

KNOWLEDGE BEANS-20

a human resource newsletter

HIGHLIGHTS OF THIS ISSUE

- Industry Champion, Sophia looks at Cultural Trainings in understanding oneself
- Prof Rajgopalan states the building of global culture
- Era Kukreja defines the aspect of team building
- Deeksha Jawa opens a new column in 'Bean Tip Article'

industry champion space

CULTURAL TRAININGS UNDERSTANDING YOURSELF

Culture is the programming of the mind, it is the way we feel, perceive, communicate and behave. Each individual is programmed differently – starting from language, family, schooling, hobbies and finally the choice of profession and work place. In intercultural or cross cultural trainings, we focus on understanding ourselves, looking at our own programming, judgement patterns, core values and the communication strategies to understand how effectively we can work with others, who have a different culture.

Cultures are not bound by nationalities, languages or cuisines. Today, culture is an influx, a constant exchange of ideas which makes it impossible to define. So, understanding the ways of how culture works on us and others can be a tremendous tool for analysing conflicts, for improving communication with colleagues and discovering new spaces for synergies. Ideally it is a process which starts with training followed by coaching. Cross cultural team building seminars also prove to be effective.

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Sophia Stepf

Sophia Stepf has an MA in Dramaturgy for theatre and media from the HMT, Leipzig and Toronto's York University and qualified as a Business Cultural Trainer from IH London. She has developed and managed theatre projects for the Goethe Institute, MMB in India and conducts intercultural theatre workshops and does journalistic writing about India.



She works for international festivals as a Dramaturge. She is actively involved in programming, writing, translation and hosting public talks. As an expert on theatre, she has conducted research for German Federal Endowment for Arts and the Goethe Institute in New Delhi. She has worked as an intercultural trainer in education and business.



THE EDITOR'S COLUMN

Alok Nagarkar



Alok Nagarkar is pursuing his Master's degree in Management with specialization in HR. He has a passion for creating a dynamic network of people and sharing knowledge.

This edition talks of "Unity in Diversity". It talks of the importance of cross culture communication and team building. It lays an emphasis on development of an effective work culture at the workplace so as to maximize the performance of the workforce. Through culture, it talks of employee development and the resultant organizational growth.



Atyaasaa Consulting Private Limited is a leading Human Resource Training & Consulting Organization partnering with some of the best brands in the country and overseas. Atyaasaa has been a catalyst & a contributor in their quest for people development and business excellence. The core differentiator of Atyaasaa process is continual innovation, unique customization and use of state of the art technology tools implemented through ethical and experienced operations and human resource facilitators having contribution as their core value.

CULTURAL TRAININGS— UNDERSTANDING YOURSELF

Training can be done in a fun way as people who are directly engaged will learn more easily. Theatre and film are popular media which can be used in training. Experiential trainings are by far the most effective. We can enact changes and possible solutions, and thus create an inner path for real life change. We can train our perception skills using films, replaying scenes a number of times to understand what we did and what we did not, what values or etiquettes get communicated and how exact they are.

By sharpening and refocusing on perception and experiencing our own inner cultural workings, learning about our cultural mix, we become competent to work effectively and live more happily in a globalized world.

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vital requisite BUILDING GLOBAL CULTURE

Prof Rajgopalan

In today's scenario, the concept of "GLOBAL WORK CULTURE" is assuming new dimensions. Acquisitions like Tata Steel (Corus) mark the revival of the "Indian MNC's". IT majors like Infosys and Wipro have successfully acquired medium size IT companies all over the world. Bharat Forge has made successful global acquisition that range from Germany to China.



All these developments have made management analysts take a re-look at the concept of organizational culture.

