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- How the Task Performance of the Skilled Work Force is Influenced by “Burnout” and its Impact on Turnover Intention
Dr K. Raghu Naga Prabhakar

- Work-Life Balance
P.N.S. Datta Sarma

- Mentoring Young Entrepreneurs: A Key Role in Start-up Management
Dr K. Raghu Naga Prabhakar

- How to Bridge the Skill-Gap in the Aspiring Youth
C. Kameswari

- The Best Employers of India
Dr V. Sree Jyothi

- Beyond A Business School
P.N.S. Datta Sarma



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Chikkadapally
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CONTENTS	Page No.
Articles	
HOW THE TASK PERFORMANCE OF THE SKILLED WORK FORCE IS INFLUENCED BY “BURNOUT” AND ITS IMPACT ON TURNOVER INTENTION Dr K. Raghu Naga Prabhakar	7-11
WORK-LIFE BALANCE P. N. S. Datta Sarma	12-17
MENTORING YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS: A KEY ROLE IN START-UP MANAGEMENT Dr K. Raghu Naga Prabhakar	18-23
HOW TO BRIDGE THE SKILL-GAP IN THE ASPIRING YOUTH C. Kameswari	24-29
THE BEST EMPLOYERS OF INDIA Dr V. Sree Jyothi	30-35
BEYOND A BUSINESS SCHOOL P. N. S. Datta Sarma	36-41

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Manuscript

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**HOW THE TASK PERFORMANCE OF THE SKILLED WORK
FORCE IS INFLUENCED BY “BURNOUT” AND IT'S IMPACT ON
TURNOVER INTENTION**

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Abstract

This article is intended to discuss the impact of burnout on new generation workers and on their task performance and turnover intention and the intermittent role of career commitment and the moderating effect of innovation orientation. Studies in this regard reveal that burnout of young skilled employees has direct negative effect on their task performance. If the young workers are committed to their career, it will play the partial mediation role in the positive relationship between burnout and turnover intention. But innovation orientation plays the negative moderation in the relationship between occupational commitment and turnover intention. If the burnout is reduced to a great extent, job performance can be improved automatically. Similarly when the occupational commitment and innovative work values are enhanced, it will reduce the turnover intention of the young workers.

Key-words

Burnout, Managerial implications, task performance, career commitment, innovation orientation, enthusiasm, acceleration, influencing factors, work attitude, stimulation, organisational behavior, dimensional attitude, career related professional pursuit, empirical analysis, negative correlation, practical implications, working atmosphere, protection of talent

Now a days, there is a cut throat competition among industries. Consequently, the new generation of employees is suffering from 'burnout'. As per recent reports, 77.1% of young employees are the victims of this. They do not have any enthusiasm for work and their work attitude is negative, irritable and hopeless about the future. Generally, most of the researches concentrate on the burnout of intellectual workers and professionals but that of the skilled workers is not highlighted much. Burnout should not be neglected as it will lead to negative repercussions such as high turnover rate and low work performance. In this context, it is interesting to observe the manufacturing transformation and upgrading of china. In 2016, china issued the goal “china made 2025”, to achieve high growth in its manufacturing capacity. The transformation and upgrading are directly linked with the input and innovation of the new generation of skilled workers.

In modern times, there is scarcity of front-line technical workers; with high technical

specificity. If they leave their job, it will seriously affect the competitive spirit and manufacturing zeal of the business enterprises. Hence, in human resource management, it has become significant to reduce turnover and improve performance caused by burnout. In recent times, in India and abroad, many researches are going on the measurement of burnout and the factors that influence it and how the negative effect of it can be reduced. The modern manufacturing industry is putting pressure on its workers who are prone to burnout. Hence it is the need of the hour to study its negative repercussions on turnover intention and performance. The recent research on the new generation employees by protagonists reveal that their work attitude and behavior are determined by their career commitment which in turn is associated with job performance and turnover intention. The employee's behavior can be stimulated, if their career commitment and work values are similar.

Burnout is a long term reaction that an individual cannot cope with the job stress effectively. The individuals who suffer from burnout feel tired, lose passion, become unmotivated, inattentive, resulting in the lack of equilibrium in their mental stability. Both the experts, domestic and foreign, mince no words in asserting that those who feel anxious, exhausted and unable to concentrate on work and commit mistakes lower their performance. Mobley (1997) defines turnover intention as the wish of an individual to leave the organization after a certain period of time. People who feel unhappy with job, have a lot of trouble at work and maintain unsatisfactory relationship with his work-mates, resort to frequent absenteeism and there will be every likelihood of leaving the post.

Commitment to career

In the career of the new generation of employees, in organisational behavior and occupational psychology, career commitment has become an important variable. There are three categories in the theory of career commitment structure. They are

1. Dimensional attitude theory:- It stresses career emotion.
2. Motivation Theory:- It emphasises the motive of behavior
3. Three dimensional attitude theory:- It throws light on workers attitude.

But the single dimensional attitude theory relates career commitment to the emotional attitude of the employee to the career. Burnout brings down career commitment to a considerable extent; which is negatively co-related with it. In other terms, the lower the burnout is, the higher the career commitment will be. As burnout increases, the employee starts hating the current occupation, his professional pursuit is affected, his career commitment is lowered and thereby the work of the input is reduced. When the burnout is considerably low, the employee will focus more on his professional activities, resulting in more input in work. He can solve his professional and

even personal problems in a positive and optimistic way, resulting in higher task performance. Thus we can conclude that career commitment paralyses the negative effect of burnout on task performance.

The protagonists of domestic and foreign schools strongly believe that there is a negative correlation between career commitment and turnover intention. In other terms, it means that the decline in professional commitment will lead to increased turnover intention. It is also found that career related attitudes will have a recognizable impact on the loss of business people. When an employee wants to quit his job, he will weigh and judge his own inputs and gains in his work and analyses various losses that the organization bears, including the emotional loss. Thus career commitment influences turnover intention. If an employee loves his career, he can do away with turnover intention and remain in the present organisation. Thus we can say that career commitment mediates the positive effect of burnout on turnover intention.

