

# The critical link

*The role of HR in an organisation goes beyond recruitment; it's about creating positive optimism*

Aneeta Madhok

In today's competitive environment, the human resources function plays a critical role in the success or failure of an organisation. After all it's the talent pool that paves the way to organisational excellence. The expectations are that HR will be vitally involved in doing all that it takes to provide the right skills, knowledge and attitude at the right place at the right time. To do this, many HR managers are balancing a scorecard that has goals for talent retention and management, organisational culture management, training for managerial growth, HR capital management and so on.

As organisations grow to large proportions the role of business leaders in talent management is evolving. Business leaders should ensure that talent development is a core and central corporate process and not only the domain of the Human Resources (HR) department. Managers at every level are accountable for attracting and retaining manpower to keep the wheels of business running. Creating a talent pipeline with proper succession planning and employee deployment is also a crucial

source of manpower.

One of the primary glitches in most organisations is the lack of adequate manpower. This is a huge vacuum which needs to be filled.

Attracting and recruiting the right mix is high priority agenda for HR practitioners in India.

And this is not about recruiting the right mix but more about cre-

ating positive optimism, that too imbued with a team spirit. People need to look at organisational needs above individual needs and to first deserve, then desire. Cyni-

cism needs to be combated on a war footing and positive organisational membership needs to be reinforced.

The role training and development in meeting business challenges of tomorrow comes next after creating high performing organisations, talent retention and recruitment. Only by investing in training can organisations create talent pools of critical skills. Business-linked training needs, development of training content that will deliver skills and competencies, assessment and audit of training effectiveness are areas of delivery for the HR managers of tomorrow. Had it not been for the immediacy and urgency of the challenge of retention and recruitment, this area would have in all probability had a higher importance in the ranking of HR challenges.

With the creation of talent pools comes the compensation of knowledge workers. And many a time Indian compensation benchmarks are lower than global medians. It's time to rethink this. It is surprising given the context of today's business where an increasing number of Indian companies are exploring ways and means of going global, that pressures of globalizing India are not really experienced as a challenge. The growth opportunities presented by this context will require a great deal of strategic inputs from the human resources function to ensure the right person in the right place is made available.

With all this comes the difficult part of HR systems implementation. While many organisations invest heavily in technology-based HR solutions, the nuts and bolts of manpower efficiency is the lowest priority. Perhaps past historical encounters with attempts at job evaluation and industrial engi-

neering and productivity measurements etc., have shaped this response to assign the lowest priority to Human Capital Practices. In economically surging times like we are seeing today, the focus is on driving business results through creating performance oriented cultures and talent management, and issues like reduction of wastages and excess manpower tend to take the back seat.

Human Resources function today seems to be engaged in a delivery mode that places immediate emphasis on high levels performance from existing employees and managing of crises arising out of non-availability of manpower as in talent retention and recruiting. In dialogues with CEOs and HR professionals, there seem to be more success stories in implemen-

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tation of simple systems for performance management, HR information management, etc, rather than complex HR management processes of today.

Perhaps the time has come for HR professionals to relook at some of the priorities and to refocus themselves on the matters that are more important and will create enduring organisational membership within the collective and ensure that the company emerges as a responsible member of society.

*The writer is President, The Institute of Management Consultants of India.*



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