

# You never stop learning here

**T**HIS year 60 diploma engineers from the Anand Group's 4,500-strong workforce will take a sabbatical from the shop floor to pursue higher education. Fifty per cent of their education expenses will be borne by the group, and the other half will be given as a loan. The loan will be written off if they complete their courses successfully.

The other 4,440 employees will be put through 1.8 lakh man hours of training at the Anand 'U' (university), the group's in-house training facility. A team of five dedicated faculty members and a dozen line managers turned part-time lecturers will ensure that every employee goes through 40 hours of training in a year. That apart, every three years, all employees are assessed on 12 competency areas. The findings are shared with the employees and a development plan for each individual is put in place. Non-performers are treated with ample tolerance and are given special attention and training so that they, too, can learn and deliver. Employees, whose children are pursuing higher education (in the IITs, the IIMs, etc.), get an allowance to fund the courses.

If there is one reason why the low-profile Anand Group made it to the list of 25

## 24 ANAND GROUP

Annual sales .....	Rs 1,026 crore
Staff .....	3,600
No. of women at senior mgmt levels .....	1
Staff turnover .....	1.40%
No. of employees with a tenure of over 5 years .....	958
No. of employees over 44 years of age .....	299

### RATINGS (On a scale of five)

Pride	★★
Camaraderie	★★
Development opportunities	★★★
Fun place to work	★★

Great Places to Work, it is the emphasis the group places on upgrading the skills of its employees. The group has a human touch as well. Expenses for major medical surgeries beyond the scope of Medclaim policies are reimbursed.

Lastly, the management encourages women professionals. Already 15% of the workforce is made up of the fair sex. You will find women engineers even on shop floors. The group hopes to increase representation for women to 30%. That will

be quite an achievement for a manufacturing organisation.

M. ANAND



Great places to WORK

## 25 JINDAL IRON AND STEEL COMPANY

Annual sales .....	Rs 390 crore
Staff .....	1,498
No. of women at senior mgmt levels .....	1
Staff turnover .....	4.80%
No. of employees with a tenure of over 5 years .....	1,302
No. of employees over 44 years of age .....	187

### RATINGS (On a scale of five)

Pride	★★★
Camaraderie	★★★
Development opportunities	★★★
Fun place to work	★★

**D**ESPITE having 1,000-plus workers, Jindal Iron and Steel (Jisco) hasn't had a workers union in the last three decades. At its two factories in Maharashtra, workers have not struck work for even a single day. In the past two years, the steel industry has been through a downturn, and salary increments at Jisco have been niggardly. Yet Jindal employees have rated their organisation as a great place to work. Why?

The answer lies in the manner the steel-maker engages its employees — on the job and off it as well. Shop floor employees don't get to hear of the new product after R&D has finished the product devel-

# A sense of ownership

opment. Workers are encouraged to chip in even during trial production. Then employees are trained to think commercially through communication. "What happens if you save 1gm of zinc coating while galvanising sheets or what are the benefits of negotiating long-term freight rates and sticking to delivery deadlines?" In each case, cost savings are shared with employees. The company even allotted shares directly to its employees in 1999 and in 2003. Says joint managing director and CEO Raman Madhok: "Jisco has built a high degree of ownership and pride among employees."

Shop floor workers are routinely moved and trained for different jobs. When they switch roles, the company foots the bill for retraining. Employees can get a Rs 10,000 allowance once in two years to pay for tuition fees. Madhok feels this increased awareness has helped increase shop floor productivity per worker from 300 tonnes in 2000 to 575 tonnes in 2003.

Also, Jisco has a 'chief josh officer', who organises games and painting competitions in the residential colonies with the plants. Madhok, who earlier headed HR, says: "We want to keep our employees engaged in productive work — at work or otherwise."

T. SURENDAR