Beliefs, recognition and preferences of the individuals to work are the work values which will affect the work behavior of the employee. They are purely innovation oriented. Such employees like challenges, new ideas and invite fresh know how. They have the ability to accept and execute creative ideas. This is called innovative concept. Naturally, every employee has a clear individual job preferences which in turn will lead to their positive or negative behavior in the work place. The career commitments of the employees reflect their love and identify of their work. Those who are gifted with higher career commitments and a strong sense of innovation, will take the initiative to carry out the work and prefer to try creative ways of working; resulting in the enhancement of their task performance. If an employee of the organization possesses a strong professional pursuit and is inclined to utilise the innovative work values, he will certainly cherish the opportunities offered by the organization. He will naturally look forward to acquire more job skills and is reluctant to quit the organization. On the contrary, those who tend to work with lower innovation orientation, in spite of their career-pursuance, will be constrained in their improvement of task performance. If they are subjected to the innovative work pressure, they will be lacking for their careers, thereby more inclining to leave the job. Thus, innovation orientation moderates the relationship between the career commitment and turnover intention. The higher the-innovation orientation, the less negative will be the relationship. Similar is the case with the task performance.

Various supporting theories

Burnout has a direct negative impact on job performance. The higher the burnout, the lower the job performance. This theory is consistent with the previous research results of knowledge workers and executives. This can be extended to different groups of enterprises. Burnout has also shown a direct impact on turnover rates. The higher the burnout, the more likely it is, to lead the workers away from the work. Even career commitment is adversely affected by burnout. This

theory extends the conclusion that career commitment plays an intermediary role in the effect of burnout and turnover intention. Burnout influences turnover intention by reducing employee's career commitment. Further theories indicate that organizational commitment plays an intermediary role. They also stress that career commitment also plays a similar role to further validate the effect on individual attitudes and behaviors in the work place.

Between career commitment and turnover intention, innovation orientation plays a negative moderating role. If the innovation orientation is higher, the negative correlation will be lower. Contrarily, if it is stronger between job commitment and turnover intention, it will be higher among the works with lower innovation orientation. Workers who are oriented by innovation are receptive to new things and new knowledge. They are ready to take up innovative work. They are willing to stick on to the job and to be loyal to their profession.

When workers are tired of their work, they do not reduce their commitment to their work. They wait for a confirmation of the same, thereby reducing the effectiveness of the work. As a matter of fact, workers feel restless and produce negative psychological reaction, which is direct and which leads to lower work performance. Next, the higher career commitment of individuals with innovation oriented enterprises will remain as it is in challenging situations. Their innovative attitude makes them spend a lot of time in studying creative ideas.

Job burnout has a negative impact on job commitment, job performance and turnover intention of skilled workers. It lowers the professional commitment of workers. Naturally, those who want to quit the job will never try to improve their job competence. This leads to the shortage of skilled workers

The protagonists of human resource management suggest the following remedies.

1. In the face of job burnout, when the job performance of the workers is alarmingly low, it can be reduced through work-adjustment, creation of a relaxed atmosphere with the help of recreational activities.
2. The organisation should strengthen the career planning of its workers. It should provide workers with a growing and most personal opportunities and built a successful occupational career. It should stimulate their enthusiasm for the job and restore their morale. It should provide a strong support and protect the talent of the workers.
3. The organisation should take up various measures to create innovative work values like strengthening of staff training, carrying out competitive activities and lectures, making the workers cultivate innovative consciousness etc.

Thus the workers can overcome the impact of burnout, do away with the turnover intention and finally improve their job commitment and performance.

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WORK-LIFE BALANCE

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Abstract

Work-life balance is the state of equilibrium in which personal life and professional life are balanced equally, without being detrimental to each other. It consists of flexible work arrangements which make room for other life programs and practices. The term is of recent origin, used in UK in late 1970s and in U.S in late 1980s. It describes the balance needed by a working individual between his working time and personal time. Besides his job, one has to fulfill one's personal interests, family obligations and leisurely activities. As the saying goes, all work and no play makes jack dull. Similarly, all play and no work too is dangerous.

In recent times, technology enables men and women discharge their duties with ease, by the help of smart phones, emails, video, chat and others. They need not confine themselves to a 9 to 5 time schedule, as the previous generations had to. But balancing work and life is not as easy as it is advocated to be. There are a lot of do's and don'ts in this process.

Key words

Flexible, unfair work load, deterioration, determining factors, imbalance, prevalence rate, perceive, male dominance, dual earning, occupational hazards, moderators, self-identification, empathy, completing pressures, source of fulfillment, patterns of reward, stress, irritability, Neuroskeletal disorders, spillover, burnout syndrome, suppression, dysfunctional system.

The United States of America recently granted paid parental leave to the new parents, to look after the new-born babies. It received a mixed response. Some new parents expressed their fear that it would lead to negative consequences in their profession. They would receive less training; forgo promotions and even future opportunities of being hired. It would lead to interpersonal conflicts, after they resume to work after leave. But analysts like Heyman (2017) aimed that it would reduce the chances of negative mental health outcomes and indicate a “long term attachment to the labor force”.

The level of absence from employment responsibilities is to be decided with meticulous care. Additional and unfair workloads may lead to unsatisfactory work-life balance. When motherhood is the determining factor, the employers may discriminate against hiring women of child-rearing age. Work in modern times is more intense than it was a decade ago. Hence work-life balance is needed now. Over-work, long working hours, and extreme work environment will certainly affect the overall physical and psychological health of the employees, resulting in the deterioration of family life. The U.K. government, taking this factor into consideration, made some provision for

the employees to make use of portable electronic equipment to do their jobs from a virtual office, or to 'work from home'.

16% of the workers in the U.S. mostly in the age group of 30-44 years reported difficulty in balancing their work and family, as per the findings of National Health Interview Survey, occupational Health supplement data 2010. This following table shows in detail how different sections of employees face difficulties in maintaining work life balance.

SI.No	Section	Percentage
1	Graduates and higher qualifications	18%
2	School final, diploma holders	16%
3	Below school final	15%
4	Workers in agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting	9%
5	Adult employees	16%
6	Legal occupations	26%
7	Office administrative jobs	14%

Employees working in an organisation naturally identify themselves with it. They consider themselves as part and parcel of it. Consequently, they incorporate within themselves the organisational values, norms and interests. But we should not fail to see the other side of the coin. The employees also identify themselves with their outer life, which they regard as their true self. They identify their roles as parents, members of certain social, religious and political groups, with certain values and morals. They interact with other employees, management, customers and others. This process reinforces their identification with the organisation. At the same time they have to manage their true self identification. Thus they possess the 'dual self', fragmenting and constructing their identity through a number of interactions within and outside the organisation. Most employees identify themselves with other facets of their life too, such as family, children, religion. Sometimes these identities are in conflict, resulting in the imbalance of work and life. Hence they should align themselves with the area of performance to avoid stress and conflict.

Why this imbalance?

Gender, working hours and family life are the three moderators which are co-related with work-life imbalance. Because of the distinct perception of role identity, gender bias is likely to lead to work life imbalance. As per a survey, men give upper hand to their work over their family duties where as women give importance to their family life. But this cannot be considered to be 100% correct.

