



Atyaasaa

KNOWLEDGE BEANS

A HUMAN RESOURCE NEWSLETTER

ABOUT ATYAASAA

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 and 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. These are implemented through ethical and experienced operations and human resource facilitators having contribution as their core value.



ATYAASAA
AWAKENING HUMAN EXCELLENCE

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OD ENTHUSIAST'S ORATE Noor Mohammad

STRATEGIES TO MANAGE TALENT IN CORPORATE CHAOS



Noor Mohammad, SPHR, has 12 plus years HR experience in FMCG and Telecom industries in APAC and Middle East regions. Currently he is working as Chief Human Resources Officer, Airtel Bangladesh. He started his career with Fonterra—world's largest dairy exporter, and worked as head of HR in Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia and had a regional HR stint in Singapore. He then moved to telecom industry and worked as Country HR Manager at Nokia Siemens Networks, Bangladesh. Academically he holds BBA and MBA degrees alongside a PG Diploma in Personnel Management.



Talent management in economically stable time is challenging enough, and in turbulent times, it is all the more difficult. What changes in turbulent times? Morale goes downhill because of job insecurity, training and development budget is cut and even some innovation spending is curtailed. While many of these actions are necessary to protect shareholders' interest, these actions combined with economic uncertainty make employees jittery. It is the potential loss of 'A' players - who, both in good or bad times; usually have a ready option to jump the ship. This undesired attrition hits talent managers hard. 'B' players' low morale impacts productivity and taking out 'C' players becomes sensitive! (Since they try to raise hoopla across organization as against the management's intention to keep it low key).

What can be done to mitigate these risks?

Be candid, share the reality. In our penchant to not make employees jittery, we tend to filter out reality and *continued next page ►►*

THE EDITOR'S MESSAGE

During economic upheaval organizations face many challenges and one might think that talent management would be inconsequential. However, studies suggest that organizations during times of crisis need to have the best developed strategies to engage their talent. The unsurpassed way to maintain organizational performance in times of catastrophe is by engaging the available talent effectually. This necessitates organizations fostering innovation; create an environment of growth and flexibility in work. This aid the organizations successfully tide over the tough situations.

The theme of the next issue of Knowledge Beans will be 'Challenges in mid level leadership development'. If you share a passion for the topic and have a flair for writing, do send us your 300 word article with a brief profile along with your photograph in jpeg format to atyaasaaeditor@atyaasaa.com

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OD ENTHUSIAST'S ORATE - STRATEGIES TO MANAGE TALENT IN CORPORATE CHAOS - Noor Mohammad

try to portray a posture of business as usual. My view is, we should try to leverage, instead of undermine, employees' power of resilience. Across countries and industries I have witnessed that most employees deal with downside rationally if they are given the true picture.

Innovate and optimize cost through cross-functional teams. While consultants have their worth, in tough times, better approach is to drive innovation and cost optimization agenda through cross-functional teams. It has immediate buy-in (due to higher ownership) across the organization. Besides, such exercise helps develop employee capabilities by exposing them to critical cross-functional experiences.

Continue to invest in top talents. This may sound counter intuitive, but tough times are the best times to reiterate organization's commitment to top talents. This directly helps fend-off 'A' players' attrition (we need them in tough times even more). Alongside, tough times may allow employees more time to invest in self development since workload perhaps is low.

Prioritize. We tend to make every small change urgent or important which confuses employees. Management should prioritize critical actions so that employees are able to focus on top two or three that matter. **E**



THE OD CONNOISSEUR'S ORATE

Stefan Schnitzler

VALUES - GUARDIAN IN TURBULENT TIMES

Stefan began his career with an apprenticeship as a merchant in wholesale and foreign trade. After finishing his apprenticeship in this wholesale house he was responsible for supervising his own customer pool within the food retailing industry as a cooperation manager.



In his career he was also responsible for the repositioning of a concept for a specialist retailer in the domestic textile segment as well as the contribution in developing and introducing the license "Esprit house" for house, home textiles and porcelain for the label Esprit in Germany and Switzerland. He is a Master Trainer and certified in Accelerated Learning. Among others he supports the National Junior Marketing association in terms of preparation and use of moderation, presentation and creativity techniques.

Stefan also works on an honorary basis as a member of the examination board at the Chamber of Commerce in Oldenburg. Stefan has been a cooperation partner of Machwüth team GmbH since 2004. In January 2007, he took on the responsibility as the Key Account Manager and Managing Director for MTI Europe, coordinating projects internationally and as of January 2012 he is also President of MTI North America Inc.

What are turbulent times? Turbulence is an event that often occurs unexpectedly with an unpredictable impact. We can all experience this from time to time during a "flight – with a high likelihood of serious repercussions. The word turbulence has its origin in Latin and encompasses concepts such as rotation, concern, anxiety, being perplexed, confused and dazzled. Taking this into consideration, turbulent times are times when nobody can predict in which direction the present will turn or in what form the present will result.

