efficient and transparent. The necessary records, registers, licenses and returns could be uploaded online and verified directly.

The government has embraced outsourcing mechanism through the current labour codes where third party audit and certification (more detailed in section 37 of the OSHWC code) could be adopted by it in randomised manner and such reports be submitted to the employer and the ICFs. Oil companies to be ready to embrace this new trend.

E. Scope for Improvement

The penalties for any violation has been

increased for ALL the labor codes. However, the scope of improvement has also been enhanced for all the employers.

No penalty shall be imposed on first time offenders, only for certain violations, and only for repeated offenders there shall be a penalty and that too if the offense has been committed more than once in a period of 5 years.

This, added with the ICFs, shall be a welcome provision by the Act to make the operating locations in the Oil Industry better compliant.

F. Settlement Period

The new code brings in the provision that in case of resignation/dismissal/retrenchment-the wages have to be paid within two working days. The oil companies need to revalidate the payment release mechanism to avoid any legal non-compliance in these lines. The dues here include non statutory payments like earned leave(which is now paid alongwith monthly salary release date) .

Code On Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions

The code on Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions is a subsumption of 15 Labour Acts. Presented here is the impact study of the same on the Indian Oil and gas industry

A. One Establishment, one Registration

The Code introduces a single registration for the establishment , unlike to the multiple registrations that the organisations had to do prior to the code. With the introduction of this centralized database this eases the efforts of different units of the oil companies, where previously it was a long and time prone process.

B. Empowering Women

While previously Factories Act, 1948 did not allow employment of women before 6 am and after 7 pm barring certain exemptions, the current code legalises concepts like

‘consent’ where women employees could be allowed to work in such timings. Again the odd work hours would be complimented with adequate safety and conveyance facilities.

Again, women employees can now be engaged in dangerous operations, unlike the restriction in the factories Act, 1948. The employer, in this case has to provide the necessary safeguard measures.

The Central Oil PSEs, according to the MOPNG statistics as on 31.03.2020, alone have a strength of 8454 women across different grades and including contract workforce. Hence such a change would be facilitative of managing the manpower in the industry for more assignments and allowing women to be more strategically involved in the work processes.

C. Factories redefined

Another welcome change for the oil industry, the definition of factory has been revamped. As per the new code, a unit shall be considered as a factory if more than 20 workers are engaged in manufacturing with the aid of power.

Previously this ceiling was 10 workers(all contract labour and employees included except the occupier) or more, due to which many of the small and less-manned units of the oil industry, particularly in the Marketing function like AFSs and depots had to also bear the legal burden of filing returns and reporting compliances frequently for a very trivial strength.

D. Scope for engaging Contract Labour and ISMW broadened

Previously the licensing and registration of an establishment was to be done if it engaged more than 20 contract workers and 5 migrant labours as per the respective provisions.

The new code again brings in a sigh of relief for the sparsely manned units in the oil industry by increasing this threshold ceiling to 50 for contract workers and 10

for Inter-state Migrant workmen thereby nullifying the need for seeking license from contractors and filing returns in relation to contract labour in the online return filing.

E. Free Annual Health Checkup

The factories, Act, 1948 mandated health check up for the workers. The new code ensures annual health checkup of all employees, the cost of which is to be borne by the employer.

F. Annual Leave with wage Period Reduced

Worker is eligible for earned leave at a rate of 1 leave for every 20 days worked in the current year if he has worked for minimum 180 days in the previous year. The ceiling has been reduced to 180 days from 240 days as was mentioned in the Factories Act, 1948. This leave cycle as per the new amendment has to be redrafted by the oil companies with the advent of the new code.

G. A canteen for a 100

In majority of the locations of the Oil industry , particularly in marketing , R&D and in the pipelines functions, the number of workers (inclusive of employees and contract workmen) was not as high as 250, thereby relaxing them from having a canteen established mandatorily. Currently as per the new code, factories with 100 or more workers have to mandatorily provide a canteen facility at the unit. This would need all such locations to start preparing the administrative setup for establishing canteen facilities.

Similarly creche has to be provided with units having 50 or more employees.

H. Licensing for Contractors

As per the new Codes, the contractors can obtain two kinds of licenses -job specific license, which is more in line with the current licensing and common license for operating in multiple states.

The second one has also a relevant impact on the contractors in oil industry where contractors with operation in multiple

states or multiple units in the same state can seek a common licence and intimate the same to the business unit and the local CL authority and perform operation with ease. The contractor based on his common license can allocate contract labour in different locations/states in any proportion upto the maximum number for which his license is obtained.

Also the contractor must obtain the license before engaging the contract labour. This creates an unwritten onus on the oil industry managers to invite for tenders involving contract labour at least 6 months in advance and place the work order by giving the contractor sufficient time to obtain the licence before start of his work, specifically for job specific contract license holders, where all these legal checks can be obtained.

I. Transition of OT from Matter of right to element of consent

Earlier the employer could allocate OT work to the employees in the roster, more so as a matter of right. With the beneficial turn taken by the code, allocation of overtime work would require the consent of the worker, whether verbal or written.

Managers in the oil and gas units need to plan their activity based on the worker's consent.

The IR Code

The IR code is the subsumption of three acts. The new code brings in the following changes impacting the Oil and gas industry:

A. Fixed Term Employment Introduced

The IR code introduces the flexibility to the employers to hire people on fixed term employment for a specific duration and a written contract. An unversed practice previously, this brings in the scope for oil industry employers to go for short-term skill based recruitments.

With the competitive trends in the oil industry and the steady march towards green energy

the Oil Industry, globally, is going to face a dearth for skilled man power with technical expertise in adopting the new business models, introducing and implementing new technologies and executing strategies. Fixed term employment appears as a panacea in the Indian oil industry in such a scenario. Introducing FTEs could be advantageous to the oil companies, particularly in the administrative setups, as this would facilitate:

- a. Skill Based time bound hiring
- b. Non payment of retrenchment benefits on separation
- c. Better cost management
- d. Payment of Gratuity only on pro rata basis.

B. Negotiating Union/Council Introduced

The bargaining power of the unions in the Indian oil industry with majority of members is being empowered by the IR code with the introduction of mandatory recognition of the unions or setting up of a negotiating council with unions having representative strength of more than 20%.

The recognition of unions is a delayed although a welcome move. It is also important to note that Indian Oil Companies have been having the practice of a bargaining agent / council in line with the code of Discipline, 1958 to which this provision of the IR code is a worthy successor.

C. Saying bye to the PUS privilege

Oil companies of India enjoyed the special recognition in the Industrial Dispute Act, 1947 as the Public Utility Services which differentiated the approach to strikes and lockouts in such establishments.

The current IR code removes the concept of Public Utility Services and makes the provisions for strikes and lockouts expanded to all industrial establishments. Strike/lockout could be carried out after 14 days of notice and cannot be continued beyond 60 days, instead of the previous higher limit of 42 days.

D. Worker's Reskilling Fund

The IR Code introduces provisions for re-skilling of workers for the first time for those workers who have been laid-off so that they are able to secure employment again. Such fund would constitute:

- The contribution of the employer of an industrial establishment of an amount equal to fifteen days wages last drawn by the worker immediately before the retrenchment, or such other number of days as may be notified by the Central Government, for every retrenched worker in the case of retrenchment only; and
- The contribution from such other sources as may be prescribed by the appropriate Government.

The fund shall be utilised by crediting fifteen days wages last drawn by the retrenched worker to his account, within forty-five days of retrenchment in the manner as may be prescribed.

The regulation of this fund and more clarity on the role of the employer would dawn upon the laying down of the rules. But this welfare provision shall also hit the oil industry, like all others.

The Social Security Code

This code is the subsumption of 9 acts and the following impacts on the oil industry would be set by the new code.

A. ESI Act and EC Act: New Lines Drawn

Previously ESI was applicable to notified areas wherever it was implemented, thereby being an integral element of the wage structure in such areas and in other cases the employees compensation Act was applicable.

However, as per the Social Security Code ESI is applicable throughout all establishments. Wherever the ceiling of wages exceeds Rs 21,000 there employee is covered under

coverage of Employees Compensation provisions. The ESI act shall be applicable to all the establishments of Oil companies even if one worker is engaged there.

B. Limitation Period's extension to PF

The ESI Act had the mention of limitation period under which the inspector could not ask an employer for display of records and returns ranging within the period of five years from the date of inspection, but not beyond that.

The new Social Security Code has established the extension of Limitation period to PF Act as well for 5 years only, ensuring more productive record management by the oil companies. Again with subsequent advent to digital record keeping such manual records would be obsolete in a few years ensuring a paperless record management.

C. Compensation for commuting to work and vice versa

The scope of 'arising out of and in course of employment' has been broadened as per the new code where the accident arising during commuting to work and vice versa shall also be liable for payment. Whereas oil companies are already having a robust compensation structure for such misfortunes, the code has brought in a welcome change in this scenario.

Conclusion

At the cost of repetition, it is noteworthy to mention that the labor management scenario for the Indian Oil Companies is very organized and rule bound. Majority of the changes proposed by the law are already in place and practice. While the labour laws take a stride towards coverage of a larger labour base, previously uncovered in the country, the oil companies need to responsibly revisit the HR parameters of compensation, leave and productivity management to ensure higher compliance and unmeddled efficiency.

Leading the Way: HR Initiatives during Pandemic



By **Gaurav Kumar**,
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Quality Assurance, HPCL

1. Introduction

In these unprecedented times, organisations across the globe have been busy in taking initiatives towards the well-being of their employees, their most precious and irreplaceable assets. From organisation's point of view, devotion towards its people and the community by extending a never tiring altruistic attitude not only provides satisfaction but also adds purpose and meaning to their efforts. As aptly quoted by Dalai Lama, "True compassion is not just an emotional response, but a firm commitment founded on reason."

Given the uncertainty during this period of pandemic, businesses can't be shut down and the show must go on but not at the risk of loss of human capital. This has been the greatest challenge for HR Function of any organisation in the current times. The article articulates how visionary leadership of HR at HPCL has been instrumental in innovating the solutions to not only address the above cited dilemma but also to create significant contributions.

2. The Initiatives

As the old proverb goes "Prevention is better than cure". Based on this philosophy, the strategy of planning and rolling out of initiatives undertaken by HR had a major thrust on preventive measures. The bouquet of initiatives was studied in depth and can be clubbed into segment-wise grouping as shown in Exhibit 1.



Exhibit 1. Categorization of Employee Oriented Initiatives to combat Covid 19

2.1 Preventive initiatives

Multiple measures were adopted for employee well-being which could help in mitigating the perils of the pandemic. These can be broadly sub-classified into five major domains as illustrated in Exhibit 2.



Exhibit 2. Preventive Initiatives to combat Covid 19

In order to ensure Covid appropriate behaviour, measures were adopted to minimise the exposure duration for the employees. Work From Home (WFH) option was activated and department wise roster was formulated based on rotational attendance to ensure smooth functioning despite restricted manpower.

Given the novelty of the pandemic, visionary leadership was required in the situation which was ably provided by Director-HR, HPCL. It was equally important to create immediate awareness amongst the employees on any new developments. ED-HR was instrumental in issuance of Covid advisories as and when required. This was supplemented by Dos's and Don't guidelines developed basis of inputs received from medical consultants, WHO and ICMR. Multiple webinars were also conducted to spread awareness that also included vital aspect of maintaining mental health. Further in case of exigencies when travel could not be avoided, safe operation guidelines for the employees helped in ensuring a safe and sound stay.

All infrastructural and material facilities to follow Covid appropriate behaviour were provided by the organisation.

Local HR made dynamic efforts to tie-up with both government and private facilities to initiate vaccination drives for employees, family members, TT Crew and contract workmen engaged with the Corporation. Standard Operating Procedures were adopted at the workplace that included temperature checks, restricted entry, scanning through Arogya Setu app, ensuring

no-mask no-entry and regular sanitization at frequent intervals. The measures not only ensured safety at work place but also instilled confidence in the employees to enter the workplace without any hesitation.

2.2 Corrective initiatives

Witnessing the rapid surge in cases, especially in the second wave of Covid-19, initiative was taken to ensure timely RT-PCR tests for employees and their family members through empanelled laboratories and new tie-ups. The long-standing relations with the medical fraternity assisted in securing beds as well as oxygen support for the infected employees in times of acute crisis. Medical consultation on call was also arranged to provide utmost care and attention.

Provision of "Special Leave for COVID-19" was also approved for employees who test positive for COVID-19.



Exhibit 3. Corrective Initiatives to combat Covid 19

2.3 Supportive Initiatives

Man is mortal. Despite doing our best, sometimes situations go beyond what humans can actually control. Public Sector Units have been known to care for their employees in the best possible manner. Following the spirit, HPCL believes in connecting with not only with the employees, but also their family members in these challenging times. The Corporation sanctioned additional compensation in case of death of an employee arising out of Covid or complications developed due to Covid.

3. Walking the Extra Mile

To keep the employees engaged and to help them learn something new constantly, the Capability Building department of HPCL organised courses round the year through virtual trainings and webinars. Learning experience was further enhanced by upgradation of online HP Academy, offerings on Great Learning Corporate Academy and courses from online platforms like EdX, Coursera and NPTEL.

The unselfish effort to help others can bring a sense of gratitude that no other action can accomplish. The Corporation was proactive in helping the society by The entire business network also extended wholehearted help for the noble cause. The Corporation also participated in fundraisers such as PM Cares Fund to extend contribution in nation building.

4. Conclusion

The most significant factor under the control of an organization is their relationship with each employee. The second-most important factor is work environment and organizational culture that fosters employee motivation and engagement. The multiple employee-oriented initiatives adopted at right course of time have indeed helped in morale boosting and well-being of the employees. Despite multiple adverse factors owing to the pandemic, HPCL has grown stronger than ever, with stupendous performance in all domains.

The strong focus on preventive strategies has helped in not only fighting the evil menace and delivering safe workplace environment, but also in and promise of trust.

ONGC DEEKSHA: Technology - enabled approach for Succession Planning

By - Team ONGC

Oil and Gas PSUs are navigating continuous changes. With the competition intensifying, it is the need of the hour to suitably develop, engage and retain skilled manpower and maintain a steady and competent leadership pipeline. The big challenge is therefore to align Human Resource Policies with new business strategies.

The key difference between public and private organizations, is the degree of flexibility in interpretation



- *Big challenge to align Human Resource Policies with new business strategies*
- *ONGC – overall strength of approximately 17,000 executives, drawn from 40 disciplines/specializations, carried by a hierarchy of 2204 well defined positions*
- *DEEKSHA (Developing Experienced, Esteemed, & Kaleidoscopic Successors for Higher Achievement) – In-house-developed IT application to manage Succession Planning process*
- *Formulated to unleash the potential of the existing systems through integration on the ICE-HR platform*
- *Embracing the talent mind set is not about building a better HR department or training but about leaders and managers at all levels embracing it*
- *Succession Planning derived from the processes of:*
 - › *Profile Matching*
 - › *Recommendations by identified/nominated position holders*
 - › *“Value Proposition for the Role (VPR)”*

of procedures and processes. HR culture in PSUs is characteristically rigid and is thus facing challenges in managing the impacts of globalization and change in leadership development, succession planning, work diversity and the formulation of corporate culture based on ethics and transparency.

In over 60 years of its existence, ONGC has crossed many milestones to realize the energy dreams of India. This journey has been a tale of conviction, courage and commitment. From a modest beginning, ONGC has grown to one of the largest integrated E&P companies in the world. As an integrated Oil & Gas Corporate, it has developed in-house capability in all aspects of exploration and production. Human Resource Management (HRM) in ONGC has always played a vital role in enabling corporate success over these years.

