

HR Round Tables

28th November 2014 to 30th November 2014

@ HR Expo, VCCI Exhibition Ground, Navlakhi Compound, Vadodara

THE FUTURE OF HR

As a novel initiative, Naman partnered with VCCI (Vadodara Chamber of Commerce and Industry) as their knowledge partner and organized the first HR Expo at the 9th Industrial exhibition at Vadodara. Due to Naman's pioneering attempts, 16 Top HR firms exhibited their training, assessment, recruitment, payroll, HR automation services.

The main attraction of the HR expo was the 3 Day Round Table conference with 'Future of HR' being its core theme. Prominent business leaders & HR country heads from as many as 34 esteemed organizations shared their views as Round Table Panelists. The varied topics discussed over the 3 days were Disruptive Innovation in Employer Branding for Talent Acquisition & Retention, Leadership in times of VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, Ambiguity) and Emerging HR strategies for engaging Gen Y.

It was an honor and privilege for Naman to have organized this unique event and bring together some of the best minds in the business on a common platform to share their viewpoints and path breaking ideas with the HR world.

Day 1: Disruptive Innovation in Employer Branding for Talent Acquisition & Retention (28th November 2014)

The session was initiated by Mr. Himanshu Bhatt who spoke about the criticality of talent acquisition and employer branding in present times of a bullish Indian economy facilitated by the government in power. He emphasized the need to invest heavily in talent acquisition, employer branding and innovation for future growth of organizations and the national economy in general.

Address by Anchor Speakers

Mr. Shrikant Lonikar (Joint President and Head HR, Adani Group) said that for him "Talent is performance". It's the talent that creates value and contributes towards the sustainable performance of an organisation. He gave the analogy of thinking being as natural a process for a psychological system as performance is for talent. He mentioned the 5 major contribution factors which according to him can help talent perform in an organisation.



These are:

- a) Colleagues: workplace environment and the capabilities of the peer group that can facilitate performance.
- b) Leaders: Leaders should be fair, competent and inspiring. They should encourage innovation.
- c) System Enablers: Organisation should support functionality and efficiency.
- d) Work Content: Quality of work should add value to individual and organisational results.
- e) Work Culture: Work culture should be open and transparent.

He believes that an amalgamation of these factors when offered by an organisation will assure stupendous results.

Mr. Sharad Gangal (Executive VP - People Processes and member of the Executive Council, Thermax Ltd.) spoke the graduate trainee programmes that their company started 40 years back under which they hire students from remote areas of India and provide them engineering education post which they are inducted by Thermax or are free to join another company. This is their credible contribution towards national talent development. His statement, "The quality of education depends on the quality of the educator." was applauded by all. He believes that ultimately its talent that brings disproportionate value to business.



Panel Discussion

It was a vibrant discussion covering a range of topics from talent acquisition, aspirations of Gen Y, attractiveness of the manufacturing sector, identification of high potential employees, dressing up for interviews, hiring techniques and what CEOs should do to engage talent.

The discussion brought out some excellent insights from the panelists.

Mr. Sharad Gangal (Executive Vice President- People Processes and member of the Executive Council, Thermax Ltd.) mentioned a unique initiative introduced by Thermax internally called "Teach a class" where anyone in the company can teach employees whatever they please ranging from photography to salsa. This is how they have accommodated the aspirations and needs of Gen Y and this helped improve productivity tremendously. They also conduct stay interviews to improve retention. He also said that there is a strong business case to hire girls as they comprise of 25% of the top talent pool in engineering institutes. He also made a very relevant statement, "Encourage talent to be your mirror and give feedback." This approach will surely help organizations grow.

Mr. Shrikant Lonikar (Joint President and Head HR, Adani Group) said that the entire process of talent acquisition is boxed but how a company does it that is the game changer. For him the experience of the company that his employees carry home is very vital. For a smooth induction process Adani follows the

Buddy System for new joiners ensure a smooth integration into the company. He believes that talent management is the key differentiator for the success of a company.

Mr. Georg Sparchuch (President, Schott Glass India Pvt. Ltd.) highlighted the importance of integration of work into life of an individual so that he/ she lead a holistic life. He spoke about how Schott Glass has a flat hierarchy and an open environment for employees to work efficiently. He brought up the criticality of a strong match in values of an applicant and company's values. This ensures a smooth tenure for him/her and good value addition for the company. He said that leaders play a very important role in development of employees as he made the statement- "Leaders do things and make it right, managers do the right things."