You personally and your organization or department could easily be shaken up in a way that you lose track and grip of driving on your strategic path. How to keep on track, how to ensure you steer back into the desired direction/future after the turbulence hits you? Your guardrails are 'values'.

The Canadian psychologist Elliott Jaques stated that development of (high) potentials need two preconditions to prepare the soil for talent development:

- An opportunity to step out of the own comfort zone (solid challenge)
- A set of values which function as guardrails to cope successfully with a new, never seen before and unstable (management) situation.

Obviously turbulent times are a perfect environment for developing and managing talent. Turbulent times are rich in challenges where a proactive learning approach is desired. These times provide multiple situations that allow people to step out of their comfort zones.

But hold on a second. What is also needed for a successful management of talent in turbulent times? A well-defined set of values that are aligned to the organizational culture serves as a GPS system to hold course in stormy weather. But who is responsible for creating the appropriate value set? Leaders! It is all about leadership with an approach of being a role model and the leader living the values himself. **E**



FOUNDER'S ARTICLE

Niket Karajagi

MANAGING TALENT DURING TURBULENT TIMES



Turbulence in fluid mechanics means anarchic and stochastic (state is non-deterministic) property changes. Our businesses of today are impacted by known and unknown factors; predictable yet unpredictable parameters and thus forecasting trends becomes just an academic exercise. The power to interpret these constant changes in the duality of opportunity and problems is a misnomer and agile adaptability with preparation to this steady alteration is imperative.

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 and contributions. Niket is an authority on creativity and innovation, emotional intelligence and statistical methodologies apart from his operations background in understanding of management processes.



Essentially, the system and the environment need a complete overhaul. The mantra is every organization must invest in technology and reduce the dependence on average performing manpower. All customary activities must be automated. Productize all services. Automation and standardization will help build a strong base. There is no point spending too much time on products and service with low margins and high effort. People dependence in mundane work must be minimized. Replace people with technology in routine.

Persistently work on ranking your employees. Hire the superlative and preserve the best only. This best of course is a function of the industry you operate in. Don't hire expertise beyond what is required. It does not help and is not a productive choice. Conduct scientific assessments to qualify employees on the bell curve. Bell curve is detested but is the finest tool.

Be lucid at what margins your organization must operate and then build teams around it. If you wish to operate in high margin high innovation sectors you must hire the exceptional. The best is not necessarily expensive manpower. In fact, my experience says people who work for money are the worst to hire. Their loyalty is poor. Their ability to learn and contribute is also not note-worthy. The problem is their energy is focussed only on acquiring material gains to maintain high personal "life standards" at the cost of the brand. Their individual value in the market is not as towering.

Reward only performers with commendable attitude. Come out of the paradigm of tenure-ship. Performance is not a function of years of experience. Performance is a function of skills, competence and attitude.



Ask a question when you hire; can this person make it alone to success on his own? Mostly you will realize you pay for skills and not for passion. Hire people who enjoy working. People with glamorous lifestyles always play safe.

Invest time, money and effort in engaging people at work and in teams they are with. People engagement is crucial to bail out of troubled times. Weed out the people who refuse to engage. In fact chronic cases are enormous chokes and I wonder why organizations still carry on with them. Have enough controls in system to identify disengaged people and set a formal process of de-weeding. Nurture a culture of innovation. Pioneering minds are a backbone for building a culture of novelty. Hire them even if there are no positions planned. Create a position the moment you spot an innovative talent.

Be vigilant of the compensation package you offer. A lot of individuals are paid more than what the job can afford. You must have an upper limit defined for each job. Either professionals shape up or take a beating on the increments. In certain cases you may also want to look at employees who are paid much more than what they contribute; either scale them up or place them out. High CTC surely bleed the organizations. I have seen in my corporate career, organizations have ruined their budgets and long term prospects by offering unreasonable pay packets and increments. Don't be misled by qualifications; look for results

Invest in development of skills and competencies consistently. Have clearly defined success behaviours for the organization and align people to them. Go for enhancing top line by acquiring new businesses. Do not ever play a defensive game. It really helps in the long run. If you have the appropriate people you will always be aggressive enough in troubled time. Always remember people only bet on a winning horse when the stakes are high.



My Mantra: Organization success is a function of illustrious people; apt technology investments and processes; pertinent products and services; and last but not the least incredible passion. With this you can surmount all adversity. **E**

BEAN STATEMENT

Turbulence is always within; outside the situation is the way it is meant to be, purely governed by the law of collective cause and effect. Wisdom based leadership is the only way out to conquer this turbulence.

The views expressed in each of the article are solely those of the author.