It is now a universally accepted fact that in today's business environment, employees remain the prime source of competitive advantage. "At the end of the day we bet on people, not strategies" (Larry Bossidy-CEO Allied Signals), as the best laid plans have been seen to bite the dust, due to lack of leadership competence and commitment. Therefore the ultimate shared goal of any

company management is to build a talent-rich organization.

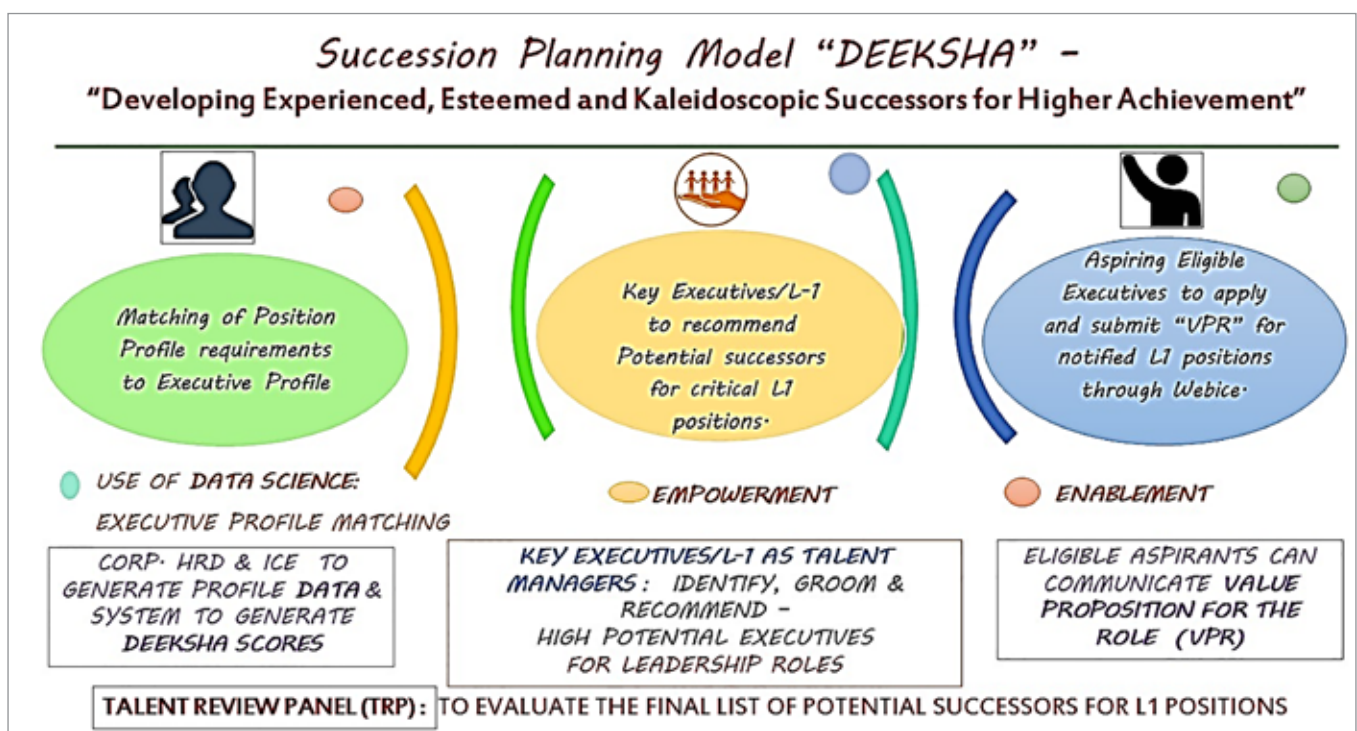
Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) is driving an ambitious growth agenda through implementation of its **Energy Strategy 2040**, which requires considerable interventions from HR, to fine-tune and align its talent and leadership pipeline towards attainment of the organizational vision, mission and goals. Furthermore, the organization is facing greater challenge due to large scale retirement of executives holding key positions and the widening talent gap.

In such a scenario, to energize growth and maintain continuity, it is essential that all strategic (key) positions in the organization are held by persons with commensurate competence and skills, to be identified through a transparent and objective succession planning process.

The “replacement” oriented succession planning that has been operational and relied upon, can no longer be expected to meet the needs of today- especially in an organization like ONGC, carrying an overall strength of approximately 17,000 executives, drawn from 40 disciplines/specializations, carried by a hierarchy of 2204 well defined positions.

So, with the objective to effectively identify the best fit from the talent pipeline and also have an early warning system in case of absence of leadership pipeline to meet business strategies, ONGC management has pushed for the development of a robust talent management platform that can focus on “Succession Adequacy” parameters instead of mere meeting replacement needs, so as to ensure that people who move into new positions are at least equal or better than the people they are succeeding. To support this requirement, an IT application to manage Succession Planning process has been developed in-house. This Succession Planning model – “DEEKSHA” (Developing Experienced, Esteemed, & Kaleidoscopic Successors for Higher Achievement) – has been formulated to unleash the potential of the existing systems through integration on the ICE-HR platform.

A pool of High-Potential (HIPO) executives ready to step into critical positions would be identified with the aid of DEEKSHA Succession Planning model with inputs derived from the processes of Profile Matching, Recommendations by identified/nominated position holders and also by an optional process of inviting application along with “Value Proposition for the Role (VPR)”. Basically, the model seeks to achieve



three basic principle i.e. empowerment of position holders, enablement of aspirants and data analytics for profile matching.

While we may be a long way from building a predictive algorithm to identify perfect CEO successor for Key position, a start has been made by putting together standard processes/mechanisms/plans in place. The process is not simple and can prove to be a minefield if not managed carefully. The model is flexible, transparent (not necessarily public view) expansive, good at identifying rising stars for the identified roles, through a scientific and collaborative approach enabling organization to move from the traditional CEO's/Top Management candidate choices, to selection based on institutional and role based future organization needs.

Its success will however lie in the way the implementation is carried out and how soon it is able to morph into an organizational habit. The many enviable recognitions and laurels that form part of ONGC's intangible assets, all point to the fact that we have the necessary

platforms and processes to lead the way. But what we necessarily and honestly have to dwell upon is -how far as a company we have embraced the talent mind-set.

Embracing the talent mind set is not about building a better HR department. It's not about better training. It's not about offering stock options. It is about leaders and managers at all levels embracing a talent mind-set. A talent mind set is the deep-seated belief that talent differentiates organizational culture and breeds competitive advantage, with benefits for both the individual and the organization—now and in the future. A talent mind-set is inspired and led by the top leadership, modelled by management and supported by a range of initiatives developed by HR and implemented by HR and line managers.

So, it is the time to be 'ready for change', which also implies being ready for the 'War for Talent'. Evolution legend Charles Darwin put it aptly – 'It is not the strongest of species that will survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change.'

Ecosystem Restoration @ BPCL



By **A DURGA RAO**, BPCL
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The Tauktae cyclone hit Mumbai city between May 16th & 18th, 2021 with such force that it left more than 812 trees uprooted in its wake. One such tree was a huge, 140-year old Banyan, (*Ficus benghalensis*), at BPCL Sewree premises. Though Banyans tend to be sturdy and almost indestructible, but sadly this one was brought down on its knees by Tauktae on night of May 18th 2021



A century old banyan tree is home to birds, ants, squirrels and many variants of fauna. It is a keeper of memories and chronicler of life

over the years. The emotional attachment to the Banyan tree was evident in crestfallen faces and teary eyes. It was as we were witnessing the demise of a beloved great grandparent. Everyone was sad to see the majestic tree lying completely uprooted. The message that nature is all powerful was driven home yet again.

However there were some who refused to let go and bow down to Mother Nature so easily. An idea germinated and soon developed into a rescue mission – **Reclaim and Restore the Banyan !!**. A volunteer team of engineers, agriculturists and general helpers who work



at BPCL Sewree, driven by their emotional attachment to the beloved Banyan decided to take on this task and give it their all.

The tree was inspected and it was decided that to enable the tree to stand again some weight loss was needed. The tree underwent emergency surgery – branches were pruned to bring the center of gravity back to the base of the thick trunk. A pit 7 feet by 3-4

and bacterial damage and also to help re-growth.

A crane was used to lift the tree and place it back into the widened pit. Two truckloads of soil were poured around the tree to provide packing and support.

Miraculously, the minute the tree was replanted, birds started coming back to the tree as if welcoming back an old friend. It was a magical to suddenly find birds fluttering about and squirrels scampering around as if saying thank you to human beings for restoring their homes and lives.. Mother Nature had accepted our offering of love and labour.

Banyan trees are revered in the Indian culture. They find mention in our scriptures as providers of longevity and fulfilment. The scientific explanation for this belief can be that the Banyan emits a large amount of oxygen compared to other trees. It reduces the presence of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Pure and clean air, chirping of birds, shelter from harsh sun, rains and a place to sit and contemplate. What more can a person, stressed and stretched due to worldly demands, ask for? Maybe that is why the title of "Grantor of wishes" has been conferred on the Banyan.

The Banyan had granted our wish to have it back amidst us in its original splendor and glory!!



meters was dug, widening the hole. The exposed and damaged parts of the tree were treated with a thin solution of Copper Oxy Chloride to prevent fungal



*The triumphant team of Ecosystem supporters @ BPCL Sewree
A. Durga Rao, Revanth Kumar, Rajesh Verma , Gardeners & supporting manpower*

Role of Spirituality in Effective Human Resource Management

People are not useless; they are used less.

- Swami Vivekananda



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the gap between where we are and where we should be, based on the organizational requirement.

In this article, efforts are concentrated around testing the hypothesis that Human Resources are self-made, self-disciplined and self-managed. Spirituality can make employees (human resources) self-developed, efficient and effective and thereby self managed.

Introduction

In today's business world, the employees are much more transparent, committed to individual contribution and group contribution, extremely careful and concern about self development. They are equally concerned about the productivity, efficiency and effectiveness. They are also concerned for rewards and recognition.

On the other hand Industries have also recognized the power of labour. Accordingly industries are trying to fulfill the needs of Labour much before they demand. When demands are fulfilled unnoticed, the unrest is automatically addressed.

Spirituality helps both HR and Industries to understand each others' need. Thereby a

The role of HR is to read the pulse of people and regulate such pulse in such a manner that he will never feel diseased, depressed or disheartened. The role of human resource manager is to keep watch in the nerves and veins of every employee so that the inherent potent glow throughout to make it more vital, strengthened, and stimulated and saturated.

Spirituality is nothing but a medium to develop an attitude of purposeful life and living with strong commitment towards creation of and associated with goodness along with channelization of such goodness to produce further goodness for the universe.

Today's Human Resource (HR) is not the HR of decades back. The HR has got transformation day by day. Present era is the era of openness, inclusiveness and sustainable development. And development is nothing but bridging

conducive environment is created with 'You win-I win' attitude.

People now are very sensitive to ethical labour practices. In this open and transparent world, everyone is informed, and therefore, they know the cause and effect of everything that is happening. Earlier, maximum labour unrest were observed due to lack of understanding of the purpose, lack of communication on 'how' and 'why' changes are being done etc.. Now, due to intervention of technologies, every difference can be easily measured and shown leading to consolation and understanding to the differences.

The objective of this article is to deliberate on how spirituality can contribute for effective HR development and management. Following few points have been covered in this article with reference to the subject:

- **What is Spirituality?**
- **How Spirituality is different from Religion?**
- **What are the basic components of Spirituality?**
- **What is Human Resource (HR)?**
- **Does HR really need Management?**
- **Changing trend of Labour Unrest**
- **Spirituality for HR Management**

What is Spirituality?

Spirituality is nothing but a sense of purposeful existence of human being. It is an individual prospective on Who am I? Why I exist? What is my role in this universe? How can I matter? Why I do what I do? How my contributions make any difference? etc. These set of questions bring the inner potent as well as the purposefulness of one's existence. Spirituality is more of individual nature and an organization is nothing but set of individuals. So when each individual is filled with sense of purpose, the whole organization comes out with a purposeful organization and not only a profit-making set-up.

Spirituality is derived from the Latin word Spiritus' which means "breath". Spirit is defined

as the vital principle or animating force within living beings. As all living beings breathe and the breath differentiates living thing from non-living, therefore, spirituality is nothing but realizing the purpose of the breath in such a way that the breath brings vitality in every living thing so that they can add more and more values.

In layman's view, spirituality is an attitude for knowing ones' own-self, exploring the inner divinity, developing the inner potential to use it purposefully for the betterment of the world around us.

Spirituality is being disciplined.

A disciplined mind – brings disciplined body.

A disciplined body and mind – brings higher productivity.

Productivity brings Prosperity.

Spirituality brings Openness (Open Culture)

Openness brings Trust amongst stakeholders

Trust brings connectedness (Lok Sangraha) and relation among employees (compassion).

Connectedness & compassion brings confidence.

Confidence brings ownership.

Ownership brings willingness and extra efforts.

Extra efforts bring higher productivity.

Higher productivity brings growth and development.

Growth & Development brings prosperity in an organization.

Prosperity multiplies productivity, growth and development and the cycle moves on.

The basic philosophy of spirituality is "meaningful work" ascribing to:

- Karma Yoga (duty orientation having an indifference to rewards)
- Lok Sangrah (interconnectedness for a common community purpose)
- Transcendence of self as Gunas (Raj, Tama and Satwa guna)

- Alignment with organizational values as Daivi Sampad (building a positive and divine work culture)
- Holistic growth as Panch Koshas (acquaintance of existence of self and others)

In human being spirituality enhances the ability to realize the full potential as a person. Spirituality develops a conscious awareness that there is something more to life than just narrow, selfish and ego centric outlook to one's surrounding.

How Spirituality is different from Religion?

Before entering in-depth into the subject let us make it clear that though spirituality has inter relation with religion, all religion teaches to accept, adopt divine principles of spirituality, whatsoever it may be. Spirituality here means the divine potent in man, the positive energy that one carry within oneself in the way of life. It's the divine spark in every living thing, irrespective of any religion, which if explored can make many wonders, including effectiveness in employee management.

Spirituality is an individual trait and is deeply personal in nature. It is not necessarily to be religious for developing the attitude of spirituality towards one's life.

Religion is more of rituals, related to caste, creed, society, location, time etc. whereas spirituality is free from any relation with any of these sections. It is universally accepted human values and independent from any subjective interpretation.

What is Human Resource (HR)?

As we know Human Resource Management starts with hiring and ends with separation of employees with many interventions in between. In a diagram this can be depicted as follows:- (Diagram – 1)

HR Activities in an Organization

Traditionally, HR activities involve the following:

- a. Job design

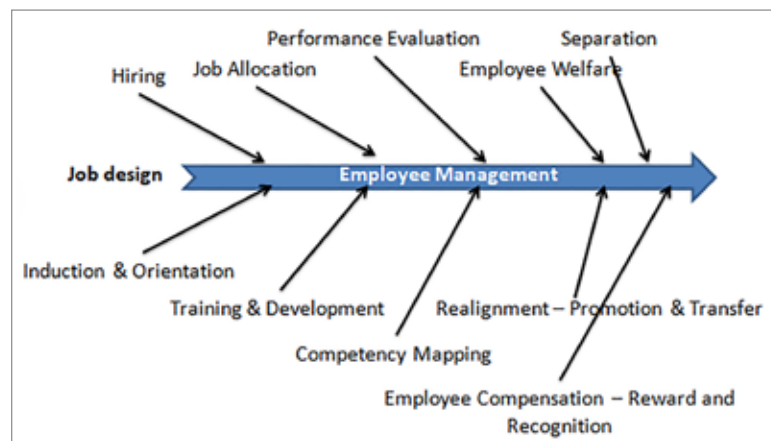


Diagram – 1

- b. Attracting people
- c. Hiring suitable people
- d. Orientation, training and development
- e. Placing right person at right job
- f. Performance appraisal
- g. Compensation
- h. Labour Relations and Boundary Management
- i. Superannuation and extending post retirement services

In the later part of this article we will discuss how and where spirituality can be imbibed in such HR activities.

