highlights of this issue
- Industry Champion, Dr. Pradeep focuses on developing Human Resource Strategy.
- Monimoy and Sajiri highlight the Competency based Employee Development System.
- Niket Karajagi underlines the importance of virtual teams in building World Class Organizations.

ATYAASAA
AWAKENING HUMAN EXCELLENCE

industry champion
Dr. N.G. Pradeep

Dr. N.G. Pradeep is currently Global Head – Organization Development at Hexaware Technologies Ltd. He has a rich and varied experience of over 13 years spanning consulting, training, research and line management in Human Resources. He also holds a certificate in Organization Development from National Training Laboratories, USA.

The exhortation that the HR Function in an organization must transform itself from playing an administrative/transactional role to becoming a Strategic Partner is here to stay. This has led senior HR Managers in several organizations to think on the lines of evolving a HR Strategy in alignment with the Business Strategy. Yet, there seems to be little clarity on what a HR Strategy should contain, and how to go about evolving it. This challenge becomes more daunting in the absence of a well-articulated Business Strategy. In what follows, I attempt to outline the key components of a HR Strategy, and the basis for developing it.

HR Strategy must articulate the following, if it has to enable the achievement of business objectives :
1. What competencies do we need to possess/build in our people? What kind of culture do we need to evolve?
2. What structure will be appropriate to best implement our business strategy and better serve our customers?
3. What systems do we deploy to ensure alignment and focus in implementation of our business strategy?

The starting point of developing HR strategy, with or without a well-articulated business strategy, is to understand :
1. The markets / customer segments served by the organization
2. The value proposition underlying the organization's offerings to different customer segments
3. The growth aspirations of the organization and potential avenues for growth

the editor's column

*Information has value. In erstwhile days, the people who held on to their information, held the most power but today, the power resides in sharing information thus " **Knowledge Beans**" new edition reaches out to you. Let's join hands together to share and spread information.*

The overwhelming response and feedback to the introductory issue of the "Knowledge Beans" gives me great pleasure and satisfaction. We honour your feedbacks and look forward to the same so that we can make reading the newsletter an enriching experience. Feel free to share your thoughts.

The October edition will deal with aspects of Innovation in World Class Companies in continuation to the founders note, the Spiritual Quotient in corporates by an industry champion and check out the space for German Project Manager, Karsten Scherling.

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Neha Arora is a young, pro-active, and energetic individual, with a passion for Human Resource Management & Training. She comes with a clear focus on managing HR interventions as a career. She has worked on multiple key projects in training and consulting areas over a period of time in Atyaasaa.

The customer value proposition helps to define the competency building agenda, and the behaviours and values (culture) that must be nurtured to deliver performance. The customer segments that we are serving (including geographical / industry scope), the nature of our offerings (products/services), our value proposition and our growth aspirations taken in tandem, enable the creation of an appropriate organization structure to better serve customers, while delineating accountabilities of various roles.

To actualize the HR Strategy in terms of required competencies, desired culture, appropriate structure and creating alignment and focus in implementation of business strategy, HR should effectively leverage its various subsystems – Recruitment, Performance Management, Training, Operations, Compensation Management, Career Management and Leadership Development – each dovetailing well with the other. For example **a)** the scale of recruitment must be proportionate to growth aspirations **b)** recruitment and training should focus on acquiring/developing competencies critical to delivering the value proposition **c)** performance objectives should be effectively cascaded down the line using a system like the Balanced Scorecard **d)** performance objectives should be defined in line with business targets and accountabilities implied by the organization structure **e)** individual compensation must be tied to performance **f)** market positioning on compensation should reflect the supply-demand equation for competencies **g)** career progression must be tied to the potential to demonstrate required competencies for the next role **h)** behaviors that align with the desired culture must be recognized / rewarded.

The alignment of HR subsystems is vital to the performance of any organization. What gives direction and makes these subsystems distinct across organizations is the uniqueness of the HR Strategy, which is derived from the organization's Business Strategy.

competency based employee development

Sajiri Chidgupkar, Monimoy Sen Gupta

Sajiri Chidgupkar and Monimoy Sen Gupta, working as Management Associates, in Geometric Ltd, have done their masters in HR from IMED, Pune and currently handling a gamut of activities arraying Organizational Development Interventions and other Developmental initiatives as a part of Capability Building Function.

