

KNOWLEDGE BEANS



TÊTE-À-TÊTE

Trupti Pansare, HR Practitioner, talks about successful implementation of Sabbaticals at Intelim Technologies Private Limited



THE OD FOLLOWER'S ORATE

Rajiv Misra, Head of Human Resources for Wipro's BPO, elaborates about, 'Sabbaticals: A good HR policy?'



THOUGHTS FROM ATYAASAA

Dipti Ganu Kulkarni, Associate Consultant, Atyaasaa, discusses 'Sabbaticals: A way ahead in Indian HR'



SABBATICALS : SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION

1. What do you think about the concept of sabbaticals?

In recent years, sabbaticals have woven their way into the corporate setting. Sabbaticals provide an extended break/s from work, as a time to recharge, to study or simply do something different away from the grind of the workplace.

Sabbatical provides people an opportunity for intentional reflection, personal growth, transformative insights to acquire niche skills and/or experience that you wouldn't have a chance to build otherwise. However, the most meaningful sabbaticals would be the planned ones – with specific goals and objectives designed to benefit both the individual and his company.

2. Does your organization have specific criteria for sabbaticals?

In today's uncertain economic conditions, with high competitive pressures and lowering margins most organizations have to 'do more with less' workforce. Rather than handling sabbatical

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TÊTE-À-TÊTE Trupti Pansare



Trupti Pansare has diverse experience in the field of Human Capital Management. With over 12 years of professional experience at leading technological organizations and business schools, Trupti has endowed HR practice/s in Talent Management, HR as Business Partner and CSR areas. In one of her recent initiative, she has helped a software start-up to build a 'Talent Analytics Platform' and its successful rollout at Intelim Technologies. Trupti is also involved with CII's Young Indians wing, a member of National HRD Network and involved with several CSR initiatives.

THE EDITOR'S MESSAGE

Sabbaticals not only enable an employee to pursue a self-development goal (either personal or professional), but also have a desirable impact on his/her career over a period of time. Though it is not legally binding for an employer to offer sabbaticals to its employees, statistically, most of the best organizations to work for, have included sabbaticals in their policy. Its advantages to the employee are obvious. The organization also benefits from sabbaticals by having a rejuvenated workforce, being able to retain the cream de la cream talent and it also turns out to be a cost effective option. Sabbaticals seem to be the ultimate answer in today's nervy times.

The theme of the next issue of Knowledge Beans will be 'Innovative Reward Strategy'. 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

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.



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requests on a case-by-case basis, if organizations can operate with an established policy, it helps in treating employees with equitably and fairness.

We determine a standard qualification method for granting sabbaticals that include – eligibility and frequency, seniority and job classification, contribution and quality of work, justified ROI.

3. What road blocks have you faced in suitably employing people on their return from sabbatical?

At Intelimint, we have not really faced such problems, as our setup is small. We have worked on various options such as flexi hours, part time work, work-from-home etc. to ensure the transition happens smoothly. This has helped us build trusted bonds with our team.

4. Sabbaticals for study purpose, how do you manage enhanced expectations from that employee?

Sabbaticals for study play a vital role and eventually lead to better professional advancements such as promotions, faster career progression. What is crucial here is to set an absolute clarity and expectations at both the ends.

What we look for is how enhanced academic profile will result into increased value creation and contributions that are balanced with the reward system.

5. What benefits the organization gets through the policy of sabbaticals?

When planned well, sabbaticals offer strategic advantages to organizations and its people such as:

- Attract and retention of valued and experienced talent
- Increased trust, confidence, productivity and loyalty
- Foster a culture of innovation in the organization
- Revitalizes the workforce and develops leaders
- Building your brand as an 'employer of choice'
- Fostering a healthy work life balance
- Come back with better focus and mental clarity
- Reducing the cost of employee turnover expenses



SABBATICALS: A GOOD HR POLICY

THE OD ENTHUSIAST'S ORATE

Rajiv Misra



Rajiv Misra, Head of Human Resources for Wipro's BPO, has served the Indian Army for 23 years before moving into mainstream corporate life. Rajiv is credited for institutionalizing numerous new processes and initiated team development programmes, which resulted in improving employee deliverables while he has been associated with Wipro.