Spirituality for HR Management

Management in true sense is nothing but controlling the aspects / resources in such a manner that the resources are available at the time of requirement. Management of any things resulted in full utilization or in other words wastage reduction, reduction of deprivation or scarcity.

So, similarly Human Resource Management concentrates around making manpower available at the time of requirement through recruitment, hiring etc. Putting right man at right place so that the available resource can be better and properly utilized, developing them through training so that they can contribute their part fully and confidently, recognizing their efforts through reward and compensation system, nurturing them to avoid wastage of

human resources through brain drain and finally taking proper care after retirement.

Indian Organization Culture is based on spirituality. Take the example of strike in Maruti Suzuki (in India) which lost hundreds of man-days, millions of production only because of adoption of rigidity. This is because of adoption of Japanese culture in Indian work environment. We can also refer to the example of one of the India's biggest conglomerate TATA industries which has successfully imbibed the Indian Culture in work place and has proven successful since decades.

It's said that people make or break an Organization. It is people who are proven instrumental in growth or closure of an Organization. Therefore, it is people who ultimately matters.

When we are talking about people, it is not only the head count, rather the skill, the attitude to implement the skill does matter.

Spirituality is nothing but scientific procedure to develop inner potent and to make such potent useful without any external influence. Spirituality is nothing but a concept once adopted and accepted by people, they can explode to bring all positivity to an Organization.

HR Practices in which spirituality can be adopted

Knowing very well the role of Spirituality in an organization, the outcome of spirituality and the impact of such outcomes in an organization, and with the agreement that spirituality is an individual traits and also accepting the fact that people make or break an organization, let's now discuss how the spirituality traits can be developed in the heart, mind, deed and overall in the attitude of employees.

In every stage of employee related interventions in an organization, spirituality can be infused. The following ways, inter-alia, can be adopted for fulfilling such objective:

1. Hire people with care

Adoption of a culture starts with entry hiring

of manpower. Hire people who understand company's mission statement and work accordingly to the company's purpose. The background of a candidate reflects many aspects whether the candidate having spiritual bent of mind set. The family culture, the education, the institution where education is taken, the course curriculum chosen to study, the family financial background etc. can give a clear picture on the attitude of the candidate. In case taken proper care by the recruitment team, right people with right attitude can be identified, selected and hired.

2. Induction and Orientation

This is the entry point of an employee to the organization. This is the transition time of what the newly recruited employee has brought with him, what is the existing aspects in the organization in which he is recruited and what is expected from him, and more over how to bridge the gap.

This is very critical transition time which a newly hired person tries to align, to adopt or to resist for the rest of his career till he is with the organization. Therefore, proper spiritual dimensions like clarity of thought, deep understanding, caring and sharing, connectedness, delegation and empowerment, culture of openness, fairness and welfare etc. are need to be imbibed in the mind so that he can comfortably align with all goodness of the new organization.

This stage is nothing but a stage of plantation of a sapling, expected grow properly and fructify contributing the main stream of growth and development of an organization.

There is a saying – "First Impression lasts long." Therefore, the treatment a newly hired employee receives during induction and orientation matters a lot. A newly hired person should so specially be cared what is expected is nourished and nurtured.

3. Placement of right person at right assignment

Everyone is unique with unique perception, interest, mind set, willingness, liking and

disliking. These basic things are already been imbibed in a person since childhood, and during the process of education etc. Now, at the later stage it is difficult to be completely changed. Though the human potentiality is beyond imagination, it is nevertheless limited.

Therefore, it is never wise to put an architecture engineer in human resource management function, as they are two different and special disciplines, designed in two different ways, to meet the interest of two sets of target people with totally different mind-set. Mismatch of things in which one is interested in and the things one is assigned to deliver never results full satisfaction. Thereby properly placing employees is very essential. Also care for rotating people periodically.

4. Action (performance) and its' evaluation

This is the crucial stage in which spirituality takes the vital role. Performance is individual. Contribution is individual. Even when individuals perform in a group, it is only the individual performance which synergized, and thereby the group outcomes become greater than the combination of individual outcomes.

Therefore ultimately, the individual performance does matter. With this philosophy and school of thought, it is important to care employees much at the stage of their performance. Create an environment of inclusion, diversity in thought and ideas in the company.

Spirituality contributes much at this stage as spirituality focuses in understanding the 'why' part of the doer (why should I do) as well as the 'why' part of action (why this is to be done). This develops a sense of purposeful existence of the actor as well as the action. Once these two are agreeably understood, and heartily accepted, then nothing resist the doer in willfully contributing fullest of the potent, with full of interest.

In such a spirited scenario, achieving the individual target as well as the organizational target is a must without fail. Further, set achievable goals with continuous feedback. Enrich Jobs.

5. Training and Development

There are few spiritual practices; every organization should focus to be inserted in the mind of employees through training and development.

The great saint, freedom fighter, enlightened spiritual Guru and the founder of Yug Nirman Yojana Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya advocates that there are four *mantras* for spiritually charged bright future. They are – *Samajhdari* (Understanding the purpose), *Immandari* (being Honest), *Jimmedari* (taking ownership and accountability) and *Bahaduri* (Bravery or courageousness) and there are four *sutras* (formulas or techniques) to achieve these four mantras. They are – *Swadhyaya* (study of the self or self-knowledge), *Sadhana* (spiritual endeavors for self discipline), *Sanyam* (wise use of resources, time, thought and sense organs), and *Seva* (selfless service with empathy and compassion)

These time tested aspects, inter-alia, can be taught to the employees during the stage of training and development.

6. Compensation

When deciding compensation for the efforts of people in an organization, spiritual attitude intends to give more, resulting to high level of satisfaction, which ultimately increase efficiency and production. The satisfactions get reflected in every aspect of human dealings and thereby reflect the positive organization culture.

7. Labour Relations and Boundary Management

A spiritually charged organization attracts better labour relation and boundary management. This is because; every stakeholder knows that such types of organizations rarely do wrong.

Besides the above stages where we can focus inclusion of spirituality in an organization, there are some general actions which can be adopted any time to develop spiritual instincts in employees. Some of these actions are as follows:

- a) Organize fun trips for employees and family members
- b) Arrange Yoga, Meditation and *Pranayama* sessions for employees and family members
- c) Organize seminars/ special talks with reference to spiritualism viz. personality development sessions etc.
- d) Invite spiritual practitioners periodically and conduct some gathering activities
- e) Encourage brain storming sessions and innovative ideation
- f) Encourage employees to spend more time with family and friends
- g) Organize volunteer social activities like sanitation camp in locality, Plantation, visiting orphan centers, destitute centers etc.
- h) Help employees connect with nature and natural features
- i) Hold out-door / out-station meetings when possible
- j) Honour creative expressions by decorating work-place
- k) Hold meeting in the round thereby creating feeling of inclusion

Components of Success contributed by Spirituality

There are components which contribute for the success of organizations and can be fostered by adopting Spirituality. Some of them are as follows:

a) Trust and Openness

This develops flexibility in mind set and accordingly develops acceptance. This develops trust among people. Openness keeps people informed and thereby leads a better organizational communication culture. The Stakeholders of a spiritually charged Organization thought to be characterized by honesty, openness and mutual trust.

b) Culture of expression

In a spiritually charged organization,

employees are encouraged to express their ideas, feelings and thoughts without any fear.

c) Positive Attitude

This develops a positive work environment and positive work culture. This reduces anger, fear and disbelief. Develops mindfulness and reduce employee unrest. This enhances employee satisfaction.

d) Selflessness

Selflessness develops ownership – the cause of all efforts of employees in any organization. This develops leadership qualities. This encourages group enthusiasm and group dynamism. This develops caring and sharing atmosphere.

e) Introspection

Introspection develops self knowledge. It helps in Identifying points of self improvement. This triggers the eagerness to develop self and to maintain the good qualities. Comparison kills. Self Introspection builds.

f) Strong sense of Ownership

Spirituality bent of mind make people more tilt towards ownership. Then spirituality get reflected in the mind of every employee and accordingly they do contribute more and more. In a spiritual Organization, people not just do things for the sake of doing, they search the “why” aspect in whatever they do. They know the reason of their deeds. They have a purpose of doing something or purpose in not doing other things.

g) Culture of Employee Empowerment

In a spiritual Organization, employees are considered the most valuable resources who can bring all positive changes. It is believed that no one commits mistake knowingly. It is accepted that man can make their future and accordingly in a spiritual Organization, people are empowered to take their own decision.

h) Self-Realization

Spirituality makes people realizing their own self. By various ways spirituality

expresses to realize that every human being is a unique creation of God and made for making positive changes. Each individual in this universe are made for making changes. Spirituality ignites the inner divinity of every human being. Accordingly self-introspection stands on the set of questions viz. Am I doing right? Why I am doing what I am doing? This makes every action purposeful.

i) Sense of Uniqueness

Spirituality guides man not to compare with others rather to compare everyday's effort with the effort of previous day.

Comparison creates hatred differences, kills others for own survival, creates lose-win or win-lose situation. But introspection creates conducive environment. It creates atmosphere of group development, inclusive growth and win-win propositions. Thereby organization development and individual improvement is the inevitable outcome of introspection.

j) Limiting the Needs

Spirituality teaches us to limit our needs. Once the needs are minimized, maximum of our efforts for greediness shall be automatically reduced. A person with limited needs shall be satisfied and happy and accordingly the evil aspects shall be reduced from his life. People can understand each others' basic needs and then there will be no more cruelty to unduly grab from each other. This will lead to a conducive and inclusive work environment.

Results of adoption of spirituality in organisation

The outcome of adoption of spirituality in HR Management in an Organization can be as follows:-

- 1 Organization shifts towards a purpose driven and meaning based
- 2 The management of efficiency and control shall be shifted to management with vision and mission
- 3 It develops open culture with highly motivating people
- 4 Management practices and decisions will be aligned with divine values like honesty, integrity, kindness, love, care, hope, respect and nurturing
- 5 Spirituality will bring a perfect alignment in Mind, Speech and Deed. By bringing heart, soul and spirit together, spirituality brings passion to what one does, why he does what he does and how can he do it better
- 6 Spirituality brings a fearless culture where the wall of hierarchy become invisible and a sense of community and inspiration develops
- 7 Spirituality develops willingness to reflect on the meaning of life and moral implications in making every decision
- 8 Spirituality brings a shared attitude that products and services need to be beneficial to community and humanity
- 9 The employees in a spiritually charged organization are valued based on who they are, and what they can become rather than being valued based on efficiency and productivity
- 10 Employees are treated in a respectful, responsible and caring ways with all human touch rather than being treated as instruments
- 11 The conflicts in a spiritually charged organization are resolved in 'You Won - I Won' fashion with utmost care and concern towards each other
- 12 The leadership in a spiritually charged organization are more of benevolent in nature rather than Command-and-Control type
- 13 The employees in a spiritually charged organization are charged with positive vibes which are reflected in every aspects of that organization viz. improvement in morale, Job satisfaction, loyalty towards organization, and thereby, enhanced productivity is natural outcome

14 In a spiritually charged organization, spiritual dimensions shall be seen integrated with respect to relationship, planning, budgeting, negotiation, compensation etc.

Spirituality is a therapy to address the ills of modern management and is anticipated as an ideal method for giving trust and confidence among employer and employees.

Table-1

Some activities which help in developing spirituality and their related impacts

SL No.	Activities	Impact/Results
1	Yoga# and Postures	Relief from mental stress; Relaxation of body muscles; Addressing hypertension; Reduce blood pressure and related diseases; Keeps body, mind and spirit aligned
2	Pranayam	Keeps mind cool, calm and composed; Develops internalization of thought and helps in self-realization; Controls breaths and thus controls emotions; Reduces bodily ageing; Keeps mind free from bondage and burdens; Keeps respiratory system healthy
3	Meditation	Expands sphere of thought and imagination; develops self-realization; Keeps mind focused and concentrated; Develops memory by reducing unnecessary loads in mind
4	Introspection (swadhyay)	Ignite the inner potent; Develops honesty and integrity; Develops sense of purpose of life and living; Develops analytical mind; Develops trust, confidence and competence
5	Sadhana (spiritual endeavors for self discipline)	Eradicates misconceptions; Builds agility of mind; Develops 'trying' and 'never give-up' attitude; Makes people fearless and confident; Develop agility to change and flexibility towards acceptance of change
6	Service (Seva)	Develops selflessness and giving attitude; Develops connectedness by reducing ego states; Develops leadership qualities; Develops love and care attitude; Develops self-respect and sense of purposeful life
7	Sanyam	Develops prosperity; Make people punctual; Develops closeness to nature; Develops openness and transparency; Develops consciousness towards wise use of resources and time; Develops judgmental and logical mindset to accept or to reject things

Literally Yoga means conjunction, confluence. It is unification of the inner self with the supreme divine consciousness. In the Gita, Lord Krishna has described Yoga as an Art of doing things skillfully. In the Gita, yoga is described in three forms:-

- Bhakti Yoga – Action with pure devotion, sacrifice of Ego
- Karma Yogaa – Actions without attachment to results and
- Gyana Yoja – Action with Prudent Knowledge of the action

Source: Compiled by the Authors

Table-2
Rishi Patanjali's Asthang Yoga (Raja Yoga)

Yam	Niyam	Asana	Pranayam	Pratyahara	Dharana	Dhyan	Samadhi
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
It has five branches - Ahimsa (non-violence), Satya (truthfulness), Brahmacharya (Preservance the vital energy of body), Asthaya (limiting the requirement), Aparigraha (not becoming greedy to grab other's belonging); Practicing five things combined in thought, speech and action known as Yam	It has five branches – Souch (cleanness of body, mind and speech), Santosh (being satisfied), Taap (accepting the pain of uncomfartability and difficulty), Swadhyay (study of own actions to know the self), Ishwar Pranidhan (feeling the close association with divine energy); Practicing five things combinely known as Niyam	There are 32 Asanas named after forest animals, trees etc.; they are done in stand-ing position, sitting position, sleeping position; Bhujangasan, Vrikshyasan, Parvat-asan, Shirs-asan, Hala-asan, Machhy-asan, Vajra-asan are some of the asanas.	It is Prana + Aayam, means control of the breath (the life energy). It consists of various breathing exercises meant to deep inhale, holding and controlling the breath. Vramari, Anulom-Vilom (Nadi-sodhan), Vastrika, Kapalvati, Vayu Pranayam, Ujjai, Shithli karan are some of the exercises to cite.	It is Prati+Ahara, means controlling desire of the senses and internalizing the needs of sense organs (Eye, Ear, Nose, Tongue and Skin)	It is concentrating of mind on one selected things which we want to keep, hold and contain	It is continuous concentration on any aspect of Dharana. In other words, when we constantly and continuously concentrate on one selected thing, it is called Dhyan. It is single mindedness on one aspect.	Keeping the mind quietly, calmly, in constant , continuous and concentrated way on a single aspect is Samadhi

Note:

1. The first four aspects are related to external bodily postures and practices and the subsequent four aspects are related to internal body, mind and thought
2. Any of the eight can be practiced without sense of sequence
3. The more we progress from left to right, the more we become internalized

Source: Compiled by the Authors

Conclusion

More precisely, Spirituality recognizes human being as very special. It describes every individual as unique, made to make meaningful contribution not only for his own but for the world at large without bringing any loss to or any pain to anyone or anything.

Spirituality is based on the belief that every individual continuously seeks for acquiring a meaningful engagement in their work assignment.

Spirituality offers a guiding plan for governing both personal and professional life. It is easy to say but not really that easy to segregate personal attitude from professional attitude of a person. Hence, a person with spiritual bent of mind carries the same to his work-place too.