Everyone today is talking about competency based development. Here is our attempt and version of what can be competency based development.

Let's start from the beginning, i.e. the meaning of **competency**. There are many definitions of competency doing rounds, for the article we'll look at competency as a trait or characteristic that allows an individual to successfully accomplish work or task assigned. These characteristics comprise of individual's skills, knowledge and attributes. The traits are known as competency only and only if they allow or result in superior performance.

The next question is often asked why use competency as the predictor of performance why not simply look at the individual's performance? Well the answer is simple while in the short term which might mean in the current role the performance of the individual might be a good indicator but for future performance competency is not only a better option but more often than not the only option. The reason being that; people perform tasks or jobs using their competency to achieve desired results. While work or jobs might change, competencies are of more enduring nature and immune to change in the job or work context. To summarize competencies are what individuals use to perform successfully and without it consistent performance is not possible.

Now that we have attempted to state the meaning of competency we take on our next important phrase "**employee development**". It is the pursuit of any activity that leads to continuous learning, personal growth, which contributes to the achievement of both an individual's and their employer's or organization's objective(s) on the longer term.

Keeping the above two definitions in mind we have tried to list down certain steps which might be used to work towards conducting a pilot and then institutionalize competency based employee development.

1. **The background**
    a. Identify a champion, target employees and structural framework for an employee development process.
    b. Assess the need for a competency development process; get an estimate for the organization's competency needs.
    c. Complete employee competency assessments and define estimates of target employees' competency acquisition needs (a SWOT of the target group's competencies).
2. **The plan and implementation**
    a. Understand the target groups "personal aspirations".
    b. Develop a plan for implementation of the competency based employee development services.
    c. Brief all stake holders and obtain resource support to implement the start-up process plan.
    d. Create a steering committee (there should be representatives from all stake holders).
    e. Implement and evaluate the start-up process.
3. **The follow up**
    a. Make case studies of the implementation and spread the learning's amongst the stake holders.
    b. Institutionalize the learning and take the process to a larger group.

The above piece is a product of our experience, reading and bit of our naïve imagination.

founder's note
Niket Karajagi

Niket Karajagi is the founder director of Atyaasaa Consulting Private Limited, Pune which contributes to top corporate brands globally. He is an established international management consultant and an innovative human resource trainer with niche areas of expertise & contributions. Niket is an authority on creativity & innovation, emotional intelligence and statistical methodologies apart from his operations background in understanding of management processes

VIRTUAL TEAMS : THE CORE OF WORLD CLASS COMPANIES

A globally integrated yet a locally strong organization, creates a World Class Company. In line with my last article on World Class Companies I am now taking up the discussion of Virtual Teams as a focal point for this issue.

A Virtual Team comprises of people across the globe connected to each other, over a technology backbone. This could be a combination of Internet, Video based interactions and other means of knowledge transactions spread over multiple time zones. The aspect of cross cultural sensitivity and awareness of technology thus plays a key role for success of these teams.

Virtual Teams are ideal for project situations and cross functional teams. The key distinguishing factor here is that in physically collocated teams interaction levels are high and thus bonding and chemistry can be created. However in virtual teams the members may not have met and yet they have to work effectively. As the members on the virtual networks are mostly experts in their own domain, organizations find this arrangement to be effective.

Virtual Teams are spread across continents and normally follow a Matrix based structure. The entry and exist of team members has to be properly planned and a culture common to all has to be evolved. The key success factor is defining the key objectives, deliverables and rules of conduct. The main failure cause identified is absence of commonly accepted code of conduct and cross cultural assumptions.

As Virtual Teams have experts located across the globe, it is the most efficient way of utilizing talent across different locations and countries to achieve specific business objectives. These teams improve productivity, quality, reduce costs of projects and also provide a great learning experience.

Should you thus be evolving as a World Class Organization having "Virtual Ready Teams" then surely you are on the path of success. Do talk to your people and find out how the concept of Virtual Teams can make your organization a productive World Class Organization.

bean statement

There are many who talk of making it big in life and then there are others who make it big. People who talk big are great visionaries who seek an easy way out & thus get nowhere. People who make it big are great visionaries who are willing to pay a price for the success they seek. Putting vision to action inspite of failures is the key to success.