Ms. Sonali Mugale (Business HR – Transformers, Alstom India T & D India Ltd.) put it very succinctly as she said "Gen Y needs C² = Challenge and Change." This powerful statement resonates with all of Gen Y. Alstom offers great opportunities to its employees in terms of geographical and inter-departmental mobility. She also talked about SMAC (Social, Mobile, Analytics and Cloud computing) that has transformed the current business scenario.



Mr. Ashwin Gupta (HR Leader - Integrated Operations and Supply Chain, Dupont India Pvt. Ltd.) brought the importance of emotional connect with the employees and the opportunity to diversify across realm within the company. He also mentioned that Dupont is one of the very few manufacturing organizations which that has a 5 day/week work schedule thus treating workers to CEO equally. He also spoke about the worthy contribution of women employees to the company.



Mr. Anil Makhija (Vice President, Big Tree Entertainment (Book My Show)) spoke about how Book My Show conducted an open discussion for applicants in a pub in Pune to hire web designers which proved to be a brilliant way to reach out to Gen Y. He talked about how his company has created a very comforting and informal environment at work by placing bean bags in office, making garden areas for employees to relax, not restricting people to sit at their desks all day long and not forcing them to be formally attired at work. All these are ways to engage employees thereby enhancing productivity. He believes in that employees need to have flexibility of thought, freedom for experimentation and autonomy to take decisions to bring out their best potential.



Mr. Pradeep Vaishnav (Executive Coach and Independent Corporate Advisor)

mentioned how Naman had helped his past organization in identifying high potential employees through Strengths based development which was facilitated and implemented by the company. He said that present day companies have to learn to manage aspirations of their employees by indulging in continuous dialogue for better succession planning and business risk mitigation. He thinks that companies have to create a congenial environment, empower employees, avoid gender bias and HR needs to be proactive for organizations to be successful.



To conclude, Naman would agree with all the panelists about the following:

1. The vital support of HR to business in making organizations a sustainable profit centre.
2. Today, HR must recognize its value as the owner of any modern company's greatest resource – its talent.
3. To acquire and retain talent, HR must excel in the altered battlefield of talent war, where there are shifts like diversity in terms of age, cultural background, geographical base, skill sets, life experience and business culture preferences.
4. Strategic HR, thriving on practical, research driven insight, with special focus on communication, talent and learning needs, and competent leadership, can be a major tool to heighten the impact of HR in future.
5. In reference to talent management it is important to realize the criticality of the statement, "We know the price of everything but the value of nothing."- Oscar Wilde.

Best Practice Presentations

Mr. Shashikant Patange (Head - HR, Linde Engineering India Pvt. Ltd.) explained the system of recruitment and talent management followed by Linde. He also spoke about the unique concept of leave bank in his company wherein employees enjoy the luxury to donate and borrow leaves from this company wide leave bank thus solving a lot of problems related to shortage of employees. Naman has had a long and fruitful association with Linde Engineering through the conduct of various programmes across levels ranging from the leadership programmes of BOLT for senior management, Pinnacle for executives to Connect programme for executives.



Mr. Dattesh Shah (General Manager – HR, CEAT Ltd.) spoke about the importance and necessity of employer branding in today's era of competition to hire the best talent in the market. He also showed an ad of CEAT MTV Roadies as they sponsored the show to get visibility and make CEAT attractive for youngsters. He also spoke about how CEAT engages its employees through innovative initiatives to keep them anchored to CEAT. Naman has conducted a Compensation and Benefits Survey for Ceat in the past which helped the company in formulation of its future policies.



Day 2: Leadership in times of VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, Ambiguity) (29th November 2014)

The second day of the RTC started with Samir Parikh (MD, Naman) introducing the topic for the day. He rightly mentioned that in the fiercely competitive times of today, good leadership is the only way to steer through troubled times and forge ahead.

Address by Anchor Speakers

Mr. Pramod Mahatme (VP - Employee Relations, Wipro Ltd.) shared his knowledge on the topic Leadership in times of VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, Ambiguity) and enlightened the audience with another VUCA which is the perfect solution to overcome the competition of the present era. This VUCA stands for V is Vision, U Understanding, C is Clarity and A is Agility. He emphasized on the fact that a good leader requires sound professional skills, maturity, varied exposure which comes through enriching experiences and the ability to inspire and motivate others to bring out the best in them. Organizations need to create an enabling environment to encourage employees to work for joy. He said that present day leaders have to ensure that for every employee that "Heart is behind the hands that work." to lead the organization to greater heights.