Spirituality commands to believe that for every problem there is a solution. For every bad event, there is always a way to come out. Thereby, spiritual person accepts things as they come and try to put his best to improve the situation.

Spirituality advocates a feeling of interconnectedness with a common understanding. It is a kind of recognition that every professional is having an inner self which is nourished through a meaningful work in the context of community setting. An important dimension of spirituality is sense of community which attributes to living in harmony with each other resulting in mutual growth and overall satisfaction.

Therefore, adoption of spiritual aspects in an organization makes the job of management

smart, smooth, effective and value adding.

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He has keen interest towards writing papers and has submitted and presented a number of HR and technical papers in various conferences, journals etc.

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He is fond of writing. 'Individual Social Responsibility – the underpinning force for Corporate Social Responsibility' (2012), 'Role of Quality education in Nation Building' (2014), 'Business Ethics and Corporate Governance – Role of HR' (2020), 'Healthy Living – the medium of blissful life' (2020), 'Fuel conservation is fuel saving' (2020) are some of his writings published in various books and magazines.

Situational Leadership- A Brahmastra



By **Rashmi Kanyal**,
CM(HRD), CO

We often come across the term "Leadership" in our professional life. Leadership brings different pictures & views in ur mind. To me, Leadership is a way of life and leaders help in achieving business results through developing teams that drive results and also taking right decisions at the right time.

Famous quote by Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard - "Effective leaders need to be flexible and must adapt themselves according to the situaion." This is the fundamental idea behind this great concept and based on this statement, they created Situational Leadership Theory or Model.

Leadership behaviour can be two types – regulating & nurturing. Regulating behaviour is one-way communication, structured, has control and supervisory characterstics. Nurturing behaviour is a two-way communication where the person listens, praise and facilitate. Further, subordinate also

exhibit behaviours based two parameters – Competency level & motivation level. These two parameters can be called as Maturity Levels of the employee. Based on these maturity levels & leadership behaviour types, various leadeships styles are developed which can be applied under different situations leading to what we call as **Sitautional Leadership**.

In this article, we understand Situational Leadership, various types of Situational Leadership, subordinate development stages and its practical application on one's professional as well as personal life.

Situational leadership can thus be stated as the guiding tool which enable us to manage or handle any situation or task in life smoothly. It is very flexible and adapts to the people's behaviour and Organisational needs. It basicaly has two component – Leadership behvaiour & Subordinate Matuirty Level of competency & motivation which vary with person and the task assignment. The four types of leadership styles are :

1. Directing Leadership – Maturity Level (Low competency high motivation)
2. Supporting Leadership – Maturity Level (Low competency low motivation)

3. Consulting Leadership – Maturity Level (High competency low motivation)
4. Delegating Leadership – Maturity Level (High competency high motivation)

SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP STYLES

DELEGATING STYLE HIGH MOTIVATION HIGH COMPETENCE	DIRECTIVE STYLE LOW COMPETENCE HIGH MOTIVATION
CONSULTING STYLE LOW MOTIVATION HIGH COMPETENCE	SUPPORTIVE STYLE LOW COMPETENCE LOW MOTIVATION

This situational model is one the best model to manage people under any situation.

Application of Situational Leadership at Professional Front

Directive style of leadership can be experienced by a person when one start his/her career. The person is assigned to a manager who provides step-by step guidance and instruction about the task given. In this case, the person's motivation level is high though his competency is low. He is very eager to understand the task and tries to learn new things at his job. In such cases, the manager/leaders has to explain him the job role, what to do and what not to do and closely monitor his performance. This style is instrumental to the success and carrer growth of the person.

Once you start to understand the job as you move ahead in your career, your competency level may increase from low to moderate and you may face some problems in life as a result of which you lack motivation; in such a senario the leader has to understand the situation, engages in two-way communications, listens him, facilitates and support him in making right decisions. This is Supportive style of Leadership.

You have started performing high and you have become competent & experienced but during the COVID pandemic situation, you may require mental support and coaching. The leader has to show consulting type of leadership style in which he provides a great deal of direction and also listens to the subordinate and take his ideas and suggestions.

Once the person has gained sufficient knowledge and skills and is also able to handle his assignment very well, the leader should delegate the task and discuss the road map and the targets and let him handle the job independently. The micromanagement decisions is left to the subordinate. This helps leader in deleveloping his team and achieving his targets. Here the leader show delegating sytle of leadership.

In today's fast changing business dyamics, competitive maket, COVID like disruptions, organisations need leaders who understand these variables and manages people very well through these siutational styles of leadership. The key to success for any leader is to know when to use each style.

Asuccessful leadershould develop the following charaterstics of Situational Leadership : **(ABCD Rule)**

1. **Active Listening** - Leader must leverage their active listening skills to diagonse the siutations and take right decisions
2. **Be Flexible** - Leader should have flexible with changing needs of team, task and organisation
3. **Clear direction** – Leader should provide clear direction to his team and define clear roles and responsibilites.
4. **Develop Trust** – Leader should engage in behaviours that provide opportunities for subordinates to share their thoughts & ideas and coach them whenever they need support.

Application of Situational Leadership at Personal Front

Situation leadership styles also help us in our

role as parent in understanding our children very well. When the child is small say from the age 2 to 4 years, the child does not have the capability to understand his environment and we need to guide him, talk to him, tell him what to do, what not to do, how to do at each and every step. As he grows bigger at the age of 5 to 10 years, he starts learning to manage himself, going to school, we provide him support and listen to his questions and try to make him understand with answers. Once he grows and becomes a teenager, more competent to handle himself, we should be more like a coach where we listen and facilitate his decisions and try to install the confidence to face the challenges of life and as he moves out of school we should discuss the roadmap and let him make his own decisions. Once the

Trust and confidence develops in the child, the child is ready to fly and face the world.

Developing Effective Leaders

Organisations are run through effective leaders and hence it is important that we inculcate the culture of developing subordinates for talent pipeline and succession planning.

Situational Leadership style effectively helps in developing leaders through assigning task and prioritizing jobs, analysing the readiness and maturity level of the subordinate and applying appropriate leadership style. Employees with high level of maturity are not micromanaged while those requiring more supervision are guided for task completion and meeting targets.

This model helps Leaders in developing teams which ultimately drive business results.

(This article is the assimilation of the class thoughts & discussions learnt during SAKSHAM Leadership course. I thank IIM Trichy Professors specially Prof Dr. Papri Nath, my training colleagues and seniors who gave me the opportunity to attend this training program)

Oil's Well



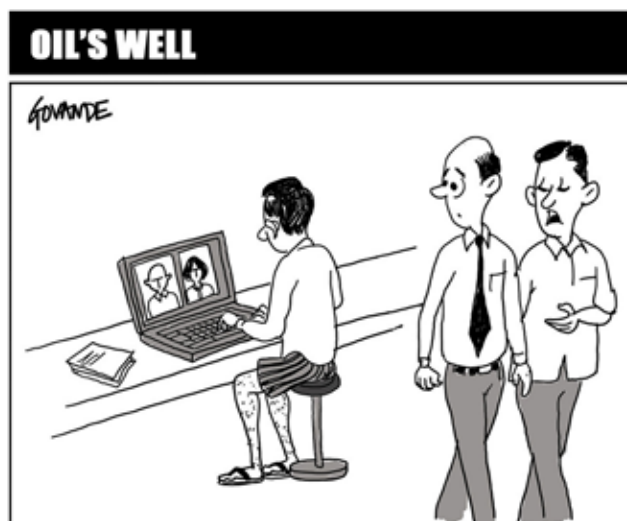
By **Chaitanya Govande**, BPCL
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Do you want to be the one to tell Boss that he has been on MUTE for the past one hour?



No, Free Fuel is not a part of your package...



As you can see, some of them are yet to come out of the Work-from-home mode...

Talent Experience – Either You Shape It or It Shapes You



By **Amit Sharma**,
Chief HR Officer,
Volvo Group India

An experience is defined as an encounter, an event that you come in contact with, react to, face up to, and remember. Focusing on the Talent Experience is a significant competitive advantage, as I firmly believe that the employees are the most powerful employer brand ambassadors. Talent experience is a broader concept over employee experience as it even includes the time while the employee is just a candidate and it continues even after the employee's exit and becomes an organizational alumnus. Talent experience begins when a candidate / potential employee interacts with the organization through the processes of how a job is found and applied for and continues lifelong thereafter.

Most of the organizations ignore the aspect of talent engagement during the pre-joining phase and post an employee exits. How easy or difficult it is to navigate through the careers page, application process, interview process, candidate experience – all these give a glimpse of the organizational culture and it creates a perception in the candidate's mind of the organization as well as its brand. This perception then starts to spread in the talent market influencing the decision of the talent to either consider the organization for the next move or give it a pass. On the other end of the spectrum, what the ex-employee speaks about the organization has a larger influence on the potential candidates as well as in shaping the talent market perspective on the organization. Connect with the alumni also makes business reasoning as the ex-employee is also a consumer and many times, unfavorable employee experience leads to unfavorable consumer behaviors – after all, why should someone buy a product of an organization where the experience was awful!

An organisation needs to consider a number of factors that shape the talent experience, which includes organization's ways of working, culture, interactions, relationships within the team and with the manager, working environment, career development & learning opportunities, processes & tools, social platforms the employee uses to collaborate on various work-related activities, etc. During this pandemic, we have also experienced that the possibility to engage in and support a company's societal engagement becomes increasingly important and contributes to the overall talent experience.

Starting point of defining an organization's talent experience is clear articulation of its People & Culture Strategy. The People & Culture Strategy goes beyond just functional HR Strategy and is owned and executed by everyone in the organization; it is its Workforce Strategy, which every leader, every function, every business and every employee should own. It goes beyond the traditional HR areas of Talent Acquisition, Talent Management, Employee Engagement, Employee Relations, Capability Development, Total Rewards, etc. and spotlights on defining what kind of workforce the organization needs to meet its strategic business objectives; it defines the key capabilities, mindsets & behaviours of the required workforce. E.g. at Volvo Group, Our People & Culture Strategy focuses on our employees being:

- **Truly Connected**

By collaborating without boundaries, both within and outside the Group, taking the end-to end perspective, becoming the center of the ecosystem. When they feel included and connect the purpose and direction of the company to their own context, organization unleashes their full potential.

- **Leading the Way**

The leadership reflects the business ambitions and is rooted in the culture. Trust, passion and empowerment are key. Employees must all take the lead by using

empowerment to act, holding themselves accountable and delivering on the promises.

- **Sustainable for Real**

Through business-driven lifelong learning and constant development, they grow together. They value and encourage different perspectives and strive for an inclusive and sustainable future; for people, society, customers and business.

- **In Constant Motion**

Change is permanent and accelerating. Employees must remain curious and constantly evolve to stay ahead. They aim for flexibility and simplicity in all they do. Once the People & Culture Strategy is articulated, it then serves as the true north compass towards all the workforce processes and the talent experience is an offshoot of the same.

Organizations should continuously focus and monitor the talent experience throughout the various stages of talent's lifecycle, driven by the following aspects:

- Connecting the external talent with the Organizational Purpose, Vision & Mission, communicating the authentic Employer Value Proposition, Leveraging partnerships with universities, sharing Corporate Social Responsibility practices and Sustainability Goals.
- Ensuring positive experience from the time the potential employees decide to apply for jobs, simplified application process, getting interviewed through a fair & unbiased process, respectful interview experience and engaging onboarding process.
- Leaders and managers play a critical role in building the competencies of their team members. Talent Management has to be an integral part of an overall People Plan, enabling fact-based decisions by aligning competence with business strategies and needs, with the right balance of organizational focus and individual aspirations. Major steps towards this are:

- o Identifying Business priorities and plans
 - o Understanding impact on competence and competence gaps (current as well future, including supply constraints)
 - o Identifying the people & competence shift based on business needs
 - o Identifying the Tailwinds and Headwinds
 - o Defining / monitoring development plans to bridge critical gaps (restructure, reduce, buy, partner up with...)
 - Inclusion is the fundamental bedrock of high impact talent experience. Policies around inclusion & diversity; workplace flexibility basis various life stages of an employee; respectful behavior towards all - irrespective of background, hierarchy, gender, region, color, etc.; strong redressal channels and creating adequate awareness around them; using gender neutral tones in job descriptions, job postings and career sites are the critical ingredients. Ensuring that the organization is free conscious & unconscious biases and being an equal opportunity employer defines this experience.
 - Culture is the key element towards ensuring high quality talent experience, as it is the culture that either makes the talent stick or leave the organization. Culture either makes a person comfortable or causes discomfort. It's the culture that makes or breaks the organizational bond of the employee. Outstanding talent experience is about building a culture of care by being responsible not only to the employees but also to the society, culture of inclusion where everyone is valued irrespective of who you are, culture that promotes innovation where people's ideas matter, culture of continuous listening through our employee pulse surveys and frequent performance touchpoints, culture of wellbeing where work life balance and psychological safe work environment are valued, culture of real time recognition, and culture of growth wherein everyone is empowered to design their learning / career paths.
 - Establishing a physical office environment which fosters dialogue, innovation, development and generates positive energy nurtures positive talent experience at the workplace. And not to forget the importance of safety at workplace along with hygienic working environment.
 - Reflecting upon the experiences of the employees who have chosen to leave the organization and taking actions on that feedback continuously improves the talent experience. Way an employee is treated during the notice period, the exit processes, rehire program, employee referrals from ex-employees and keeping a connect with the alumni forms the core here.
- Having looked at the above aspects, we need to understand that as the employees' needs and aspirations are changing and that the organizations are working in a very dynamic environment, there are certain aspects which will define the talent experience going forward. Organizational need to be adaptable, find new ways of working, have speed in actions and innovate consistently. Some of the significant dimensions towards this are:
- Shedding the tyranny of OR and embracing the power of AND. It's no longer about Either Or; it's about ensuring Both e.g. You & I, Perform & Transform, Common & Unique, Global & Local, Centralized & Decentralized, Collective fairness & Individual expectations and recognition, Daily operations & Innovation, Human & Technology, Legacy & Future, etc.
 - Moving from Silos to providing End-to-end perspectives. Organizations are generally structured on the concept of Differentiation & Integration; and this integration happens at the topmost levels only. Employees working in the functions/ departments have only a siloed view of the picture and don't get to see the full picture. So organizations that deliver great talent experience are the ones who are able to provide this End-to-End perspective to the employees, which helps them develop strategic thinking and wholistic business outlook.