Long working hours i.e. inflexibility, shifting in work requirements, overtime or late night duties can lead to a lack of equilibrium between work and life. Studies reveal that time spent at work positively correlate with both work interference with family and family interference with work. But however, it is not related to cross domain satisfaction, which is partly subjective. Then it can be presumed that those long duty hours can be interpreted positively or negatively, on the basis of individual temperament. Though long working hours affect the family duties, incentives and similar financial benefits may nullify this aspect, as financial support sometimes may dominant.

Gender and family

Work-life conflict does not vary according to one's gender. The centre for American progress reported that majority of working mothers and fathers suffer from work-family conflict. But men and women handle it differently. Social norms and organisational attitude determine this factor. Some companies have taken welcoming steps by providing programs and initiatives to help their employees overcome work-life balance.

It is observed that parents suffering from work-life conflict will either reduce their working hours or will increase the same, to run away from family life. The KRI (Kenexa Reserve Institute) revealed its findings that men and women perceive work-life balance with different attitudes. Women, they observed, are more positive than men in responding to the efforts of their company to help them to balance between their work and life. Their report is based on the analysis of data drawn from a representative sample of 10,000 U.S. workers, surveyed through work trends. As per the results, there has been a considerable shift in women's perceptions. In past they would find it difficult to maintain balance due to the completing pressures at work and demands at home. But now they can maintain equilibrium between work and life. Eminent sociologist **Jiping Zuo** says

“The past two decades have witnessed a sharp decline in men's provider role, caused in part by growing female labor participating and in part by the weakening of men's absolute power due to the increased rates of unemployment and underemployment”.

She further explains that women are more committed to work and their earning power is growing. At the same time men's social mobility is being stagnated and they are inclined to become more dependent financially on women, resulting in the erosion of male dominance.

Consequence of work-life imbalance occupational stress

Problems caused by stress have become a major concern to both employers and employees. The symptoms of stress are manifested both mentally and physically. If stress continues, it shows its evil effect through cardiovascular problems, sexual disorders, and lack of immunity. It also leads to poor coping skills, irritability, insecurity, exhaustion and lack of concentration. Most of the stress is caused by long work hours, which make people deprived of sufficient time to spend with family, friends and community and to grow personally and spiritually. To quote,

**“To get ahead, a seventy-hour
work week is the new standard.
What little time is left is often
divided up among relationships,
kids, wife and rest”.**

Uncertainty

In the post modern society, uncertainty as the dominant attitude to life has been diagnosed by psychoanalysts. People suffer from uncertain attitude due to the heavy pressure exerted by the society on them. It is the uncertainty to fail, but also the fear of their own limitations that they may not achieve what the society expects. Every walk of life is dominated by competition, in occupation, livelihood, education of children etc. Something which is average is not all tolerated. It is observed that those who are subjected to burn out are affected badly, due to their passionate attitude for perfection. The hard workers, perfectionists, loners, grim tempered usually maintain a lack of healthy distance from work and suffer from burn out, leading to work-life imbalance.

Role of technology & work from home

There have been changes in the work place in recent times, by dint of technological changes. Devices like laptops and smart phones have made it possible for employees to work beyond the confinement of their physical office space. They can send their work output through email, while not officially on the jobs. Thus, doing the office work, they can spend their free time with their family. It is suggested that the vague boundary of work and life is a result of technological control which unfolds from the physical technology provided by the company. But this type of control replaces the more direct and authoritarian control by bosses. Consequently, communication technologies in the temporal and structural aspects of work have changed, with 'a new work-place' emergency, in which employees are more connected to jobs, beyond the boundaries of the traditional workday and work place. Work from home is an initiative that arose from the efforts of improving the work life balance. The idea started in U.K. work from home is also known as telecommuting. In 2017, it was reported that 5% of the entire U.S. work force is working from

home. This is because of the demand for more flexibility in work environments. It allowing employees to work from home decreases employee turnover and increases employee productivity. Those who work from home are from finance, design, computer scientists and other high skill professionals.

Role of the employer

**“When people are given work beyond
their capacity, companies pay the price”**

-Texas quick

The above opinion reveals that it is the responsibility of the management to reduce the stress among its employees. Though the traditional stress management programs lay stress on the individual rather than on the organisation, a disfunctional system cause burn out among them. Work-life balance causes job satisfaction, sense of job security and better physical and mental health. Even the organisation is benefitted by less absenteeism and staff turnover. Valuable employees will be retained, remain loyal and committed. As a result productivity is increased and organisational image is enhanced. Work-life balance can be facilitated by the organisations through work-life practices and family-friendly policies such as flexible working hours, job sharing, part-time duties, compressed work-weeks, parental leave, telecommuting, and on-site child care facility etc. These practices are part of a company's corporate social responsibility for its stake holders. They can be divided into three categories, policies, benefits and services.

Companies like Star bucks, Google and Boston consulting group who have incorporated these practices have been recognised in “Fortune” 100 best companies to work for. The world's best performing organisations proved that creating a work life balance is a key factor for great business performance outcomes. It is a strategic initiative for engaged employees that produce business growth.

Religion and spirituality pay a major role in work life balance as they are part of diversity management. Ours are religion based societies and religious accommodations create a secure feeling among the employees that their religious beliefs are safeguarded by the organisation. This develops a sense of gratitude among them and makes them work better. Almost every religion preaches that fulfillment in life is to be found in finishing each assigned task in time with perfection. No occupation is great or small in itself. Everything gains the value of the love with which it is done. When we love fulfilling our work, then there is work-life balance and stress is reduced. Companies like 3M have introduced free stress management programs in the work place to help the employees with their busy schedules, Google, face book and sales force have put areas to be physically active in the work place as well as providing free food and snacks to the workers, granting sick and maternity leave.

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MENTORING YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS: A KEY ROLE IN START-UP MANAGEMENT

**Dr K. Raghu Naga Prabhakar, Director, Aurora's Business School, Hyderabad
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Abstract

Mentors play a crucial role by filling the gaps in a founder's business, by drawing on their own experience to help young entrepreneurs get a handle on finances, scaling up and building the brand. The approach taken by each mentor plays a different role in the evolution of a start up. A good mentor asks questions and does not force answers. Mentoring opens-up the potential of an entrepreneur. But on the other hand, an investor confines himself to better returns on investment. A mentor digs out the creative abilities of the entrepreneur where as an investor is concerned with goals. The former 'lets loose' but the latter tightens. An entrepreneur should know that he should seek the assistance of a mentor, if he wants to face a creative challenge. If he wants to face a challenge in business performance, he should approach a mentor. This article throws light on how mentors guide the founders through thick and thin. The writer of this article is highly indebted to 'Mint' magazine's "Business of life" column, for offering valuable information.