Dr. Rajesh Parekh (Head - Training, Bayer Crop Science) emphasized on the fact that VUCA is the new normal but the speed at which changes are happening is faster than our ability to respond so leaders need to strategize more proactively to forge ahead. He beautifully brought out the concept of VUCA by saying that V (Vision) - Leaders need to communicate the vision of the organization throughout to keep everyone driven towards the ultimate goals of the company. U (Understanding)-Leaders need to listen to their



subordinates, be open to new ideas to challenge the status quo. C (Clarity)-Leaders need to simplify processes and take calculated risks to take business forward. A (Agility)-Leaders should be decisive and empower others for smooth functioning.

Mr. A. Sundara Rajan (Founder, Director, Thomas Assessments) very rightly said that "Competition is moving at cheetah speed but organizations are responding at elephant speed." and VUCA is permanent and change is the new constant. Thus organizations need to use technology to overcome challenges. He gave brilliant examples of how large MNCs like Cadbury's , ITC and 3M had handled difficult situations in the past and emerged stronger though innovation and great strategy by their leaders.



Panel Discussion

Mr. Pramod Mahatme (Vice President - Employee Relations, Wipro Ltd.) said that the ability to work hard, drive change and leverage technical ability is much more in today's leaders vs. earlier leaders who were more mature in decision making. He said organizations today need to do away with the conventional system of "Either you go or you go" and concentrate on developing new leaders to avoid future shortages. Attrition being inevitable companies must invest in enhancing productivity.

Mr. Jonathan Fletcher (Senior Vice President - Manufacturing, RPG Cables) stated the importance long term strategy formulation that stretches beyond 5-10 years to get competitive advantage in the industry. He said that innovation is natural in India but there has to be a right mix of Jugaad and standardization to take on the future. There has to be greater focus on team KPI vs. Individual KPI for businesses today. In reference to the manufacturing sector he said that the leadership style in this sector is very directional in nature and resistant to flexibility and change. But leaders have to develop a more coaching style of leadership and be offer intelligent and innovative solutions to everyday problems.



Mr. A. Sundara Rajan (Founder, Director - Thomas Assessments) said that the cognitive abilities of managers today have improved tremendously over the years. They have good technical and analytical skills to handle tricky situations.

Dr. Rajesh Parekh (Head Training, Bayer Crop Science) stated that today's leaders have to act as motivators especially for their sales force to limit attrition and improve retention. The employees should feel more connected to the organization through the vital role played by their leaders. He also believes that leaders today need to practice pull (influential) type of leadership and not push (authoritative) leadership.

Mr. Nirmal Parekh (Promoter, AAMPLE Pvt. Ltd. and Peak Point - The Training Company) believes that VUCA is here to stay and in this phase of technology and knowledge explosion, companies need the best problem solvers. Indians need to put their ability of “Jugaad” into the right perspective and avoid crisis in the first place. He said that excellence and discipline should become a way of life in organizations. Leaders need to focus on speed and time of action as it is the fast companies that kill the slow ones and not the big companies that kill the slow ones. All employees should be oriented towards company values so that they act in a collaborative fashion when handling crises.



Mr. Rishikesh Raval (Senior VP - HR Cadila Healthcare Ltd., Zydus Cadila) highlighted the importance of standardization of internal processes and open communication to avoid crises. Employees should be encouraged to develop a collaborative culture as ultimately it is the company performance that takes precedence over individual performance. Recognition of merit by leaders at the right time is also essential for success. He laid emphasis on the point that HR today has to develop skills of industry relations to connect with employees while engaging them positively and constantly to the organization. There may be a lot of gadgets to connect virtually but the human connect is lost. This thought was captured in his statement, “Are we humanly professional or professionally human.”



Mr. Rakesh Agarwal (Vice President and Head - HR Gujarat Flourochemical Ltd.) said that employee engagement is a major component of employee retention. Companies should develop “Parivar culture” to inculcate a sense of belongingness to the organization. He also gave great importance to job satisfaction when he said that, “No amount of fun at work can be replaced by fun in work.”



In the end all came to consensus that leaders of tomorrow have to be influential, decisive, visionary, empathetic, and inspirational, open to change and lead by example to handle VUCA situations.

To conclude, the panel came to consensus that VUCA being a constant, the best way to lead through it would involve:

1. Leadership agility: The leaders of tomorrow have to be influential, decisive, visionary, empathetic, and inspirational, open to change and lead by example.
2. Global connectivity: Managing talent, involving all stakeholders in development, identifying learning needs, upgrading technology and maintaining employee commitment and engagement across boundaries is the need of the hour.