- Aspirational Talent is not satisfied by just solving a given task. They don't look at the job as a daily chore or activity; they want to connect with the higher purpose behind what they are supposed to do. High impact talent experience is about helping them know how they are contributing to this purpose and ensuring alignment of their purpose with the organizational purpose.
 - Moving from Internal focus to more Collaboration focus - both internal and external is another imperative towards sustainable talent experience. How much organizations are open to new ideas, ideas from external world, ideas from other fields, working with partners (internal and external) provides that breadth to the talent, which helps them grow personally as well professionally.
 - Related aspect is moving from working with Hierarchies to working with Networks to leverage the competence and deliver results. Is the organization obsessed with following the hierarchy in all working aspects or is there a flexibility and culture where a talent can reach out to anyone towards making an initiative a success? Many times, hierarchies kill some brilliant ideas, or they are never taken up, thus causing disengagement in the talent.
 - Ensuring Accountability and providing empowerment is an important aspect of outstanding talent experience. Many organizations have the culture of command and control, which leads to employees feeling stifled, micro-managed, not valued for their intellect and being considered as just another resource. Human being is not a resource but is boundless bundle of potential and energy. Providing them appropriate empowerment, along with ensuring a sense of accountability is critical towards high quality talent experience.
 - Organizations create policies & processes to manage various situations. In this VUCA world, situations are dynamic; new situations keep emerging and needs of the employees too evolve and change. But unfortunately, in organizations the policies and processes don't keep pace with the changing times and organizations continue to be the 'slaves' of the processes & policies. To provide customized and individualized Talent Experience, organizations need to be guided by Principles over being governed by extensive processes.
 - "One person, One position" mindset is another bane against wholistic talent experience. Today's workforce aspires for multi-dimensional, flexible work arrangements. They need to see how other cogs in the wheel are fitted. Hence organizations need to provide them with broader exposure.
 - How many times, when we conceive a new initiative and come up with the new idea, have heard this term from those who are in the organization since long, "We have always done this way" or "This is how it always happens here". Such a culture can never breed innovation and brings stagnation. Great talent experience fosters on curiosity and constant growth. Hence organizations, that intend to shape great talent experience, are completely open to new and varied perspectives and ideas.
 - Gone are the days when there used to pre-defined career paths and career- ladders for the employees! Current times are of empowering the employees to form their own career journeys. It's about guiding them towards what it takes to succeed in various different roles and letting them choose their paths and journeys. This is a hallmark of customized talent experience.
- HR team should be on a mission towards making every touchpoint of the talent much simpler and empower them through a workplace friendly environment and creating the safe space for efficient interactions at each step of the employee lifecycle.
- Change is permanent and accelerating; Companies need innovation to survive; People are the source of innovation; people move the

world. When Employees win, Customers win, and when Customers win, the Organization succeeds.

Talent Experience is something which is taking place every moment, its organizational choice that it either shapes it basis what it wants or allows itself to be shaped by the experience! Choice is yours ...

About the Author

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In a career spanning more than 2 decades, he has worked across various HR roles with top of the line organizations, in diverse set of industries such as Indian Oil, Johnson & Johnson and Philips.

With focus on Business HR, his experience spans across Talent Acquisition & Management, Organizational Development & Culture, Capability Building and Employee Relations.

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Amit has received various internal and external recognitions for his work in HR and has been speaking on HR topics in various forums. He is Member of the Academic Council of KiiT University, Bhubaneswar and Member of Board of Studies of LM Thapar School of Management, Mohali. He is also Visiting Faculty at Symbiosis Institute of Business Management, Pune.

He has earlier been the Vice President of the National HRD Network, Bangalore Chapter. Currently, he is Member of CII's National Committee on Industrial Relations.

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Can Compassion and Executive Presence Coexist?



By **Rashmi Datt**
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decisiveness and dignity; the ability to get results.

Executive presence is something that is desired, yet it has an elusive and mysterious quality to it.

What Exactly is Executive Presence?

It has been variously described as:

Showing up as ready for your next promotion.

The missing link between MERIT and SUCCESS.

'It factor,' a heady combination of confidence, poise, and authenticity that convinces the stakeholders they are in the presence of someone who's going places.

Executive presence is not just a measure of performance. You have reached a certain level, so competence and functional expertise are assumed. It is said to be a measure of image: whether you signal to others that you 'have what it takes', that you are leadership material.

Jack Welch, the well known earlier chairman and CEO of General Electric said Executive Presence was like a unique fingerprint- and included communicating confidently and clearly, and essential to advance your career.

From the definitions and descriptions above, It creates an impression, doesn't it, that Executive Presence is about 'ME' – the ability to be in the center of the room without hogging all the attention; a general sense of poise, confidence,

But in reality Executive Presence is moving beyond the Self: it is the ability to simultaneously pay attention to all 3 factors: INNER (managing own agenda, as well as self-awareness- as a myriad of emotions do come up in interactions- anxiety, irritation, along with curiosity, courage and respect), OTHER (the reactions and emotions of the person/s you are with), and OUTER (the larger picture, the agenda).

Paying Attention to the INNER with Compassion

One of the spaces where Executive Presence is very much needed is when entering ZOUD (Zone of Uncomfortable Discussion).

It is an 'Uncomfortable Discussion' because there are likely to be emotions such as disappointment, frustration, anger, anxiety accompanying you.

If they simmer somewhere inside, unacknowledged, and they have the power to either derail the conversation, or cause the key issue to be side-stepped, or be so caught up with own needs that you are unable to pay attention to the other.

It is helpful to name the emotions, know they are legitimate, and welcome them. It enables

you to click through to learn what lies inside, rather than resisting them.

You fully feel the pain so that you can heal. You open your heart to it, accept it without wallowing in the emotions. Listening to your emotions will help you to make the necessary changes, instead of getting angry with yourself and not thriving.

And this requires first of all, to be compassionate with yourself. As John Steinbeck American author and the 1962 Nobel Prize winner in Literature said: "If we could learn to like ourselves, even a little, maybe our cruelties and angers might melt away."

Being Compassionate with Other

Here are 3 suggestions in dealing with ZOUD :

1. Make it about 'YOU and me' instead of 'MY thoughts and feelings'.

Instead of saying 'I have some challenges at work, which I want to discuss with you'; say: 'I realize I'm missing some dots, can we spend some time talking about the big picture, so that I can support you better in the way we work together'.

2. Keep sight of the big picture: it will help you to give in to smaller less important issues. Sometimes we get so caught up with 'drawing boundaries' OR 'stating our needs' that we forget to bring flexibility with lower priority items.

3. Challenge yourself to become a ninja of 'Dealing with angry resistance through calm persistence'.

Here is an example of how a CEO was able to bring about a change in his manager by using compassion.

The CEO was getting impatient with one of his managers (lets call him Sanjay). Sanjay was leading the meeting, was not keeping track of time, kept dwelling into micro-details, and going on tangents. And this was also the way he tackled his job. The CEO had given exasperated feedback to Sanjay about this before; somehow it just didn't sink in.

Then the CEO changed track. With a burst of inspiration he let go of irritation, and bringing compassion, he said: 'Sanjay, I know you are keeping an eye on time vis-à-vis the agenda; and tracking of the big picture. And you are focusing on the frogs to eat vs the easier jobs you enjoy and are comfortable with.'

Something clicked—an inner programming between the two changed; and Sanjay's eyes sparkled. The meeting took a different tone. Sanjay was actually able to shift his behaviour, move on to the bigger picture and keep a sharper track of time.

Being 'present' helps you find flexibility in your style. And to acknowledge when an emotion (like anger or impatience) is becoming dysfunctional. Self-awareness and compassion provides flexibility from your rigid stances; which we tend to take up in times of stress.

'Why should I sugarcoat if I see nothing admirable?' is a common question. American psychiatrist Theodore Isaac Rubin answers it with, 'Kindness is more important than wisdom, and the recognition of this is the beginning of wisdom.' It is our arrogance and rigidity that makes us assume that there is no ability in another individual.

This helps us to move from 'The Love of Power' to the 'Power of Love'

The Importance of Centering Ourselves

How to access our compassion and connectedness with the other when our thoughts and energies are scattered ? we feel impatience when there is a conflict, anxious when we are in a dilemma 'should I speak or not'; we are frazzled with mind chatter which shatter our sense of inner focus and attention.

What we need to do is to center ourselves.

If you were asked to locate 'self' in your body, where would you do it? Do you know that the physical center (of gravity) of our body in a standing posture, is typically about 10 cm lower than the navel, near the top of the hip bones.

Centering ourselves can also mean finding the embodied center.

In Japan, the center is 'seika-no-itten', the one point, the still point, the intersection of mind and body.

Being centered means:

- Being present to the self: living here, living now, a point-to-point sensory contact with reality;
- Efficient use of human energy;
- Taking action from a place of calm;
- Being self-reliant: Self-sufficiency and independence grows.

It means developing Balance, Resilience, Insight, Empathy.

'Centered Boss' vs 'Boss-Centered'

I was speaking to a colleague –whom I had met only a few times; and about 25 minutes into the conversation, I looked discreetly at my watch.

We had not planned a closing time to our meeting, though I had mentally set it at half-hour.

He immediately said: 'Oh, you have to go?'

He had followed my eye movement to look at my watch- that too over a video call!

You have met these people, who I call the 'Centered Boss', who are closely tuned into the other.

Eg, they take one look at you, and say:

'You look tired today. Go home early and get rest'.

Or 'I know you are going through a tough time, its not easy, but its important we finish XY by tomorrow'.

The opposite is 'Boss Centered' Individual who are so task focused, that the human-connection gets lost.

The focus of the latter becomes 'my agenda', and the anxiety to achieve it is so strong that it hijacks the capacity to see the other. One

outcome is pushiness; erasing the needs of others, resistance, aggressiveness, imposing the self on others.

But the 'Centered Boss' simultaneously keeps track of : Inner (own feelings, needs, expectations), Other (others' body language, expressions) and Outer (the agenda).

Compassion at the Time of the Pandemic

In conclusion, how are these ideas applicable to the current crisis of the pandemic, and the accompanying stress and ambiguity?

The Pandemic has been a time of self-reflection for many of us, and has highlighted how we interact with each other, what our priorities are, and how we communicate with our team during a crisis.

It has raised the important question: How do you reassure them that you are there for them, connect with compassion, and yet expect performance? Can you do both?

As leaders search for answers as to how to be empathetic, authentic and still conduct business, we can pay attention to the three areas mentioned in this article:

1. Inner: What is happening inside us? If we don't acknowledge the huge anxiety inside, it is likely to 'escape' in the form of freeze, flight or fight reactions. Some leaders believe we have to put on a brave front of 'positivity' and 'confidence'.

The more we know ourselves, the more we can regulate our responses, and choose that we present – that of an authentic, leader who doesn't know the answers, but who has the strength and wisdom to work out things together.

2. Other: to be in tune with the thoughts, feelings and behaviours of my team members.

3. Outer: What are the systems and structures we as an organization are putting in place to support and take care of our employees.

Next Normal of Talent Acquisition



By **Sumit Rampal**,

Talent Acquisition, Assistant Manager - HR, HPCL

ABSTRACT

With the rise of Covid-19 in the year 2020, we faced several unprecedented changes in such a short span that otherwise would have taken decades. Covid-19 is not just a health crisis of vast potential but it is also a societal crisis, which has uprooted our lives. In addition, it is continuously threatening the wellbeing of our family members, friends and colleagues. Business is under immense pressure to sustain and deliver results. Immediate action is critical to avoid further fallout.

All across the globe, economies are restructuring, business models are innovating, employees are showing resilience and individuals are supporting each other

to cope with these unprecedented changes. Indeed, this "Next Normal" is going to stay for long. This Next Normal is the beginning of an era wherein existing models will recast themselves and deliver long-term advantage. Talent Acquisition is no exception, the constraints posed by these challenging times have led this function continuously adapt as per situational demands.

Through this article, we have identified a dimensional framework for setting the futuristic path of the Talent Acquisition cycle, various initiatives that were undertaken in response to COVID 19 to make the hiring and selection process seamless and their impact on the organization.

Context

Covid-19 pandemic has brought unprecedented and challenging times in which all of us are adapting to the New Normal. Organizations are facing uncertainty and challenges of unparalleled proportions and the Talent Acquisition function in Human Resource Management also witnesses it

Talent Acquisition(TA) is a primary process in any organization. It is highly complex and process driven exercise that involves multiple stakeholders (i.e. applicants, selection committee, psychologists, HR facilitators, Subject Matter Experts), scrutiny & validation of applications, multi-level interactions with future talent pool through various modes and finally, integration and assimilation of new hires into the organization. With COVID-19, the current ways and norms of the hiring processes are under constant pressure and

face humungous challenges and. Will these roadblocks lead the TA team continue its working in the legacy way or will this be tipping point where in the TA as a function will adapt a new Avtaar for the times to come. Now, it is critical to assess the situation continuously, plan and implement the Next Normal in hiring and selection to emerge stronger and better prepared for adaptation to the New Normal

NEXT NORMAL

Next Normalⁱⁱ is the term first used by *Mckinseyⁱⁱⁱ* with an assumption that there is an after and before, the period before COVID-19 and after. COVID-19 is not the first pandemic the human race is witnessing, but the uncertainty, speed of this infection and the potential of its return in the form of multiple waves is the one, which demands a different descriptor - the "next normal". Why it has to be Next Normal & not the New Normal? If we compare 'New' vs

‘Next’, New is like a current change, present one, something that is static while Next is like an ongoing and complex process, which will modify and adopts as per the changing needs. Considering the situation we all are in, we need a continuous forward looking approach that can reform itself as per the needs in these upcoming times.

In this article, we propose a three dimensional framework, the challenges faced by Talent Acquisition and initiatives that can be implemented under each of the three dimensions.

Catalyst for Change : The Roadblocks

With the surge of Covid-19 last year, Talent Acquisition faced several impediments such as the inability to conduct the selection process physically (Group Task & Interview), geographical movement restrictions leading to inability to visit campus for conducting the recruitment drives,. All these factors are potential threat to Recruitment Cycle and led to deferment of hiring cycle or permanent closure of active positions

The prospective candidates also faced fear and anxiety, they had the risk of losing dream job due to uncertain environment. Therefore because of these hurdles, desired manpower could not be provided to business for smooth operations... This will have a huge impact on organization brand and candidates' mindset who are considering HPCL as a preferred employer.

Re-Engineering Recruitment

At the peak of the crisis when everything was uncertain, things were not in order at global and national level, and no one was able to predict the next outcome - we in Talent Acquisition, tried to address the problem and identified factors that can navigate us

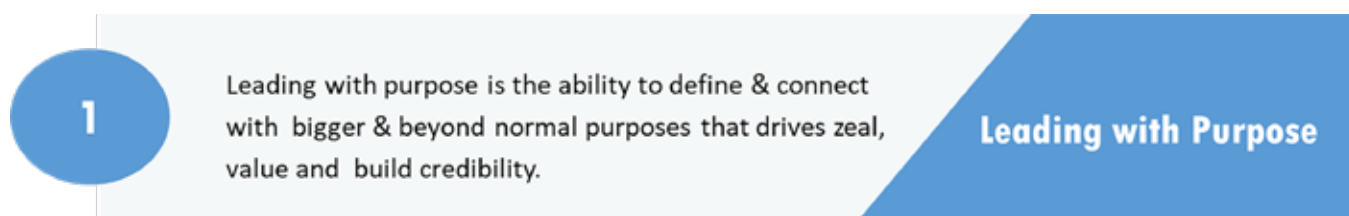


Figure 1: Three Dimensional Approach

through this crisis. With the current challenges and evolving dimensions, our traditional approaches and methodologies were found unsuitable in sustainable for long and hence need to reengineer. The starting point here is the three-dimensional framework: **Lead with Purpose, Resilience & Agility** (Figure 1).

We have reviewed and studied various contributing factors and other models, but the above-proposed model is more suitable and aligned with our Talent Acquisition strategy and philosophy. If implemented successfully, this model carries the potential to transform the existing weaknesses of the system to strengths and threat to an opportunity.

Each of the dimensions are fluidic and interlinked with each other. Initiatives designed under one dimension are also contributing in other dimensions and overall contribute towards the outcome. Observing the same in silos is not possible and considering this, we have designed the detailed roadmap & strategy in and around these dimensions. Detailed definition of each of the dimensions is shown below (Figure 2).