Key words

Industry veterans, short comings, sustainable marketing, campaign, mentor's philosophy, win-win, aspirations, de-growing, risk-taking, metro-dweller, hinter lands, multitude, richer ecosystem, e-commerce, internet of things,

Outwardly, the start-up life seems to be attractive and colorful. But an entrepreneur, starting out with only concepts and without knowing what actually the future will be, will certainly be in need of a helping hand. Any budding startup executive will happily acknowledge his gratefulness to his mentors, who may be the industry veterans or even his relatives. Samarth, founder of the "Milk man", a dairy tech start up owner owes his professional success to his father who helped him in managing finances and dealing with compliance. He taught Samarth to connect with several people in industry. In that process he met Mr Amit Dhanuka, CEO of Kejriwal Bee Care and Virender Jeet, Senior V.P of technology at Newgen software. They advised him to understand the needs to be measured, to raise funds and to build a team with technical awareness.

'Wild Voyager' is a travel start-up launched by Alankar Chandra, a product of IIM, Ahmadabad. His alma mater helped him in finding a mentor, jabong's former MD. Praveen sinha: who taught him the details of digital marketing. He told Alankar to use the IIM Network, to meet his business partners as well as future clients.

To Quote

“Early stage startups require what I call 'Wider' mentoring whereas growth stage startups Require 'deeper' mentoring. Requirements of startups at every Stage are diverse, unclear and to some extent Preliminary. A mentor who is a Jack-of-all is better suited to the task”

-Debashish Chatterjee

Director

IIM, KogiKode

As the start-ups grow, they become more focused with their products and markets which claim specific understanding. A mentor has already gained ripe experience in these things and hence it is suitable for mentorship. They are really credible experts.

How a mentor has to be chosen?

A mentor need not be and should not be selected just because he is a popular person in industry, or he has ripe knowledge or experience, or because he shares the values and passions of the entrepreneur. As Ankit Garg, CEO and Co founder Wakefit.co, a sleep solution company opines, the mentor must be the one to give the courage, the push an entrepreneur needs. Garg himself was mentored by a former national brand manager at a leading FMCG Brand. She had the same wavelength of philosophy as that of Garg. Her knowledge was of great use in marketing their product. She guided them in selecting the media platform, enlightened them in sustainable marketing and trained them in keeping the cost low. They actually were given a big estimate which they could not imagine because they had so far depended on organic traffic. The mentor assured them that this investment would certainly build the recall value of their brand.

Net-work and mentor, vice-versa:

Which is earlier? The seed or a tree? This has been a paradox. Similar is the Question: Does a good network help you get a good mentor or does a good mentor help you build your network?

If a mentor is suggested by your friends or family members, it will be well and good. He can help you get in touch with contacts he has built over years. But the recommendation of a mentor is crucial, when one is going to start a company and is in a pressing need.

Trust-Creation

The mentor, having faced similar challenges, can give valuable suggestions. Dhanuka's experience in the honey industry was useful much for the dairy industry. It was specific. It was from-setia who was close to Dhanuka. Setia feels that in his hurry to do quickly, he overlooked some obvious things. He made some silly mistakes too which included booking work tours with his personal money. As a result sustainable growth was at stake. Dhanuka corrected him duly.

Sometimes it occurred that both the mentor and entrepreneur did not agree with each other. Then they would take the advice of a third person, after a constructive discussion.

Garg and his partner, who was a mentor in past planned to increase their product portfolio, by making sofas under the same brand, wake fit. Through their mentor was against such a move, as it was too early and might lose focus, they ignored him and went ahead. The result was a disaster. They had to close it within nine months. Sometimes the suggestions of the mentors, were with a pinch of salt. But it often boomerangs upon the entrepreneur. Rakyan, who mentored and received mentoring is of the opinion that often certain ways of thinking become obsolete. In such case, respecting the mentor's opinion, with our gut instinct, we should take a final decision, shrewdly. Rakyan also dwells upon the experience of a single founder. So he tries to pay it forward by informally helping a few startup founders. In the beginning, every founder is led by his own passion and instinct, but gradually, as the company grows up, logic and reasoning starts leading him. That is why Rakyan gains fresh experience from time to time, by frequently interacting with them. He sincerely aims that it is a win-win for both.

Entrepreneur 4.0 is a column in 'Mint' in which successful Indian entrepreneurs discuss various aspects of start-ups. Ronnie screw vala is a first generation entrepreneur and chairman and co-founder of up grad, an educational platform. He sincerely feels that India needs one million entrepreneurs for true change; as unemployment is at its peak which poses a serious challenge to any government in power. The young generation of India is driven by aspirations. It wants their dreams come true. Naturally, it expects to make it happen through the government. But this is not an issue to be handled by the government only. Mere skilling of the population on a large scale cannot be a solution. The employment problem is based on the concept of demand and supply. If the government takes up the task of skilling 30 million people, it does not mean that equal number of jobs are available. This means that skilling only takes care of the supply, but not the demand.

A whole new middle class has been created by information technology, in the last 30 or 40 years. It reached peaks now. Similarly, the mobile revolution is creating a number of jobs. The banking and

transport sectors too are contributing to the creation of jobs. All have mixed out and some of them are de-growing, when it comes to jobs. Strangely, there are no jobs for life time anymore. Lifelong learning in the form of up-skilling, upgrading and specialisation has become the way of life in the 21st century.

India has to come out of its image as a cost arbitrage country. If we have to play a key role in the fourth industrial revolution, we should emerge as a country of creators and originators, not as servicers. In this regard, Mr Ronnie Screwvala opines that our country is in need of one million entrepreneurs, not merely ten thousand, who will be able to build sustainable and real businesses at scale, so that jobs are created in the ratio of one entrepreneur: one thousand jobs. Those who chose this way of entrepreneurship must be encouraged. There must be a shift in the mind set of the young generation. To achieve this, the educational system and family brought up have to be modified. Virtues like risk taking, viewing failures as stepping stones to success must be inculcated by the young entrepreneurs. There has been a misconception that start-ups can only be about e-commerce or internet of things. The entrepreneurship community should get out of this. There are many other sectors that can make impact at scale and create long term fundamental businesses which are more valuable than seeking a badge of honor with multiple rounds of funding. Kishore Biyani, founder of Future Group reiterates.