Case Study Presentations

Mr. Amit Karandikar (General Manager- Corporate HR, Atul Ltd.) presented a very insightful case on Performance Management System framework (Saarthi for senior and middle management) in Atul Ltd. which had been transformed from the conventional method of performance management to the balanced scorecard approach with the implementation facilitated by Naman. This new system had benefitted Atul Ltd. tremendously. He covered various aspects of PMS right from the criteria of performance evaluation to communication of feedback and the framework used to judge competencies. He spoke about how PMS tool was used for internal leadership development and succession planning.



Ms. Darshana Mohite Bhatt (Senior Manager - OD and Talent Management, Arvind Ltd.) shared insights on how Arvind Ltd. believes in building leadership capability across all levels (junior, middle and senior management). They have implemented this idea through various internal leadership programmes across levels for efficient succession planning and to build a sound leadership pipeline for future roles in the company. She also mentioned that Arvind Ltd. had introduced programmes for horizontal mobility within the company. In an attempt to move from B2B to B2C type of business the company has introduced an extraordinary concept of customized clothing for customers through Arvind retail outlets across cities. Naman has had the privilege to conduct a programme on team building called "The Power of We" for the executive level employees at Arvind Mills in the past.



Day 3: Emerging HR strategies for engaging Gen Y (30th November 2014)

The third day of the RTC started with Samir Parikh (MD, Naman) welcoming all the luminaries of the HR fraternity to the session on Emerging HR strategies for engaging Gen Y. The session was then taken forward by Ms. Meera Sampat who commenced with a very intriguing video on the differences in generational perspectives ranging from baby boomers, Gen X and Gen Y. She spoke about the omnipresence of Gen Y, the inevitable fact that they are here to stay and rule the world.

Address by Anchor Speakers

Mr. Amaresh Singh (Country Human Resources Director, Alstom India Ltd.) talked about the attributes (tech savvy, achievement/ result oriented, independent, inclusive, team oriented, attention seeking, compliance oriented, ethical, innovative and open to change) of Gen Y and how they are driving major changes across the world by standing up for the right. He spoke



about the impact that Gen Y is having on the workplace due to the stark difference in perspective with their colleagues from Gen X and baby boomers. He gave some excellent ideas to engage Gen Y: Giving them purpose, freedom to innovate and experiment to challenge status quo, continuous feedback and timely recognition, flexibility to work and ample opportunities to learn and grow.

Ms. Aparna Sharma (Country Head - Lafarge India Pvt. Ltd.) started her talk in a rather unconventional fashion by going around the hall to interact with the audience and bringing up their energy. She introduced the topic through the mythological epic of Mahabharata and bringing out the analogy between managing expectations of Duryodhana and the current Gen Y. She said that Gen Y looks for work life integration vs. work life balance. The value that they add to the organization through individual contribution is paramount to them. Ms. Aparna Sharma put it succinctly by saying that "Engagement of Gen Y should not just be a form of entertainment but a way of involving and anchoring employees to the organization. She brought out her idea of future of employee engagement through a path breaking concept of **CARE**. **C** is Communicate expectations of company to employees, **A** is Aspiration management, **R** is Recognize and reward performance (instant gratification), and **E** is Empower empathetically. Leaders need to develop IQ and EQ in equal measure to handle the aspirations of Gen Y and future Gen Z. She gave brilliant employee engagement examples of companies like Coca Cola, Intel, Cleartrip, flipkart which have had a very positive impact on productivity.



Both the anchor speakers threw light on the stereotypical traits of the Gen Y and also highlighted the need for complementarities and collaboration among the Gen Y, Gen X and Baby Boomers for organizations to fully utilize the potential of today's workforce.

Panel Discussion

The entire discussion was centred on the dilemma of how should leaders/ organizations handle the dichotomy of retention and managing expectations of Gen Y.

Mr. Amaresh Singh (Country Human Resources Director, Alstom India Ltd.) said that it has become imperative for companies these days to create the right environment for Gen Y to express themselves through freedom of innovation." He also mentioned that Gen Y has had the luxury of abundance thus will be incentivized by unique rewards. Since Gen Y brings along great value addition to the company in terms of technology and innovation, their aspirations need to be accommodated. Leaders need to adopt the idea of demonstrative leadership to handle Gen Y.