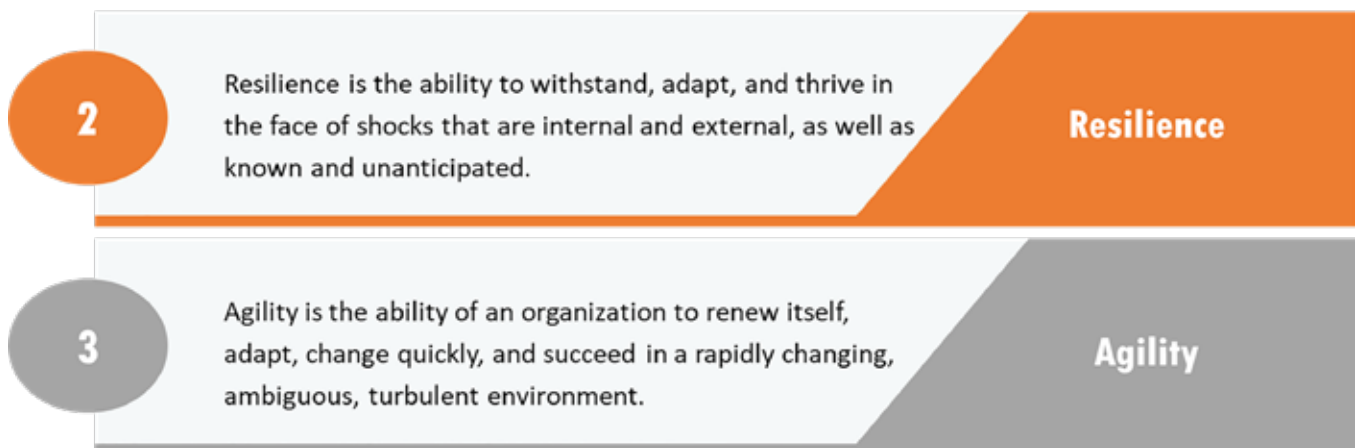


Figure 2: Talent Acquisition Next Normal – A Three Dimensional Framework

Creating Possibilities : Innovating & Experimenting

As we navigate through the challenges posed by COVID-19, under each of the dimensions (mentioned above), we experimented with our existing processes and brought in new practices which will cater to our requirements (Figure 3).



Figure 3: Recruitment Initiatives

Leading with Purpose

In the testing times when everyone is anxious, frightened and insecure, it is very important for our leaders to set the path and provide a sense of purpose amongst all. One of the critical challenge for an organization today is to run smooth operations across all locations and we faced the same. To address this issue at HPCL, we tried to define the purpose i.e. 'the power of Why' to understand and align our actions with it. With this we put People first - as any organization possesses a Human Capital made of individuals be it internal stakeholders, external stakeholders, customers etc.

The ultimate objectives of Talent Acquisition is to create a brand image of organization to

attract talent, to provide manpower to business verticals, fill critical vacancies due to changing business needs and integrate new hires into the ethos of the organization. In addition, a sense of pride, social security and emotional connect is associated with recruitment of esteemed Public Sector Enterprises. At the time of crisis, when job losses and uncertainties are already at peak, recruitment in Public Sector Enterprises provides a ray of hope and equal opportunity to all.

Therefore, considering the overall value created by Recruitment, how many lives it is going to touch and influence on business decisions, we decided to remodel our drives despite of multiple challenges and unpredictability. That decision enables us in addressing business needs by filling all the critical vacancies, and projecting an organization synonymous with stability & credibility that provides opportunity to new talent in difficult times. We also addresses the fears and anxiety of applicants through various communication channels related to recruitment process. In FY 20-21, HPCL hired more than 300 new officers and not even a single advertised position was deferred or cancelled in-between due to COVID-19 pandemic.

Resilience

Resilience^{iv} is the ability to withstand, adapt, and thrive in the face of shocks that are internal and external, as well as known and unanticipated.

As per existing practice, a centralized team managed both strategical and operational activities of the Talent Acquisition process. Post COVID-19, the same models were not feasible due to various constraints like travelling restrictions, social distancing, geographical spread of talent pool, different situations in each states etc. To continue our recruitment cycle, we modified our processes and carried out activities as planned without any major challenges. The processes and new initiatives, which were experimented, are mentioned below.

➤ **Re-skill, Re-organized & Re-energized:**

As situation demands, evolution was the only solution. We shifted our processes from Centralized to decentralized locations depending upon the complexity, replicability, strategic decision-making process etc. We reskilled our employees at decentralized locations and increased their competency in Recruitment areas by conducting knowledge transfer sessions and hands-on sessions. In addition, whole team worked in a synchronous motion during this time that ultimately re-energized our teams and provided a collaborative environment resulting in seamless completion of all the activities without any bottlenecks.

➤ **Flexible & Decentralized Onboarding:**

Joining-cum-onboarding was planned in a decentralized manner. Various factors like geographical proximity from hometown/ assignment location, inter/intra-state movement, Covid-19 surge, local guidelines etc. of new hires were considered. Individual one-on-one HR buddies were assigned to each of the new hires to address their fears, anxieties and provide a continuous support until they feel comfortable in organization.

Agility

Agility^v is the ability of an organization to renew itself, adapt, change quickly, and succeed in a rapidly changing, ambiguous, turbulent environment. It is combination of stability & dynamism. The more fast and nimble we will be in our processes and systems, the better

we can handle the situations like COVID-19. We have taken various strategic decisions and initiatives to build a robust system driven recruitment, :

➤ **Fast Decision Making / Approvals:**

Immediately post COVID-19, we studied the possible outcomes and recovery models in alignment with global studies. Accordingly, we modified our existing Talent Acquisition process swiftly and developed new ways to conduct the hiring process ; example conducting interviews through virtual platforms at HPCL locations, modifying shortlisting methodologies, decentralized & remote onboarding and joining.

➤ **Digital Transformation Push:**

Covid-19 has pushed digital transformation manifold globally and we leveraged various digital initiatives critical to the success of recruitment in current situation. We have developed an online documentation verification portal and currently all the documents are reviewed and verified through it, thereby limiting the presence of new hires physically. Also, in future with the help of this portal e-Employee folders will be created thereby limiting physical documentation.

In addition, we have moved to virtual platforms for conducting interviews wherein the selection committee and applicants will be connected using digital platform and evaluation and assessment is done virtually.

Further to continuous upgrade and increase our digital quotient, we are continuously taking 360-degree feedback from all our stakeholders' i.e. applicants, new hires, HR facilitators, selection committee, psychologists etc. for each of the stages.

➤ **Blessing in Disguise – My HP Dost**

Onboarding of new hires is highly sensitive and critical in nature especially in pandemic times. In order to address the apprehensions and anxiety amongst the new hires, we created a Covid19 Response Team and mapped each of the new hires with a single point of contact (SPOC's). COVID

appropriate behavior related guidelines were issued to all the new hires and with the help of the response team, regular support was provided to all the new hires related to accommodation, movement, e-passes, medical emergency etc.

Embracing the Change

With this article we have highlighted the innovative approach adopted by HPCL Talent Acquisition team to continue its zeal to hire the best talent of the nation.

However, the impact of COVID-19 is still unknown and unpredictable, one thing is certain that this is the Next Normal in Talent Acquisition and we have to embrace ourselves for continuous change. Each organization is different and working models differs from context to context. Some models may work for one and may not work for other organization. However, collectively our focus should be towards the preparing for the future. Towards the end, it can be said that the model defined above was able to deliver the desired results

in a short span of time. More incremental changes will help us evolve the Talent Acquisition Ecosystem into a more robust and agile function.

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MOSAIC: Unique endeavor of ONGC to stimulate the best out of PwD employees

By - Team ONGC



Since its inception, throughout its six-decades-long journey of exploration and production of oil & gas, ONGC has been a vocal advocate of embracing a diverse work environment. People, regardless of gender, region or disabilities, can blend and deliver their best to secure the nation's energy needs. While several ONGC initiatives and policy reforms have been structured to embrace gender mix and equality in the operations of the energy major, the Energy Maharatna has also been supporting initiatives that seek to eliminate disparities of all forms against the physically challenged by not only creating opportunities for livelihood but also instilling confidence for growth at par with everyone in the society.

1st ONGC Para Games

- Kicked-off on 19 December 2017
- Participated by 120 PwD Employees - 100 men and 20 women from 16 work centers across the country

Hence, to provide equal opportunities to PwDs, not only in employment but also in overall development of the Human Resources of the company, ONGC conceptualized annual sporting events to inspire, motivate and keep Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) engaged. ONGC became the first PSU to introduce the Para Games – series of field games for specially-abled employees across all PSUs – in December 2017. The unique HR initiative, organized only by ONGC, for the specially-abled has evoked huge enthusiasm among PwD employees through the years. The philosophy behind conducting the Para Games is to provide similar sporting avenues to specially-abled employees that the regular employees can avail.

MOSAIC – 2020

- Flag-off: 23 November 2020
- Total PwD employees in ONGC – 424
- Participants in MOSAIC 2020 - 246

In 2020, the nation got struck by the unprecedented havoc of the pandemic, disrupting normalcy across all sectors of business and life. Organizing the Para Games at that juncture became challenging. However, the undeterred Team HR of the National Oil Company came up with another unique initiative

to replace the Para Games and keep the spirit of the PwD employees high. While working remotely became the new normal amidst the pandemic restrictions, ONGC introduced MOSAIC 2020 to keep its employees engaged through virtual platform. MOSAIC 2020 is a series of online games for PwD employees from ONGC and ONGC Videsh Limited (OVL), which included engaging activities like quiz competition, extempore contest, poetry recitation contest, debate competition, poster-making competition (Digital Canvas) and Regard before you Discard (Best out of Raw Material).

Para Games & MOSAIC 2020

- Objective: Providing equal opportunities to PwDs, not only in Employment but also in overall development of the Human Resources of the company

Among the total 424 PwD employees of ONGC, MOSAIC 2020 witnessed the participation of 246 employees across the events – with 158 unique participants having registered in all events. Security Officer R Kartikeyan Iyer, with orthopedic disability, pictured MOSAIC as an “online festival amidst the gloomy days of the pandemic”. DGM (HR) Satyendra Kumar Sangwan, also with orthopedic disability, sketched the online games as one of the greatest way to get connected with the organization and colleagues; Captain Sangwan is a Kargil war hero as well.

In the midst of all odds and restrictions, ONGC energy soldiers continued displaying utmost commitment by walking extra miles to ensure steady operations even at the most remote bases. ONGC HR practices like MOSAIC 2020, Para Games, etc. stand out as a backbone to encourage, engage its employees and create an inclusive work culture, where PwD employees are inspired to engage with the mainstream and deliver productive outcomes smoothly.



The Table with the lady



By **Mr. Subhasri Hore**,
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It was a rainy monsoon evening in Mumbai. We were a group of 30 young officers gathered to present three key ideas that could change the course of our Lube Business for years to come. "Oh, so you are the only lady in the room! Congratulations for the wonderful idea on Logistics!", said The Chairman of our Corporation. The ideas were to be presented in front of the Chairman of Indian Oil Corporation Ltd.

Yes, this was back in 2016 when I was less than 1 year old in the Corporation. As a newly graduated Electrical Engineer, I had grand career aspirations. However, having completed the Induction Training, I was posted in a small Lube Blending Plant at Budge

Budge; somewhere in the outskirts of Kolkata. Staying alone for the first time in life, travelling three hours everyday from Kolkata to Budge Budge and more importantly working as a Maintenance Engineer in a factory run by two hundred men was not a roller coaster ride for me to start with.

The transition from hours of classroom lectures to hours of motor repair workshops; working on assignments with fellow students for hours to working on the DG set breakdown repair with fellow Electricians and mechanical service persons for hours had taken a toll on me. "What am I doing all this for?", I used to often wonder; "Is this the kind of work that I imagined for myself? "; such thoughts used to often linger at the back of my mind in the initial days of my Factory life. Our Plant-In-Charge and my first boss used to often tell me, "I know how you feel, but remember something- your ideas are always welcome here, this you will get to know with time"; and I did get to know that soon enough. Walking through the plant, being a part of the daily maintenance job, I used to notice certain redundancies in operation- eyes of a foreigner as they say.

I kept a note of all of those redundancies and started manifesting ideas to overcome them. I kept discussing those ideas, big and small with my boss and he encouraged me to implement them in the Plant. That year, due to installation of heavy duty motors in the pump, the electrical power demand had crossed the contractual demand limit with our utility provider; due to which we had to pay huge penalties. Thinking about this issue for hours, I came up with a unique solution where-in a power electronic smart Demand Controller shall be used to switch off the lesser priority electrical devices way before the demand actually rose to an alarming level. With the help of ladder logic and my knowledge in power electronics, I implemented the new Demand controller in the plant which aided in avoidance of any further penalties and helped us move one step towards a smartly operated Plant.

As I slowly progressed through my initial months in this Corporation, I gradually discovered the sense of duty that I inherently had within me. I realised the fact that I can definitely make a difference, big or small in lives of the people working in the Plant. The learning curve was gradually peaking when suddenly one day my boss called me in his Office. "You have been

nominated by HO for a Lube Transformational Project. You are in a part of the team that shall articulate a transformational idea to improve Lube Logistics for coming times". Thus started the journey-we worked tirelessly for hours, days and months and finally articulated the idea that transformed Lube Logistics.

It was a rainy monsoon evening in Mumbai. I was chosen by our team co-ordinator to present the Logistics idea before the Chairman of IOCL. We were just done with the presentations and the Chairman was interacting with the budding Engineers. "So, you are the only lady in the house tonight" he said. The interaction lasted for quite a few minutes. Little did I know that the interaction would change my life forever! With his ever charismatic personality, he entrusted me with huge power and responsibility to implement the ideas presented within six months. There are some moments that become memorable for years to come and there are some others that are etched deep in your heart forever. I would be ever grateful to my Corporation to give me the vast array of opportunities that made me believe in myself a bit more everytime I successfully achieved them.

Prosocial Emotions as a lever for Employee Engagement



By **Neelesh Khulbe**,
Chief General Manager
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Employee engagement refers to being psychologically involved in, connected to, and committed to getting one's jobs done. Engaged employees "experience a high level of connectivity with their work tasks" and work hard to accomplish their task-related goals.

Employee engagement is important because it drives performance and productivity. Based on a Gallup survey, business units with the highest levels of employee engagement have an 83% chance of performing above the company median; those with lowest employee engagement have only 17%.

In a nutshell, engaged employees work with passion and feel profound connection to their companies. On the other end of the spectrum, the disengaged employees vent

their unhappiness by undermining the efforts of the engaged employees.

Organizations across the globe having realised the importance of employee engagement have been taking lots of initiatives, committing several resources for addressing various levers of engagement. A Gallup survey finds that supporting the employees can practically eliminate active disengagement.

With the above background, the purpose of this article is to provide some practical and implementable behavioural support systems for enhancing employee engagement and for actively eliminating disengagement.

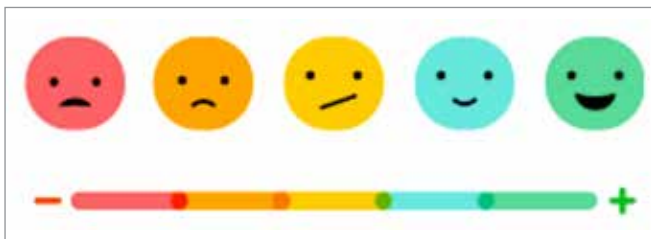
A case for Leveraging Prosocial Emotions

Our own personal happiness depends heavily on our relationships with others. By attending to the needs of other people, we enhance our own emotional well-being. The same is true within organizations; organizations (through their agents and/or through their culture)

that foster trust, cooperative relationships, psychological safety are more likely to have a satisfied, engaged, productive and innovative workforce, with greater employee loyalty and retention.

Drawing on research and real-world case studies, it is validated that honing these skills i.e. display of prosocial emotions at work by leaders promotes well-being within an organization. Managers and leaders who are high in empathy are known to have employees in their team who report being happier and take fewer sick leaves, display effective teamwork, trust, and resilience in the face of stress and are also good at problem solving. Psychological and neuroscientific roots of E.Q. make a strong case that these are not just “soft” skills, but core aspects of human nature that serve basic human needs as well as the bottom line.

Why do we have Emotions?