**“We have to make entrepreneurs
a lot more attractive-socially and
by way of policy environment,
to attract the next generation of
entrepreneurs who can create
millions of new jobs every year”**

It is the need of the hour for enthusiastic women entrepreneurs to join the battle, doing away with their doubts and hesitations. Gone was the age when entrepreneurship was the claim of the highly educated, or the metro dweller. Even from the non-metros, the tier 2 and tier 3 cities and villages, entrepreneurs should thrive in large numbers. We can quote a number of instances where inspired entrepreneurs, even from the remote areas have proved their mettle by creating stellar organisations of great value. The motto is, go and build your company, become a job creator and change lives all around you. Then your family, your friends and even your country will feel proud of you.

To Quote **Sri Shishir Modi**, the founder of Niki.ai:

**“To create a richer ecosystem,
Entrepreneurship should be
promoted more, celebrating successes
and acknowledging failures”**

People's dreams will fly, using the wings of entrepreneurship. It can elevate the living standards of people and cause overall development. India will change from a developing country into a developed country. A promising entrepreneurship has to think big and go all out. Rules of success are the same for everyone. No one is disadvantaged, unless only when one thinks so. **Mr. Vishal Gondal** vehemently asserts:

**“India has one billion problems
and hence there is an opportunity.
Ten million entrepreneurs can come
up with the right solutions to
the one billion problems”**

To conclude, the episode of a startup which linked waste creators with recyclers is worthy to be mentioned. Mr. Sachin Sarma, Co-founder of GEM Enviro expresses his surprise that companies preached environmentalism but they rarely want to change processes and introduce recycling practices. Sohini Sen discusses this key issue in the column “life”, in the Mint magazine. Recycling and safe guarding the environment involves many challenges, which are unprecedented. Sachin Sarma illustrates his personal experience in this regard. While he was working as fund manager in IFCI capital funds, they invested in a company called “Ganesha Ecosphere” which recycled PET bottles. It faced a lot of problems in getting PET bottles, for recycling. In spite of the demand for recycling, most of the bottles ended in landfills and ruined the environment and consequently, there was a scarcity for these bottles. Sachin with his friend Dinesh Pareekh incorporated their own company GEM Enviro Management in 2013.

They did a lot of work in the fields of research and strategy planning. They discussed with people in industry such as rag-pickers, scarp dealers and recyclers to understand the processes. Now the company handles the entire plastic value chain. They collect plastic waste from various sources and turn it over to recyclers. Then the final recycle merchandise is taken in the form of t-shirts to laptop bags and is sold to corporate companies who use these products internally or as corporate gifts. Initially, the company started PET Collection from large beverage companies. Before this, these companies did not have any formal waste disposal process. But it was difficult to convince them for GEM Enviro. They were not even aware of the harm caused by plastic to the

environment. After a patient and long awareness building, the coca-cola company became their first client. Hiring efficient people who could work with rag pickers and scarp dealers was also difficult for the company. Many people are merely idealistic and utopian in their approach to save ecology. But actually only a few come forward to work, in reality. They hired nearly 70 people from the nonprofit sector. Later they make huge investments for buying boiling machines for bottle compression. The raw material is turned into recycled polyester staple fiber which goes to another agency or small scale entrepreneurs who turn it into bags and t-shirts. The company is now ready to work with local governments and pollution boards etc, to manage plastic packaging waste, in a sustainable way.

Thus, in start-up management, mentoring entrepreneurs is very crucial. No area is unfit for a start up. It is innovation, spirit of enterprise and risk taking that stands the test.

Source:-

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HOW TO BRIDGE THE SKILL-GAP IN THE ASPIRING YOUTH

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Abstract

On one side, acquiring professional qualifications is an achievement. On the other side, acquiring the necessary skills to pave the way for one's career is an accomplishment. The former is academic, whereas the latter is the need of the hour. Considering this fact, the Indian industry is now implementing up-skilling and re-skilling training to the job-seekers and job-holders, through the means of advanced technology. Such skill-acquisition brightens the prospects of employment, widening the contextual insight of the career-hunters. In this process, technology empowered learning, integrated learning programmes and skill education, play a vital role. Unfortunately, the professional graduates and post graduates are not up to the mark in this regard. This article discusses how the gap between academics and skills can be bridged effectively, analysing the needs of employees and employers as well.

Key-words

Global work force, smart classes, artificial intelligence, ramifications, re-skilling, up-skilling, holistic apprenticeship, imperative skills, work place efficiency, customer empowerment, critical thinking, talent innovation, self evaluation

In the advent of Right to education Act, maximum number of students were encouraged to complete their schooling. But education is incomplete without practical experience. There is a wide gulf in the industry circles because we gain knowledge in educational institutions and not the skills required for jobs. The traditional Indian educational set-up is badly in need of modification so that the youth of the company is provided with enough employment opportunities. It will be possible only when they become skilled amply. That is why Indian corporate and educational space is witnessing huge investment of time and money in skill training, talent acquisition and retention to address the dearth of skilled work force.

Content & Context

These two things play a vital role in the skilling people. The modern age is controlled by information. Content combined with a strong contextual understanding is more interesting and easier to retain. Besides, it provides the real time perspective and brightens the prospects of employment. The course of learning is being reshaped by technology, Hence technology empowered learning modules, smart classes, live on line/virtual lectures, recorded videos, products, AI, VI, etc are eliciting very good results in disseminating quality education. Even

learners from rural areas too access and imply advanced knowledge to sharpen their skills. The integrated educational programmes deliver learning through four forms of classrooms, digital, on-campus, on site, and on the job, offering a more holistic apprenticeship experience. It prepares the talent pool with add on practical skills and makes them ready for future employment.

The governments at the centre and state level are implementing various skill training programmes to meet the demand of skilled employees in the job market. The ministry of skills development and entrepreneurship launched its “Skill India” programme. It combines three main components, academics, industry and job seekers. A long term, sustainable skill developing plan has to be evolved, which is the need of the hour. The corporate companies imbibe customized training programmes for their work force. They include advance methodologies of ramifications, storytelling, hybrid-learning etc.

With the advent of globalisation, skilled manpower is in high demand to convert growth opportunities into jobs. Every year, 12.8 million new job seekers are entering the market. Skill development has become India's utmost priority. It is very crucial for India's potential economic growth for transforming into a diversified and internationally competitive economy. In this context, the organisations are facing a big challenge, the “skill gap”; which is the result of rapid changes in the needs of industry. The skills one possesses and the actual skills needed, both these aspects are separated by a gulf. The complex business environment demands that the skills of employees are updated from time to time. Firstly, the employees are to be subjected to certain skill tests, to decide whether their existing skills will suffice to the needs of the organisation. Freshers with formal education can be inducted and later trained with necessary skills or those already skilled can be hired.

What is skilling?