Ms. Aparna Sharma (Country Head- Lafarge India Pvt. Ltd.) said that "Organizations today need to be more open to reverse mentoring from Gen Y and create an organizational culture of tolerance to generational diversity and collaboration." In her opinion Gen Y respects competence and not position so leaders need to act accordingly.

Mr. Sandeep Dipankar (AGM- HR, L & T Power) said that Gen Y believes in the motto of “Deserve before you desire” and thus can see through glib talk. Frank communication is vital to win them over. Organizations need to be open, flexible and leaders must practice transformational leadership to fulfill the expectations of Gen Y.



Ms. Geeta Garodia (Managing Director, Jewel Consumer Care Pvt. Ltd.) emphasized that organizations need to foster an environment of creativity and inclusiveness. Gen Y needs to be empowered to act and take decisions for which mentoring is the way forward. She also mentioned about the open door policy followed in her company wherein even the junior most employee can reach her directly if they have new ideas. She also mentioned that Gen Y is more objective and receptive to negative feedback vis a vis Gen X and Baby Boomers who are slightly more rigid and hence GenY is easier to mould.



Mr. Prashant Patel (VP - Marketing, Savair Energy) stated that Gen Y has to be given clarity about their job content, career prospects and also be appreciated timely for their contributions. They are passionate about work and organizations need to channelize this factor in the right direction.



Prof. M N Parmar (Dean – Faculty of Social Work, MSU) speaking of his experience of the academics fraternity brought out the point of reverse mentoring wherein professors and mentors are learning a lot from their students. He jokingly quoted that the current generation keeps their employers on probation instead of employers keeping the employees on probation because they switch jobs so quickly.

He gave valuable advice to future leaders by saying “Leaders need to Walk the Talk and Talk the Walk.” to lead Gen Y and bring out the best in them.



Mr. Sandeep Purohit (Chief Manager - HR and Admin, Gujarat Industries Power Company Limited) rightly quoted that Gen Y does not believe in sermons and may get disillusioned if opinions are imposed on them. They need to be handled with care and given adequate opportunities for growth. He also pointed out the lack of emotional maturity of Gen Y due to lack of experience. He advised Gen Y to wait for their turn to become future leaders.



Mr. Shashikant Patange (Head – HR, Linde Engineering India Pvt. Ltd.) spoke about the fact that Gen Y is very receptive to negative feedback and ready to change quickly for personal growth and for betterment of the organisation. He mentioned that Gen Y at Linde had done wonders by introducing several out of the box ideas in the company thereby contributing to organisational productivity and efficiency.

Mr. CS Mahesh (Founder, Anahat) pointed out that the cognitive abilities of subsequent generations have definitely improved over the years. He said that Gen Y today has the courage to stand up for their rights and make a difference in contrast to past generations. He advised leaders of tomorrow to treat Gen Y as mature adults and give them autonomy for best results.



To conclude, Naman agrees with the panel that all generations at the workplace need to collaborate and complement each other to make organizations sustainable profit centers in the long run, keeping in mind the following facts regarding the millennials:

1. Gen Y is smart, exciting, has an unprecedented ability to learn new things fast, always in touch with what is going on in the world and has a passion for making an impact in the society.
2. Rather than asking Gen Y to conform to the existing norms, leverage what they have to offer, be ready to learn from them, give them freedom to work and express creatively, give them constant feedback and treat them with respect.
3. Engage the millennials by aligning their goals with the organizational goals, give them ample opportunity to grow as professionals and give them an opportunity to contribute to social causes.
4. Gen Y also needs to develop patience, rather than expect instant gratification both professionally as well as personally.

Case Study Presentations

Mr. Sankalp Shobhit (Lead HR Business Partner, Bombardier Transportation) mentioned that Bombardier conducts an employee engagement survey every year to get a view of the aspirations and ever-changing needs of their employees and they accordingly formulate strategies yearly to engage employees. They have picnics, swimming competitions and other fun activities to break the monotony at work and keep employees engaged. She said that these initiatives had improved the productivity of their employees to a great extent. Naman has had the great opportunity to conduct an extensive skill assessment programme for the blue collared employees at Bombardier in the past.



Mr. Bharat Goswami (Senior VP – HR, GSPC Gas) spoke about the various ways they have implemented in their company for engaging employees especially Gen Y. He also stressed on the need to encourage innovation in organisations to get competitive advantage and help employees grow with the organisation.



Each discussion brought out a lot of thought provoking ideas and initiated intellectually stimulating interaction with the panelists graced with standing ovations by the audience at the end of each session.