Some of the important elements of culture are:

- The philosophy and the values of the organization
- Respect for individuals
- Decision making styles-ranging from totally autocratic to totally democratic
- Fairness to all stakeholders
- Transparency

In building a universal culture, the commonality of philosophy and values creates the biggest bondage. Hence, these need to be clearly identified, communicated and strengthened. The next important barrier to be cleared is a traditional perceptual factor. Most developed countries have been "rulers" and most developed countries have "been ruled". Entries of Toyota into the USA and Tata Steel into Europe have been perceived with doubt, uncertainty and with a feeling of "let down". This can only be increased through greater visibility on mutual basis.

Prof Rajgopalan holds a graduate degree in Economics from the Mumbai University. He did his Masters in Business Administration with specialization in Human Resources from the Jamnalal Bajaj Institute of Management Studies, Mumbai. He is also a Law graduate from the Mumbai University.

Prof Rajgopalan has a rich experience of 35 years. He has been the Regional Personnel Manager at ITC for 10 years. He has a 25 years experience as a corporate trainer and an HR Consultant and has conducted more than 1000 training programs till date. He is a visiting faculty at IIM Lucknow, Jamnalal Bajaj Institute of Management Studies (JBIMS), Mumbai, Sadhana Centre for Management, Leadership and Development, Pune and a number of other institutes.

The second stage would be the joint participation in training and development processes. The focus is on highlighting commonalities, breaking traditional myths and prejudices in the process and building global teams.

Unilever would perhaps be the best case study. It has decentralized its operations globally. For years, the company hired people of different nationalities but, with similar values and interests. The company strongly believes that the induction of like minded resource people makes employees work as a team, irrespective of national and cultural differences.

Unilever also attempts to bring diverse employees together. The route ahead for Indian MNC's is challenging but not impossible



bean tip

CULTURAL PROFILING

Culture is the key influencing factor for individuals and the organizations. Culture across nations differs a lot, so it becomes necessary for every international manager to develop a culture-specific understanding about the countries he/she needs to operate in. The approach is to develop a cultural profile of the country with which he/she is to do business.

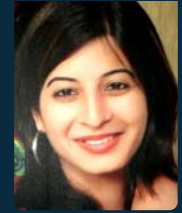
To develop a cultural profile, one needs some awareness about the cultural variables universal to most cultures, some of which are mentioned below:

- Economy
- Thinking
- Politics
- Societal cultural values
- Values
- Public policy & legal framework
- Religion
- Social institutions
- Association
- Basic personality/National character
- Perception

From these universal variables, one can categorize specific differences found in each country or people and hence anticipate their implications for the workplace.

Deeksha Jawa

Deeksha Jawa, Head – Project Management, Atyaasaa Consulting Private Limited, is a post graduate in Management HR and Green Belt in Six Sigma with a background in Psychology. She has a passion for behavioural sciences and combines her knowledge of psychometric testing with her management expertise to manage projects end to end and design & develop workshops in order to meet the changing needs of busines



space for everyone

Team BUILDING

A Team can be defined as a group of people working together to achieve a common goal. It is a process that develops cooperation and unity among team members. It has a specific objective to fulfil. Team members have to demonstrate their individual talent & function synergistically to achieve a common organization goal.

Team members share responsibilities; they get involved in generation of new ideas & decision making process. They show support, respect & trust for each other & handle conflicts and indiscipline successfully.

Team building is essential for competing in this competitive world. To build an effective team, the primary step is to establish common goals & the commitment of the team members to achieve those common goals. These goals should be clearly communicated to the participants. They should be aware of the purpose of their participation in the team. This helps to motivate them & build trust among them. Proactive communication makes the members feel worthy and gives them a direction to work.

Moreover building an effective team also requires multiple & balanced skills. In this era of globalization, team building plays a major role in multinational companies. Differences in culture can create misunderstandings between team members. Therefore, building trust is a critical step in the creation & development of such teams. A team leader has a big role to play in team building. He should have the ability to command respect from his team members. He must be able to influence his team in positive way. Then only the purpose of 'teams' would get fulfilled.

Era Kukreja

Era Kukreja is currently pursuing her Masters in Business Administration from Sadhana Centre for Management and Leadership Development, Pune. She has keen interest in studying human behaviour and their transformations.