Skilling is all about having a pragmatic approach towards problem solving which happens only when the requirements are understood properly. The requirements of rural and urban customers are different. Irrespective of these geographical boundaries, consumer behavior has been changing very fast. Now-a-days customers crave for more information and knowledge about the product to be marketed. To gratify this craving, organisations should conduct classes and field activities for training the employees based on financial literacy, financial tools, customer behavior, selling skills etc.

Very few organizations have the funds and means for offering holistic skill development programmes for their employees; which results in a skill gap. The remedy is, government incentivised vocational training programmes which not only impart skill training, but also enhance employability. More-over, the recent digital innovations enable the employees to acquire required skills. Technology is a vital driver which can easily assist in scaling up the skill

development initiative. It can help to identify standard training schools, tutorials and assignments for the candidates.

The skill-gap can be defined as the gulf between the skills employers expect from the employees to possess and the skills which the latter actually possess. While technical skills may vary according to job description and industry, there are some universal hard and soft skills which have to be acquired by everyone to get success in their careers. Hard skills are specific, teachable abilities that can be defined and measured. They include the ability to use software programmes. Soft skills, on the other hand, are less tangible and harder to quantify, such as getting along with others, managing one's time, creative thinking and leadership qualities. They are less measurable, less commonly taught. Even technically talented people with poor soft skills get fired from their jobs.

The top three hard skills which the modern job-seekers are lacking in are:

1. Writing proficiency
2. Public speaking
3. Data analysis

HR Managers expect people whom they hire to 'write' well, as more and more communication takes place through e-mails, slack and Google Docs. The job-hunter should make sure that his resume and covering letter are grammatically flawless and follow email etiquette best practices in every correspondence.

Public speaking does not merely involve delivering speeches on the stage. We use it every day, while giving presentations, interacting with clients and participating in meetings. The interview itself is an assessment of public speaking skills. Body language is also a major part of public speaking.

Data analysis is paramount in virtually every industry. Companies need skilled employees, who can organise and analyse data to provide them insight into their sales, clients, finances etc. Excel skills, Excel certifications, pivot tables add weight to the resume and liked in profile as well.

There are 5 soft skills in which job aspirants are lacking. They are:

1. Critical thinking/ Problem solving
2. Attention to detail
3. Communicating talent
4. Leadership ability
5. Working in/with terms

Problem solving skills show employers that employees are able to work independently and think critically to find solutions to obstacles. At the time of interview itself, they are asked to explain a life experience like handling a difficult customer or fixing a software bug. It must be something with quantifiable results. The STAR model helps the aspirant, to break down the “Situation” he faced, the “Task” involved (including challenges), the “Actions” taken and the consequent “Result”.

Attention to detail makes our work thorough and accurate. Through behavioral indicators, the hiring managers can detect these skills. “Communicating talent” makes your life impacted by your ability or inability to express your ideas well. It promotes better understanding, helps remove conflicts, inspires trust and respect and allows creative ideas to flourish.

Leadership ability is the potential of employee to contribute to the company and the team by taking on the responsibility of a leader. The “Star” model can be useful here too, to quantify the result from times when others are motivated by the leader, efficiency is improved or funding is raised to ensure a successful outcome. Team work is the ability of the employee to work with others comfortably. One's experience as a team leader is a good indicator of how you communicate, collaborate and get along with others. Being a productive team member involves knowing his responsibilities, using his strengths for the advantage of the team and seeing things through to completion.

Lorri Freifeld aims that unemployment rate in the U.S is high. Yet employers feel that they cannot find “suitable” persons to fill their vacant positions. The reason is that a wide skill-gap hinders the sustainable growth of businesses. There is a shortage of people skilled in the STEM (Science, technology, education and math) industries.

Ed Gorden, author of “Future Jobs “aims:

“It is not a skills problem. It is a talent issue. People do not have the liberal arts and thinking skills and specific career training. They need in today's technologically advancing world”.

Gordon predicts that if the structure does not change, there will be 14 million to 25 million vacant jobs by 2020 that we won't be able to fill. Though we can have the latest technology, our business is not sustainable, if we don't have the talent behind it.

At its core, the skill-gap is an issue pertaining to education, according to Adam wiedmer, Director,

Seven Step RPO. He aims that in India, the number of technical environment in high-demand areas of engineering and technology is five times higher than that of U.S. That is why the U.S constantly needs to look internationally to feed the increasing demand for a highly skilled IT work force. To quote JIM Spohrer, director of IBM University programmes:

“STEM Skills need to play a bigger role in our curriculum at all grade levels and professionals must make Continuing education opportunities a priority to stay informed on the latest technical advances”

The Baby Boomers are retiring in small numbers. Those remaining may not have sufficient literacy or communication skills. Technology and the world of work change so fast that there will be a dearth of experienced employees in emerging technologies and work practices. Hence the work force should keep up with these changes, to avoid their leaving behind. Van velsor, senior fellow in Research and innovation minces no words when she says that young people today are not receiving the help they need in terms of training, mentoring or coaching to become the leaders of tomorrow.

The attitude of the employers should change

“Skill Road” is a provider of cloud based social talent management software. Its chief Human Resource officer suggests that employers have to change their strategy for talent acquisition. They should better look for a balance of specific technical skills, critical success skills, work attitudes and self management skills.

A gap analysis will determine the steps to be taken to ensure the workforce that is required for the future. The steps are: the number of employees required, the skills they should possess, the means to acquire them, the existing skills, the training to bridge the gap.

A training investment should be made to get their skills in line with the requirement of the position. The incumbent employees should be given the opportunity to upgrade their skills to qualify for new assignments or promotions. Consequently, employee engagement is increased and entry-level positions for new hires are opened up. An effective training department should work with the other departments in the organisation so that they are kept up to date on current trends as job change. Developing strong internship or co-op programmes can help develop skills early, in the hiring process. IBM offers free training and educational resources for It Professionals, educators and students, through a web-based technical resources and professional

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THE BEST EMPLOYERS OF INDIA

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Abstract

In recent times, the concept of a work place has changed considerably, in every sector, from corporate offices, co-working spaces and social media. Whatever be the place of work, a good employer not only brings out the best in his employees but also facilitates their Personal and Career growth, through various initiatives and programmes. 'Forbes India', a globally renowned business magazine, in collaboration with AON conducted a study on the companies that managed talent best. Through meticulous planning and consistent efforts, 16 companies, by dint of their employers' innovative strategies and their human touch in administration, enhanced the skills of their staffers while retaining their individuality. The study reveals that employers need to foster individuality and inclusion to be among the most sought after. The students of management education have to be acquainted with these virtues, as they are going to be future employees and employers as well. This article lays focus on the good culture to be sustained in good business.