Most human emotions fall within the universal category of happiness, sadness, anger, surprise, fear and disgust. In contrast to the notion that each emotional state is an island, the studies find that there are smooth gradients of emotion between say, awe and peacefulness, horror and sadness. Emotions are not finite clusters because they are interconnected.

Readings from “Darwin and Emotion Expression” also give theoretical premises about human emotions and how Darwin’s thinking have saved decades of research on emotions. Darwin’s basic message was that emotions are evolved and adaptive. They not only originated as part of process that protected organisms but had an important communicative function.

In 1872, Darwin published “The expression of the Emotions in Man and Animal”, in which

he argued that all humans including animals, display emotions through remarkably similar behaviours. For Darwin, emotion had an evolutionary history that could be traced across cultures and species. Today, psychologists agree that certain emotions are universal, regardless of culture – anger, fear, surprise, disgust, happiness and sadness. While basic emotions remain same, they are subjected to “Display Rule” i.e. cognitive component is added to expression of basic emotions, which is largely due to cultural differentiations and conditioning and also due to job requirements e.g. cabin crew of airlines are expected to display certain behavior irrespective of their emotional state on a daily basis.

The building blocks of human emotions are psychological (what happens in body), mental (conscious experiences) and expressive (action and behavior). Many of us consider our bodies as somehow distinct from our minds or brains (Descartes, a French philosopher of 16th century belonged to this school of thought), biologically they are hard to distinguish.

Prosocial Emotions

David Desteno in his book emotional success, profiles the role of prosocial emotions (gratitude, compassion etc.) play in fomenting morally guided professional success which in turn helps organizations in having an engaged workforce.

The healthiest kind of emotions regulations does not require training with the thoughts, rather in accepting and embracing emotions with their values in prompting adaptive response supporting morality. Guiding success involves balancing emotional and cognitive input in different degree and different situation capitalize on positive events at work.

What are elements of Prosocial Emotions?

We’ve all wished for more willpower sometimes. If only at some point when we feel for allurements, we had more self-control, grit or the ability to delay gratification, we would be more persistent in pursuing our goals.

But there's a problem with this scenario: Willpower doesn't usually work. Willpower alone can't ensure that you'll delay gratification or resist temptation to achieve your long-term goals. It will fail and probably just when you need it most.

Cultivating positive emotions of gratitude, compassion and pride help us act in "prosocial" (kind and helpful) ways, it effortlessly brings out our better natures and encourages a long-term view of our present-day actions. These emotions have three advantages over reason, habits and willpower. Their strength doesn't wane even after repeated use, they can't be hijacked to favor immediate rewards and they improve our decisions in different areas of life at the same time.

Gratitude

Gratitude's benefits for self-control also extend to being willing to sacrifice to help others. In one experiment, some people were made to feel grateful by having an actor come to their aid in solving a problem which was rigged in the lab. After leaving the lab, participants were asked to help out another person with a project that involved doing hard problems. Those who had experienced gratitude volunteered to persevere with the problems longer, in spite of not being watched or paying a price for doing so.



Gratitude leads to perseverance in other contexts as well. For example, researcher found that doctors who were nudged toward feeling grateful were more willing to spend the time necessary for a proper reading of a patient file, which led to more accurate diagnoses. Other experiments have shown that gratitude helps

people be more future-oriented and exhibit more self-control. Unlike willpower, gratitude doesn't require much effort. Practise it as a leader and start with maintaining a gratitude diary - you will start enjoying the process right from day one.

Gratitude is a non-monetary way to support employee motivation by thanking people in organization who might not get acknowledged in routine. Lastly, don't force people to be grateful as it runs the risk of inauthentic expression of gratitude and may undermine the initiative itself.

Compassion

While gratitude stems from realizing that others have offered us something of value, compassion is caring about others without having received benefits. Interestingly, compassion also has a prosocial side that seems to help us prepare for a better future – especially if we can direct it toward our future self. Compassion also means taking the perspectives of others into consideration and not ousting one's own point of view.

So compassion makes us wise about difficult choices, More compassionate people also seem less reactive toward others and better at decision making having long term implications. While criticism impleads journey towards transformations, compassion accelerates this journey.

In the organization, when we came across certain behaviors requiring correction, empower the person in correcting or overcome that instead of punishment.

Pride

Though perhaps more nuanced than either compassion or gratitude, pride can also help us to achieve our goals as long as it doesn't turn to arrogance.

Pride is a natural response to successfully accomplishing your goals and being recognized by others for your abilities. When it is authentic, it signals to others that you are a capable and reliable person, which is how



it evolved in the first place as a way to raise one's status in a group. People with greater authentic pride tend to attain their goals and have higher self-control.

We can encourage authentic pride in ourselves and others by recognizing the importance of a growth mindset: the belief that we learn from our mistakes and that effort matters. Praising others who show effort rather than simply success can help protect them against hubris, as well.

Cultivating these states of Pride, Compassion and Gratitude in oneself increases our motivation to act in ways that benefit others, including our own future selves. So, stop

trying to push through your actions instead, start practicing gratitude, compassion and pride, you and those around you will be happy and feel satisfied.

In conclusion, honing and display of prosocial emotions at work by leaders and key influential persons at work will definitely act as lever for much enhanced employee engagement.

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Workforce Dynamics - Navigating Generational Diversity



By **Siddhi Srivastava**,
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In today's fast paced, competitive, dynamic world, four generations dominate the workspace: the Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials and Generation Z. They range in the age of 18-74 years. With an age gap of 50+ years, these workers bring distinct challenges, strengths, and expectations to the workplace. Identifying and adapting to these differences is the key to effectively managing a multi-generational staff.

Generations can be thought of as age cohorts, groups of individuals who share some similar experiences (rather than values) as a result of growing up at the same time. Five identified age cohorts with their generally accepted classifications are:

- **Traditionalists / Silent Generation – Born before 1946**
- **Baby Boomers – Born between 1946 – 1964**
- **Generation X – Born between 1965 – 1980**
- **Millennials – Born between 1981 – 1998**
- **Generation Z – Born after 1998**

The current workplace is occupied by the latter 4 cohorts and below-given are their characteristics and experiences.

Baby Boomers – Born from 1946 to 1964

India, during these same years, shifted to a socialist economic model under Indira Gandhi: nationalization of industries and public works. India signed a 20-year treaty of friendship with the Soviet Union; its first break from non-alignment. Wars around borders continued: Sino-Indian War, the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971, etc. The rupee was liberalized and underwent severe devaluation. A "Green Revolution" improved agricultural productivity

enabling India to feed its population self-sufficiently after two decades of food imports. Towards the end of the period, during the Indian Emergency of 1975-77, Gandhi was accused of corruption, rule by decree, suspended elections and civil liberties, and was removed from power.

For teens in India at this time, economic options were limited by the sluggish economy; personal options were heavily influenced by the family, group, or caste into which one was born. For those who were able, success was linked with getting out of India to obtain higher education and work in the U.K. or U.S. Also, the Indian Emergency left this generation with skepticism of political leaders.

Generation X – Born from 1965 to 1980

Teens in India saw Indira Gandhi killed by her bodyguards and succeeded by her son Rajiv Gandhi, who instituted a number of important reforms: loosened business regulations, and lowered restrictions on foreign investment/imports. He also led the country into a major expansion of the telecommunications industry and information technology sector. Political conflict continued: Rajiv Gandhi's image as a politician was shattered by the Bofors scandal. He was also later killed by a suicide bomber. P.V. Narasimha Rao became Prime Minister and initiated further economic liberalization and reform. Still, over 75% of IIT graduates migrated to the United States.

Members of Gen X in India developed a mental model patterned on a rich, vibrant democracy – comfortable with many views, perspectives, and voices. The constraints of the caste system were giving way to the power of education, which was increasingly available for the best and brightest. Although success continued to be associated with moving outside the country, economic opportunity was growing within India.

Generation Y / Millennials – Born from 1981 to 1998

Globally, Generation Ys' immersion in personal

technology enabled this generation to experience many of the same events and, as a result, develop as the first globally similar generation.

In India, the late 1990's and 2000's saw the development of a large middle-class and increased demand for and production of many consumer goods – in many ways, a situation reminiscent of the U.S. Traditionalists' (born before 1946) experience with a rapidly expanding pie. The Indian economy grew under liberalization and reform policies. The country was stable and prosperous, and political power changed hands without incident. India became a prestigious educational powerhouse and respected source of IT talent. By 2008, 34 Indian companies were listed in Forbes Global 2000 ranking.

Gen Y in India shares the generation's global sense of immediacy in a VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, Ambiguity) environment, coupled with the excitement of being part of the country's first wave of broad economic opportunity. They have come of age in an exciting, dynamic country with significant economic opportunity. Most are entrepreneurial and business savvy, as well as technologically capable and connected.

Generation Z (1998-2004)

This is the largest technologically connected, socially networked generation in history. They have come of age in 2010 into a world lacking safety and permanence. They have seen dramatic events like terrorist attacks, bomb blasts and global financial crisis of 2008 unfold before them. They have grown up in a time when the globalization is waning and the "Make in India" narrative has emerged. Having more access to the realities and impermanence of life than the previous generations, they have had to mature before their time and face a constant existential crisis and look out for a sense of purpose in everything they do. With rising standard of living, they are also known to be cocooned by parents. With the advent of social media, they enjoy staying connected to friends, family and colleagues virtually.

The key insights of each cohort are as follows:

Baby Boomers: Key Strengths and Challenges

Work ethic:

Researchers labeled the Baby Boomers the “original workaholics”. They were the first generation to prize their career over more traditional values of home and family. Boomers work hard for professional advancement and prestige. Boomers are noted for their focus and follow through more than their younger cohorts.

Adapters to technology:

If Millennials are digital natives, Baby Boomers are digital immigrants. They grew up without smart phones, computers, the Internet, but have learned fast and adapted modern technology due to work expediency and a learning attitude.

Managing the Baby Boomers

Baby Boomers present a unique set of problems for the employer. As Baby Boomers prepare for retirement, it is crucial to plan for succession and retain knowledge. Those that remain in the workforce may benefit from more flexible work arrangements.

Tips for managing Boomers through both work and retirement include:

- Establishing cross-training programs between older and younger workers
- Creating mentorship programs for legacy building
- Creating a database of their organizational knowledge
- Offering part-time jobs or consultancy

Generation X: Key Strengths and Challenges

Digital savvy

Most Gen X-ers didn’t grow up with a computer, but they have spent their career using one. In a 2018 poll by CNBC, 54% of Gen Xers and 56% of Millennials reported they were comfortable

using technology in the workplace. The majority of both generations access the Internet daily, with Gen X-ers spending 40 minutes more online each week.

Soft-Skills:

Generation X demonstrates more patience and co-operation than their younger cohorts. They are generally independent, entrepreneurial, and have strong problem-solving abilities, making them ideal leaders. Their communication skills are also excellent, as they can effectively communicate both in person and through digital platforms.

Managing the Gen X-ers

Generation X is motivated and self-sufficient. They don’t require a great deal of oversight and may balk at perceived “micro-management”. They make loyal employees. However, their loyalty lies more with individuals than the company itself. They like to be recognized as leaders themselves, either through advancement or mentorship.

Some strategies to retain these seasoned workers are:

- Providing a clear path to advancement
- Ensuring hard work is well-compensated
- Avoiding micromanagement
- Utilizing their strong problem-solving abilities with challenging work
- Offering attractive retirement packages
- Providing the opportunity to mentor

Millennials: Key Strengths and Challenges

Gallup Research, an analytics firm, identified three traits unique to this demographic:

Job-hopping:

Sixty percent of Millennials are open to a new job opportunity. This is good news for recruiters. However, for employers, it suggests over half of their young employees don’t see a future with them. A recent Gallup poll reported that 21% of Millennials changed jobs in the

past year — more than three times the rate of the older cohorts.

Team-oriented:

They are a social generation, befriending coworkers and supervisors alike. Throughout their education, they've learned the importance of teamwork. They prefer to work in collaboration because it is familiar, fun, and doesn't incur much risk. Taking on sole ownership of a project can feel intimidating to Millennials.

Values-driven:

Millennials care about their employer's mission and whether it aligns with their values. According to the 2019 Deloitte Global Millennial Survey, over half of young workers turned down a job offer because they didn't align with the company's vision.

Making a difference: Millennials are looking for a sense of purpose in their work. Almost 75% report that "making a difference" is essential to their job satisfaction. Personal growth is also a priority, and opportunities to learn and improve may help retain them.

Managing the Millennials

The majority of Millennials grew up in a structured, sheltered environment. The Journal of Higher Education described their upbringing as "buckled, watched, fussed over, and fenced in by wall-to-wall rules and chaperones." Not surprisingly, they rely heavily upon their supervisors. They prefer strong, personal relationships with their boss and require continuous feedback. Poor communication and lack of support from managers is the top reason they leave their job.

Millennials also prefer a more democratic work environment versus a traditional hierarchy. They want every idea to be heard regardless of seniority or credentials.

The following strategies can help companies attract and retain these younger cohorts:

- Open-plan offices and co-working spaces
- Group projects

- Frequent staff meetings
- Opportunities to socialize outside the workplace
- Friendly relationships between superiors and subordinates
- Ongoing feedback rather than the traditional quarterly/mid-year review
- Regular communication from managers, using modern platforms such as online chat and collaboration software
- Maintaining an open flow of information
- Developing an online presence (e.g., website, social media) that communicates the company's vision, mission and culture
- Inclusive hiring practices ensuring diversity
- Community outreach and volunteering
- Developing mentoring programs
- Providing opportunities for continued education, training, and travel

Generation Z: Key Strengths and Challenges:

Since Generation Z are recently entering workforce in the form of apprentices and Management Trainees, little research is available on their behaviours:

They are the most technologically savvy and socially connected, who have grown in the age of internet and free flow of information.

Managing Gen Z

- Structured On-the-Job Training to assimilate them into the culture of the company
- Mentoring programmes
- Higher involvement in important projects to benefit them as well as the veterans
- Team based work

Keeping the employee experience personalized

Grouping of workforce, in many ways leads to generalisations and stereotyping. It is also necessary to delve into limitations of

this classification, so as to avoid stereotypes and generalisations, as well as to appreciate intermingling of cohorts and their characteristics both ways.

The stereotypes about each generation have in a lot of ways created a self-fulfilling prophecy as per the perceptions about that cohort. We need to note that human beings are more similar than they are different. What is required is radically as well as, simply individualizing our approach and meet people as they are. It is required to meet and greet people in their "only"ness, the spot where only they stand, and that requires more flexibility, joyful curiosity and above all empathy.

This may require more face time, walks around the office, employee survey or

mere meaningful conversations that try and understand who they are and what they are hoping to accomplish at work. Ultimately, the time invested in understanding the employees will allow the organization reap dividend in terms of improved engagement and retention in the long run.