Rajiv has been awarded the Army Commander's Commendation Card in 1988 and 2006. He was also a part of the United Nations Forces in Lebanon and Israel for a year. Rajiv retired as a Colonel after successfully commanding an artillery unit in 2007.

Rajiv holds a bachelor's degree from JNU, a master's degree from Madras University and a certificate in Business Administration from MDI, Gurgaon. He is regimented, regulated, disciplined and an avid sportsperson. Tennis, squash, golf and fitness are some of his passions.



Over the last few years, the concept of sabbaticals has garnered a lot of attention in corporate India. If we look back in history, a sabbatical was leave given to college teachers for a period of a year or less to study, travel or rest at full or partial salary. The dictionary meaning of Sabbatical leave is "a time period in which a person does not report to his regular job but remains employed with that organization".

Today's high pressure environment requires one to be on the job 24X7 trying to meet deadlines creating a lot of stress on an employee. Most IT/ITES organizations have customers in different time zones and use modern technology leads to creating a virtual office at home catering to the needs of these customers.

Over a period of time, this constant pressure and lack of work life balance leads to lower productivity and burnout.

Understanding this need, a number of organizations have put in place a policy of sabbatical leave. Leave is granted at half or no pay for employees to use this leave to develop their skill sets, spend time with their family or work for a social cause. For organizations this is used as a retention tool to attract and retain talented and high performing employees. The employee also benefits as he/she can utilize this time to fulfill their needs with a guarantee of the job waiting for them on their return.

From an organizational perspective it ensures that costs are contained and organizations can manage cyclical surges effectively for business and at the same time gain employees who are more productive and creative on their return. Once back, placing the employee in a suitable project is a critical decision which needs to be handled sensitively.

SABBATICALS : A WAY AHEAD IN INDIAN HR

THOUGHTS FROM ATYAASAA Dipti Ganu Kulkarni



Dipti Ganu Kulkarni, Associate Consultant, Atyaasaa is a HR professional with over 3 years of experience in recruitment, selection and training operations. Presently, she is handling various outsourced HR projects. Talent management, training and development are her areas of interest.



A robust scheme/policy for sabbatical leave has tremendous positives well harnessed by the developed countries. However, this concept has not taken root in Indian corporate milieu. This stems possibly from the inherent insecurity nourished by the domestic policy makers with regards to likely abuse of this scheme/policy.

Sabbatical can work wonders especially for middle level and senior level managers. Those in their middle age are struggling with their work life balance. There is also a phenomenon of burn out setting in. To top it all, the threat of getting outsmarted by the younger generation on the technological front is real.

In the developed world this initiative has been used as an effective employee engagement tool. There exists a seamless opportunity for a win-win situation for both the employer and the employee. Employee gets to work on things which otherwise the occupational exigencies prevented him/her to work upon.



A robust sabbatical scheme/policy helps this situation immensely and has a huge potential of making these senior resources not only more productive but also enable them continue to sustain competitive advantage for the organizations they work for.

In the process the employee builds desired competencies and sharpens essential skills which are useful to him to effectively discharge his/her responsibilities at the organization where he/she returns at the end of the sabbatical.

Insecurity of losing people to competitors during sabbatical is well founded. Strong "emotional engagement" with the organization and the profound sense of ownership will certainly hold the "wanted" employee back. In some cases though,

The only investment which the organization has made in this whole process is implementing a robust sabbatical leave scheme/policy giving comfort to the employee that they are "wanted".

employee may abuse the scheme/policy and organizations may end up losing him/her. All such people are worth losing anyways. Aren't they?

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

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BEANSTATEMENT

"Sabbatical a break or a preparation to pursue dreams, a choice worth considering"