Key-words

Enabling infrastructure, aligned culture, accountability, diverse work force, spectrum of choices, institutional biases, family-centric approach, strength finder, EV technology, alignment of goals, attrition rate, right ecosystem, job rotations, competency mapping, zero waste practices, communication plat forms, motivated workforce, divergent thinking, prioritising, ethical behaviour.

Once upon a time Management gurus used to think that people management is the concern of HR Department. But as the concept of knowledge economy grew, It has become the concern of all stakeholders in the organisation. In past, talent management meant talent acquisition and motivation of the employees. But times have changed. Organisations have to respect the individuality of the employees and “include” them. Hence, diversity and inclusion have to be embraced. But AON Best employers feel that diversity is the means to a more just and more effective employee experience. They prefer 'acquired' diversity to 'inherent' diversity. They address the institutional biases that shape their company culture.

There are five elements which determine the effective culture of an organisation. “Good culture is good Business” is the motto.

1. Purpose: The mission of the organisation provides meaningful direction to the employee. These must be effective co-operation between different departments and groups.

2. Teamwork: There must be a work environment which accepts diverse backgrounds and ways of thinking. Employees should share best practices and job knowledge with one another.

3. Communication: Managers should be open and transparent in communication.

4. Performance: Strong performers should be given excellent career opportunities and be retained to achieve the business goals.

5. Decision Making: High quality decisions have to be taken at the right time with right speed. Employees should have their appropriate share and influence in the decision making authority.

AON Best employees create such a culture through senior leadership which has the greatest relative impact. They implement people's programmes to develop talent through career and learning opportunities and motivating through reward systems. They provide enabling infrastructure in the form of tools and resources which are required to perform effectively and efficiently.

Lance Rosenzweig, Global CEO, STARTEK says:

“As we integrated our businesses,
We worked hard to build a strong
unified culture, while maintain-
ing and celebrating our diversity
around the world. We are excited
about the future”.

Globally, Startek has more than 45000 employees from 86 nationalities, speaking 55 languages. It has hired more than 5000 employees with disabilities. Systems and programmes are designed and implemented to cover the entire employment life cycle. The employees are empowered to achieve dynamic results which comes with a commitment towards their social economic and intellectual growth.

AGS Health nurtures employees right from induction and fosters an ambience to let them flourish within the organisation. The company tweaks and customises training methodology for every fresh recruit. It provides tangible benefits reflected in revenue lift and improved profitability to clients. It is adjudged a Best employer by dint of its family-centric approach to engage with the staff; by its attempt to align a recruit's strengths with job role through a 'strength finder, by offering a permanent career desk hotline and open careers portal and identifying fast track high potential employees.

Truck maker Ashok Leyland has been travelling from tradition to transition; towards new

emission norms and electric vehicles with initiatives to engage and encourage employees. N.V. Balachandar, Head of HR says.

“With Artificial Intelligence and
Machine learning, the aim is
to free up our engineers to do
Higher thinking”

The following programmes makes Ashok Leyland 'A Best Employer' They built a recognition filled environment to encourage engineers to meet timelines. They launched a communications initiative to inform rank and file about changes. They built a separate EV team, with an open office similar to start ups. They took up automation to free up engineers to do more value added work. They are using technology to manage multiple generations in the workforce. Thus the vehicle manufacturing giant has set itself the target of becoming one of the top 10 commercial manufactures in the world.

Anjali Raghuvanshi, Chief People Officer, Randstad India stresses the importance of the involvement of employees in decision making.

“Companies need to leverage on
Technology to ensure alignment
of goals. But it needs to be frequ-
ent and be a platform where em-
ployees not just listen but also speak up”

Bajaj Finance has 90% of its workforce in remote places. It connects 1800 locations with the head quarters. According to AON's data, the company has an attrition rate of 18% of the total workforce, about 12000 are below the age of 30. Bajaj's Strategy has been to push its managers to constantly innovate and urge them to think of the business like entrepreneurs, rather than just employees. The finance tycoon has become “A Best Employer” because It introduced”, 'Do more, earn more' and 'think more earn more' policies which provide incentives for achieving sales and distribution targets Its “Leaders as Trainers” programme created a pool of experienced trainers. Every organisation wants the right message to be sent out to the vast work force. Similarly no company can afford a disconnected taskforce. That is why Bajaj finance has 34 million customers satisfied with its services. It is the top lender in consumer electronics, digital and life style products.

Bayer has made it to the Best Employers list for the third successive years by dint of its “Samavesh

initiative”, which trains and educates women. D. Narain, senior Bayer Representative, South Asia proudly announces:

“We engage in the development of
our employees by providing them
with the right ecosystem to help
sharpen their skills and grow in
today's ever-changing environment”

Bayer's “Global Internal job Board” helps employees with development opportunities across the world. They discuss their professional goals with experienced individuals. They also get opportunities for international short term assignments Bayer rewards its prolific employees with its “Top Performer Awards”. Bayer gives a voice to its employees, by taking feedback through pulse surveys. “Breakfast with Leaders” gives them a chance to engage with senior leaders in a casual setting.

Britannia Industries, the century old packaged conglomerate functions with the motto

“We make things happen
Inviting, igniting, creating
and respecting-those are
the four tings of our culture”

What makes the company 'A Best Employer' is their willingness to rehire former company, executives, their approachable leadership, Grooming people from within the organisation into leadership roles and adoption of communication platforms such as workplace by facebook.

Varun Berry, M.D. Britannia Industries says,

“We give opportunities to people
within the organisation and let them
sink or swim. As it happened, everybody
is swimming.

The company has also embraced technology to communicate with its workforce, especially the younger lot. It adopted work place by Face book and artificial Intelligence, powered chat bots to drive communication among the rank and file.

DHL Express India helps employees study further, improve their skill sets and remain engaged.

In the words of R.S. Subramanian, country Manager.

“Our people are empowered and
made to feel like equal owners
in the organisations larger purpose
and we feel responsible for their overall
Well-being”

Every year the company selects about 75 employees who wish to continue their education and help them enroll in different universities that offer post graduation programmes. The improved education level and better skill sets add value to the company. In-house programmes (They call it UMANG) for workers give a threefold advantage. Increased productivity, lower attrition rate and skilled workforce. The company cares for their employees' families. It reimburses the cost of school fees, books, study material and extra coaching classes for the qualifying children of employees. The company has a Vast network of 3200+employees. It uses digital tools to stay connected with them. They are designed to be the employment engagement tools. It is a plat form that aims to give employees easy and on-the-go access to updates and employee related details, while also serving as a tool to build and enhance connection.