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CHETNA: Personal Connect during COVID 19



image
required

By **Diana Robin**,
Manager HR, HPCL

It was Monday morning but Rajat had no Monday blues, at once with the watsapp beep he got up, half asleep opened the door, with half eyes opened searched for the newspaper and milk packet, but found none to his avail. Rajat told himself – ‘These are lockdown blues’ !. Won’t get any newspaper or fresh milk until the this COVID situation ends. Rajat made black tea and got ready for his work, He is the Location Incharge of Ajmer LPG Plant. The young vibrant Rajat who was known for his fun loving and jolly attitude had worn silence on his face, the empty roads and

closed shops added to the hollowness that the COVID 19 pandemic had created. He looked at the Plant from his cabin’s window, he could not recognize from so far who was working in the shift as everyone was wearing a mask. Even the carousal’s noise could be feebly felt. The sun was at its full beam, when his mobile rang. It was Chanchal on the other side, the Zonal HR Head of North West Region. He was surprised to see Chanchal’s call as she normally prefers to get work done through mail. Rajat got apprehensive while picking up the call, Chanchal requested to Rajat if he can spare two minutes for talking. With Rajat’s nod to go ahead, she first appreciated him for ensuring that the Plant was running at full capacity while the entire nation was under a lockdown. Rajat very confidently shared the production stats but his voice missed something. He was firm and committed yet not happy, the ecstasy

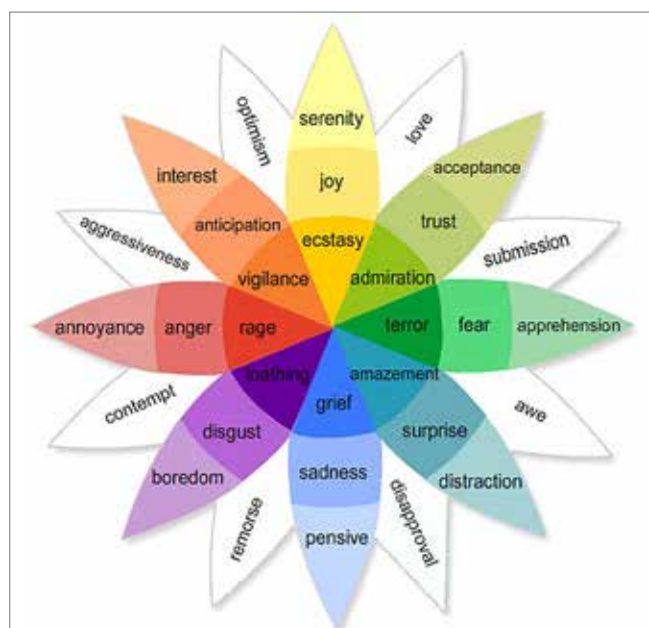
with which he interacted was missing. So Chanchal asked him – ‘Are you worried about something, if something is bothering you, you may share with me’. To which Rajat answered that his parents were alone in Lucknow. He was feeling intensely worried about them as their neighbors were tested positive. Chanchal listened to him very patiently and tried boosting him by saying ‘Request them to follow all the COVID protocols, they will be all fine, Do you want me to talk to them’. Rajat also shared that he feels for his workers, most of their families were staying in their native places, he was responsible for their health and wellbeing. Chanchal added that the organization is very supportive and that together they will ensure that they don’t keep any stone unturned if the situation demands. Finally towards the closure of the call Chanchal felt that Rajat had a smile on his face and he did thank her for calling. Just before cutting the call, he asked the reason for the call to which she said ‘I called to know if you are doing fine or not’!!

Rajat would certainly be thinking that why would HR call without any work. But that was the fact. Chanchal realized that having an encouraging conversation really helps to pep up people around you and especially in COVID times when it feels that the world has disappeared below the ocean, these personal calls do make a difference.

This is the essence of “Chetna”, a unique initiative that the team HR of HPCL had implemented, as a part of which the team of 200 HR Officers called all the 9300 odd employees to understand their personal wellbeing. However, these conversations were not the regular ones; they had a different flavor of humanity.

The Wheel of Emotions

It is understood that human beings are capable of experiencing over 34000 distinguishable emotions. The range of emotional upheaval that our people will encounter in face of stress and threat is vast. The categorization of 8 basic emotions made by renowned Psychologist Robert Plutchik, also emphasized that the



combination of various emotions at different degrees gives rise to further numerous emotions, much like the colours in a color wheel leading to numerous possibilities.

Fight Vs Flight: The fear unknown

The bigger problem was not Covid-19, each and every associated staff was churning through varied emotions from being anxious, stressed, fearful and remote. Everyone’s Mind was hijacked by the fear of being infected and isolated. Who would want to risk their life. In this situation, how do we ensure that the required staff comes to work safely and goes back home safely, how do we ensure that the business happens in an uninterrupted manner. How do we enable our people to handle these overpowering emotions? How do we address the fears of our people that they will have to overcome and step out of their homes during the corona war? Without any physical connect, with social distancing norms, how do we engage them?

There is extreme sensitivity attached to conversations especially through HR. Specifically for organizations that fall in the category of “Essential Services”, where the employees, the contract workmen and the extended staff have to necessarily attend duties even in face of extremities, such conversations play a major role in boosting the morale of the

employees and enforcing the belief that the organization will stand by them in their hours of need.

From Personnel to Personal

The program '**Chetna**' – meaning Consciousness was launched in June 2020 by HPCL HR as part of its response strategy to challenges faced by the Employees and Corporation. Amongst its many multiple meaning '**Chetana**' or Consciousness **means a state of being aware of and being responsive to the surroundings.**

The objective of Chetna is to enable the team HR to engage in proactive conversations with all employees to create awareness, show our genuine concern and empathy, listen to the fears and apprehensions of the employee; in short, to ear to help them express themselves. The conversation was envisaged as an informal, friendly and personal conversation with each of the individual employees for the Corporation.

Thus we mapped all the 200 HR Officers to our 9,300 workforce and ensured that a one on one call was personally made to every employee to understand their wellbeing and concerns if any. A proper structure was put to this conversation and HR Officers were educated on making this call effective. This conversation was captured on an online platform and cases that were identified as critical were shared for immediate action. Also cases where people were found mentally stressed were routed to Paramarsh, our platform for consulting with trained psychologists.

While the employees felt happy, surprised, delighted and being cared for, HR Officers themselves developed more ownership for their people. They were one point contact for all the concerns of their employees. A sense of togetherness was reinforced. The belief in HPCL as a family was strengthened. Team HR and all the employees felt empowered and special.

Humrahee: We are in this together



By **Anubha R. Gupta**,
Senior Manager
HR, HPCL

The world today is living the reality that we had not even imagined. Impact of COVID-19 on our daily lives including economic activity and mental health has left us disoriented and emotionally overwhelmed. Our lifestyles, social interaction patterns, work arrangements etc. have undergone substantial change at an individual level. Similarly, at a much broader level, the complete socioeconomic fabric has undergone a massive shift.

In these uncertain and challenging times, taking care of one's mental health has also taken a front seat. To remain healthy, it is important to have someone with whom we can share our feelings and anxieties without any fear of being judged. As David DeNotaris, an acclaimed author mentioned, "I believe that when things are a mess, we need others to know what we are thinking, feeling, or doing. We must share our feelings with people who will not reprimand us for our thoughts. We need to share these feelings with someone who will encourage us to move forward."

Project Humrahee: Genesis

Keeping this in mind, a need was felt to provide HPCL employees a platform where they could openly express and be listened to in an empathetic manner. A virtual platform 'HumRahee' meaning co-traveler was conceptualized for all employees to interact and gain insights from one another in a safe environment. Based on the integration of Cognitive-Behavioral Theories (CBT) and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy Theories (ACT), the platform provides a safe space to our employees to express where they feel accepted, connected, and part of a larger community going through similar situations.



It also helps employees in maintaining their emotional and mental well-being, which is vital in maintaining a healthy work-life balance. Authentic communication, genuine involvement, and, non-judgmental acceptance are the needs of every human being. Expressing ourselves gives us positivity, hope and show a way out if we ever feel stuck in any situation and fail to see light at the end of tunnel.

HumRahee evolved with very important human virtue of 'Sharing'. Sharing is an act that equates to caring. During crisis, we get comfort in sharing our fears and receiving calming and objective feedback from others. Also understanding how others successfully overcame a similar challenge gives us a sense of direction and comfort that the situation is indeed surmountable. The very act of verbalising our feelings tends to reduce their intensity.

You'll Never Walk Alone

The HumRahee platform enables employees to interact and gain insights from one another in a comfortable environment wherein they can share their concerns, experiences and how they dealt with the current (COVID-19) situation at personal, professional and family levels.

The employees have a choice to be part of a homogenous or heterogeneous group from various options. These groups have an open and semi-structured discussion facilitated by an external expert. Group discussions last for around 2 hours. Each participant is encouraged to share their learnings, concerns, fears, insights, experiences in the spirit of providing mutual support and care. Employees share their experiences on how they are dealing with the current situation at personal, professional and family level. This initiative has provided a unique and one-of-its-kind opportunity to employees. Several employees have opted for participation in HumRahee sessions.

HumRahee enables employees to walk together. During the sessions, employees actively engage in open dialogue with their colleagues regarding the next normal. Sharing individual experiences and perspectives not only paves the way forward towards collective understanding, but also reignites creative energy among employees. The goal is to refocus individuals away from trauma and toward a better future for themselves and the business.

Outcomes:

Project HumRahee provides a ray of hope to those who are facing certain challenges but are not able to share their feeling with others. It assures people that they are not alone even in these challenging times and, most importantly, what they are feeling is normal. It makes them aware that many others have similar concerns.

All sorts of issues from losing loved ones, anxiety about travelling, being away from loved ones, managing Work from Home, public dealing, seeing stakeholders in distress, general fear of the disease, social isolation etc. Individual ways to cope up with the new normal also featured in the discussions.

There is no doubt that this has been a tough situation, but reaching out and supporting each other has been the best way to get through this situation. Perhaps it has allowed everyone to slow down, spend more time with family or learn and do new things.

Feedback received from participants indicate

that the sessions enabled them to see the same challenges from entirely new perspectives. The viewpoints of others in the sessions helped them to explore alternative ways to deal with their concerns. It also made them aware of the kind of difficult times others were going through. Most of the employees were happy to connect and empathise with fellow HPites.

A common realization has also been that all of us need to look after ourselves first in order to be there for other people in their hour of need. Employees were grateful to HPCL for providing them with this opportunity to share their experiences and to learn from those of others.

Testimonials - In a Box: (Optional Content)

1. Sanjeev Kumar Bhatnagar, General Manager-Operations and Distribution, SOD-HQO:

"The design of the programme is excellent. The current times are extraordinary and hence it's not only internal immunity which takes care of physiological health. Therefore, one needs to enhance mental immunity. Kudos to Team HR, HPCL for the initiative!"

2. N Damodarn, General Manager – Installation-Coimbatore IRD:

"Great initiative to organize a meeting mainly for sharing experiences. Very interactive and informative. I was totally comfortable and enjoyed the entire session. It also gave me a chance to virtually meet all my friends after a long time."

3. G Ramadoss- Deputy General Manager- Installation, Hassan Terminal:

"A very well thought interaction with Location In-charges who had faced the brunt of both operational constraints as well as challenges imposed by Covid-19. This has given us much needed moral support and sense of belongingness. It has also assured us that senior management is concerned about the trials and tribulations being faced by officers at the locations."

Delivering Happiness During Pandemic



By **Rajeev Goel**,
CGM PRCC, HPCL

the restrictions began, there was hardly any work for a daily wage earner and it has been a heady task to manage the household with the meager savings.

The knock on the door brought Kamala out of her thoughts as she quickly put out the stove to rush and open the door. "I could have lowered the flame to simmer.", muttered Kamala to herself while opening the latch. The HP Gas Stove was a new addition to her kitchen and she was still getting used to cooking on it. Years of struggle to bring firewood and living under a cloud of black smoke has dissipated with the on-coming of this little wonder and it has become a beloved part of her family in no-time.

Mohan's eyes drooped in disappointment as he looked into the eyes of his wife, Kamala who was searching for a ray of hope. Once a handsome young man, Mohan has aged dramatically fast in the last few months and looked way older than 35. What years of hard labor under the sun could not do, months of unemployment has done. The bright smile under the dark skin is a thing of past. Sadness and disappointment written on his face, Kamala understood that he has returned without finding any work, again.

"Don't worry, we will manage", half consoling herself as she brought a glass of water for her husband, whom she knew was struggling to get work in this Covid-19 induced restriction. Since

Kamala knew that soon she would have to let go of her dear HP Gas stove and get back to collecting firewood in the nearby forest. The thought of resorting back to that life shuddered her to the core. Just when all doors of hope were getting shut, she thought she saw the faint figure of Ajay Bhai approaching, with a cylinder on his shoulders.

'I don't have the money to pay you for the refill, Ajay bhai', said the distraught Kamala to the HP Gas delivery personnel – Ajay. 'Its free! Just keep it', said Ajay as he explained that under PMUY, HPCL will be providing free refills to all PMUY Customers under a scheme of MoPNG*

Kamala could not believe her ears and tears of joy erupted. Ajay also told Mohan to go to the nearest HPCL Retail Outlet where essential commodities like rice, pulses, medical kits etc, were being distributed free of cost to the needy. Wearing his PPE Kit, Ajay went about delivering more cylinders in the neighborhood, a beacon of hope in these disastrous times.

Like Ajay, thousands of Corona Warriors worked tirelessly during the restrictions to bring essential services to a country, disrupted by Covid-19. Dedicated to the motto of Delivering

Happiness, our HPCL Corona Warriors kept the wheels of life and economy rolling.

HPCL has learned to adapt to the challenges posed by Covid-19 quickly and implemented a series of measures backed by the induction of a culture that spells – positive change to ensure that our business continues to function seamlessly.

Business continuity was extremely important as we supply the fuel that runs the Country and it left us with no alternative but to operate our Refineries, Depots, LPG Plants, Pipeline Stations Retail Outlets, LPG Distributorships etc. with following all movement restriction norms imposed due to the Pandemic.

Our Refineries at Mumbai, Visakh, Bathinda (JV) and Mangalore (JV) and Pipeline Stations of more than 3000 km long cross-country pipelines ensured 24 X 7 operations by implementing innovative shift rotation techniques to operate with skeletal manpower and strict implementation of Covid-19 protocols ensuring highest levels of safety. Lockdown increased consumption of Domestic LPG demand, which lead us to operate our LPG plants beyond their usual timings. Braving the odds our officers and staff worked tirelessly to ensure that the supply is always there to meet the demand.

Even though the demand of Petrol and Diesel was less but to ensure supply to essential services vehicles like Ambulances, HealthCare workers, Trucks supplying essential commodities, all our Retail Outlets were operated following Covid appropriate social behaviors.

In order to support our frontline workers working at our installations, LPG distributorships and Retail Outlets; Rs 5 Lakh ex-Gratia scheme is being provided as an added protection during the Pandemic. Help like Sanitation Kits, Immunity Kits, Essential Food Items, and PPE kits etc. were provided to workers/truck drivers to prepare them better to fight this crisis.

Measures such as robust and continuous communication with all employees, especially with location in charges of 24X7 Operating

locations, Talks to boost the morales by Top Officials, employing external health partner along with in-house medical team to organize Covid-19 readiness, etc were deployed to keep the workforce safe and engaged.

Apart from this during the pandemic, all the locations of HPCL, Retail Outlets, and LPG Distributorships went beyond their call of duty to help the poor and needy in an around their locality, especially the migrant workers with food, shelter and medical kits to help them in this crisis.

HPCL also participated in Govt. of India's massive Covid-19 Awareness campaign by participating in spreading the message of Covid-19 appropriate social behavior by putting up hoardings across all the Retail Outlets, LPG distributorships and other locations. More than one and half crore SMSs were sent and more than 1.2 crore customers were educated by word of mouth. Massive usage of social media was carried out to educate the general public.

HPCL also contributed Rs 120 crore to PM Cares Fund and its employees, voluntarily contributed Rs 6.31 crore from their salary.

To counter the deadly second wave, HPCL took many initiatives to help the authorities fight the Pandemic. From supplying oxygen by providing Pressure Swing Adsorption (PSA) Oxygen plants, to cold chain equipment for Vaccination drive and to financial support for Covid Care centers with beds and ICU Ventilators, HPCL has taken many steps to help the society. HPCL is also engaged in actively vaccinating its employees through various camps across the country to fight the pandemic.

HPCL's Corona warriors are defying the odds of pandemic, finding ways and means to turn up to duty and delivering their very best. Ensuring that engine of this great Country never stops and Like Kamala and Mohan, all the citizens have access to Energy, which is quintessential for a healthy and happy life.

HPCL...Delivering Happiness!



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