

# Business Manager

Vol. 21 No. 7 January, 2019 Single Copy Rs. 125/-

Making HR People Complete



Corporate  
Governance  
& Board Diversity

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Corporates have begun to realize how much employee wellness contributes towards the bottom line. When employees are stress free and happy they are much more productive. An article by **Achal Khanna**

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Research has shown that the HR strategies of the past no longer cut it. Enhancing employee engagement and retention, improving mental health of employees while dealing with trust, issues employees may have with management etc., need clear communication & 100% transparency in words & actions by business & HR leaders alike. An article by **Aparna Sharma**

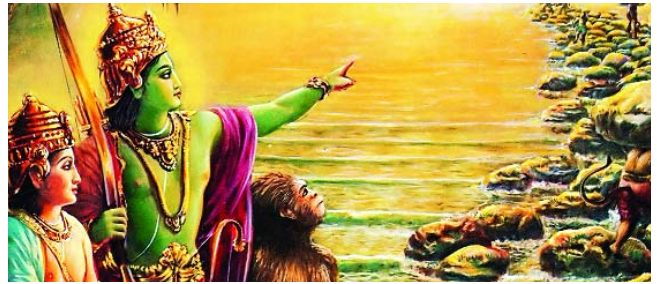
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**Corporate Governance & Board Diversity**

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# Technology will influence PEOPLE & WORKPLACE

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**H**uman resources function is an ever evolving world of compliance, trends, and topics that one has to know & work diligently to stay on top of. With the rapid changes in the workforce and HR trends in the last few years, it looks like the HR trends for 2019 are shaping up to stay the course as another game - changing year.

We're only just beginning to see how technological advancements are permanently changing the modern workplace. While the full effects are still uncertain, it is clear that the below mentioned new HR trends have the potential to radically improve day-to-day workplace interactions for employees at every level of a company in 2019 and beyond.

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While HR professionals will continue to work on people analytics, up gradation of recruiting technology, recruiting more for attitudes & behaviours & less for qualifications, enhancing employee experience (EX), I see the below HR trends in 2019 gaining more focus -

## 1. Artificial Intelligence (AI) -

It's no surprise that artificial intelligence has cropped up again. It is no longer just a topic of a favourite creepy sci-fi. It has become a tool businesses are using to make better decisions and strengthen operations from the ground up. As AI capabilities rapidly increase, this technology will help HR professionals address low engagement with real-time solutions, reveal troubling patterns, and even make the employee experience more pleasant.

## 2. Employer Branding-

It's crucial to view employer relations as a two-way street - it's not only an employee's job to serve a company, but the company's job to

serve its employees. Leading with this mindset, companies are crafting their value proposition to candidates (Employer Value Proposition - EVP) more clearly and focusing on enriching company culture. In turn, HR departments will have lower turnover rates, a motivated workforce and more innovation. This process of building a strong culture will include new technology that supports teams and cultural changes within teams. Companies may employ analytics tools that help them measure metrics like applicant conversion rates, or self-service portals that empower employees to interact. It's not only about better - functioning technology, but more quality communication between HR and staff members.

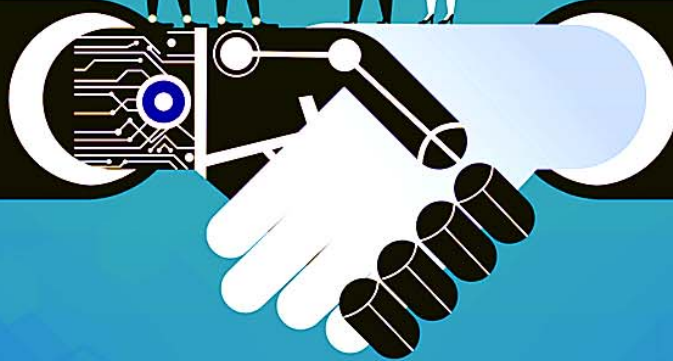
## 3. Gamification of HR-

Gaming culture will move into the workforce in 2019 as HR begins using such triggers to motivate employees to deliver their best performance. In fact, a lot of organisations are integrating gamification as part of their on boarding & Induction processes. Not only does





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gamification create a fun work environment that encourages employees to tackle issues with zeal, it also reinforces team management and synergy - both key components of the all-important employee engagement game.

#### 4. Atypical working -

In the broadest sense, atypical working is a term coined for a business which does not conform to the standard working hours or model - commonly associated with the '9 to 5' office lifestyle.

To work standard hours, day-in-day-out simply isn't realistic anymore. Flexible work options will become even more popular as the 9-5 business day will become much more obsolete in 2019.

Technology enables employees to learn and work at all hours of the day from various locations. More and more employers will also allow their employees to work from home, if they haven't already. Employees will start to expect more flexible work options when considering employment, and employees from newer generations will especially have a hard time acclimatizing to or accepting job offers that demand schedules that force them to commute to an office and stay there from 9-5, Monday through Friday.

With most mobiles having 4G network and the ability to hotspot, a lot of employees can simply hook their laptops up to the internet and work remotely.

If managers are worried about employees procrastinating, this huge trend of atypical working is seeing great developments in engagement software too.

#### 5. Personalisation -

Historically, HR has focused very much on standardisation and "One-Size-Fits-All". Making the shift to an approach where the individual needs, wishes and capabilities of candidates and employees are the starting point is difficult. Traditionally, many HR-practices take the needs of the organisation as the starting point. An example is recruitment: we have an organisation structure, with a hierarchy, and well - defined jobs. Next step: how do we find the candidates that can fill the vacancy? Another example: most on boarding processes are designed top-down: what do we want new employees to know when they enter the organisation? The reverse question is hardly ever asked: what can we learn from the new employees who enter the organisation? Also learning & development has a hard time to make the shift to an individualised approach. We still see many programs targeted at groups (e.g. high potentials, senior managers), with a large classroom component. Office design is an area where the standard approach has backfired. Most of the new office designs now take the different needs of users into account. If you work better near other people and if you regularly need advice from colleagues, you can work in open space. When you need to concentrate on a complicated report, you can sit alone in a quiet room. For a call with a client, you can find one of the small phone booths. In 2019 personalisation will get a lot of attention, and employees and organisations will benefit.

#### 6. No more paternalism -

Often HR takes a very paternalistic and normative approach. "Our leaders and managers should be good coaches". "We expect our employees to take responsibility for their own development". "You cannot opt out of life-long learning". Coaching is a good example. It starts with a global leadership model. These models (often a circle) always contain an element like "Developing people and/coaching."

As the reality is that many managers are not good coaches, the next step is training (mandatory). Also, HR designs a process that forces managers to have coaching sessions with their direct reports at least twice per year. The process is incorporated in the HR System, and when a manager starts her computer in the morning, the chatbot starts talking: "Good morning Radha, it is time for your bi-annual coaching session with (terrible) Ram, I have already scheduled it. Can you please complete the following preparation form?" This approach is cracking, as it does not work. Neither task oriented Radha nor terrible Ram are happy with the process. Why force people to do things they do not like, and they are not very good at? It is time to consider other approaches. One of the emerging issue for HR leaders is the impact of the #MeToo movement. So, as always...these are exciting times for us in HR. While all the above mentioned areas will be important, in summary, my recommendation is to stay open-minded and embrace the ones you feel could really benefit your business and employees. Let's bear in mind, if you fail to evolve, your business may face the reality of being left behind. Stay nimble and stay connected - it may well boost your revenue, reduce staff turnover and improve employee satisfaction rates. **BM**