Godrej Consumer Products Limited has a strong culture of learning and inclusiveness which makes it a preferred choice for its employees. Its programmes are employee-centric, aimed at their overall-welfare. For example, a sales manager would work with the analytics team on models to forecast price and demand. The company believes that when people got involved in functions which were unrelated to theirs, it helped them do their own job better on the long run.

The Oberoi Group became A Best employer by dint of its employment policies that empower staff at all levels and its focus on learning and development.

Vikram Oberoi, CEO and MD, the oberoi group says,

“We don't want our employees to
think that this is just a place they
work at. This is their hotel, these are
their own guests”

They hire managers who are trained in behaviour assessment. The oberoi group has about 1800 employees of which 27% managers are women. The group also uses a hiring assessment tool that throws situational questions at the candidate, to evaluate whether he or she would fit in with the company's culture. It pays a lot of attention to training, which he makes the oberoi group a group a

great employer. The programmes at OCLD have helped shape the hospitality industry.

The achievements of the above mentioned companies prove the fact that a diverse workforce has varied needs, requiring diverse solutions. AON Best employers offer a spectrum of choices to personalise solutions to the masses. Their employees feel that they have the right technology to enable them. They also ensure higher levels of senior leadership connect and manager support.

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BEYOND A BUSINESS SCHOOL

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Abstract

There is certainly a gap between a business school education and the actual knowledge that comes from the day-to-day experience of building and running a successful business and managing people. Mark MC Cormack, founder of “ International Management Group “ which is the world's largest sports and lifestyle management company explains in his International Best Seller “What they don't teach you at Harvard Business School “, explains so many concepts for the students of management education, which are not taught in Business School. This article throws light on those concepts so that they are benefited by this experiential learning practices (ELP). Rupert Murdoch, a global business stalwart sincerely admitted that the work of Mark MC Cormack was incisive, intelligent and with and reading it has taught him a lot. The author of this article is highly indebted to the writer of the book for enabling the former to enlighten the students of management education with the salient features of the master piece. Mark MC Cormack never attended any reputed Business School. But the success of his company has been taught at the prestigious Harvard Business School, as a case study. International Management Group has 3000 employees and operates from 85 offices in 33 countries. Its business now include the world's largest licensing agency, a prominent literary agency which manages world-renowned classical artists and three international modeling agencies. Its broadcast division, TWI (Trans world International) is the world's largest independent producer and distributor of sports programming. The author of this article is highly privileged to abridge the views of the great management guru, for the benefit of budding business professionals and entrepreneurs.

Key words

Self-learning process, sales force, Business situations, cubbyhole, innate prejudice, pre conceived notions, people-reading, insight, modus operandi, aggressive listening, ego-shedding, preconceptions, crisis, talent diversification, expertise, arbitrary thinking, consistency, flexibility, fear of failure.

The best lesson any one can learn from a business school is an awareness of what it can't teach you; all the ins and outspokenness of everyday business life, which teach you what they cannot teach you; which is how to read people and how to use that knowledge to get what to read people and how to influence their reading of you and how to apply or customize both to any likely business situation. Based on his own experiences and observations, he recommends many specific techniques which can be directly applied with immediate and tangible results. Of course, his advice is unconventional. He minces no words when he says:

“Running a company is a constant process of breaking out of systems and challenging conditional reflexes, rubbing against the grain. People want to work but policies suffocate them ”

The writer discovered that a Masters in business can sometimes block the ability to master experience. He noticed that many of MBAs hired were congenitally naive or victims of their business training consequently, there was a disability on their part to learn real life experiences; a failure to read people properly or to size up situations and an uncanny knack for forming the wrong perceptions. The great management guru aims that intellect and intelligence are not the substitutes for common sense, people sense and street smarts.

The master piece is divided into 3 parts. They are 1) People 2) Sales and Negotiations 3) Running a business. Let us analyse them one by one in three articles for the benefit of budding business professionals.

Reading People

In the business world, we can adopt a corporate persona or personas, on the basis of situations we face. We have to act one way with our subordinates and another way without seeders. But our real character cannot change as per the environment. In business situations, we have to deal with that persona's real self. We hear what people say or even oppose their version. We want to be in a position to put the deeds of others and their business activities, into the larger context of character. It applies to sellers or buyers, employers or employees Business situations are always a kin to people situations. Hence the more we know about those whom we deal with, the more effective we are going to be.

People-reading is nothing but keeping our senses open to what is actually going on. This can later be converted into our advantage only our powers of observation can provide us with deep insights into people. Many e business executives are not aware of what is going on around them. They engage themselves in self-listening or in listening to others. Being too busy in their corporate presence, they fail to notice what others are doing. Insight into people enables us to see beyond the presence. A real business man has the ability to listen to what others say. This has far greater business implications. “Learn to be a good listener “ is the advice of many management gurus. We have to constantly watch our listen/talk ratio.

Observation is an aggressive act. In other words, unless we keenly observe others. We will miss what they reveal. The statements of people are both conscious and unconscious and the form.

Latter signals are generally called “ Body Language “. Real observation lies in getting a wider picture, by taking all these conscious and unconscious signals, weighing them and converting them into usable perceptions. It does not mean that quick observation which makes one jump to hasty conclusions. Sometimes people communicate with their eyes in business situations, when they can't use words. This eye contact with each other has to be observed carefully, to know their intentions.

Another important factor is the ego. It is the difference between theory and practice. In other words it is the difference between the way things work and the way we would like to them to work. A one's 'security quotient' has a direct bearing on how he will behave in business situations. Will he be stubborn or reasonable? Our own ego hinders our insight into other people. We must be aware of our strengths and weaknesses which affect reaction to others. Apparently, these are no hard and fast rules for reading people; beneath their corporate disguises. But compassion will help.

Creating Impressions

We should always make use of the little opportunities to create an overall ongoing impression of competence, effectiveness, maturity and fair minded toughness. We must make people think that we are the kind of person people want to do business with. Internal and external correspondence is the best opportunity to present ourselves to the business community. Personalisation of business correspondence, referring to some personal interest of the recipient can bring up a business deal.

Most business executives complain that they do not have enough hours in the day to get everything done. The same executives are not aware of others time. Taking up more of the time than we need leaves a negative impression on our stakeholders. When we have someone in our office, we must make our telephone calls as short as possible.

Business promises are made, as a part of the job, but when they cannot be fulfilled, they create a horrible impression. People often agree to do things but they may no longer be able to fulfill them for many reasons, due to changed circumstances, information-change, or their being over ruled by their superiors. Of course, a commitment is a commitment and a deal is deal. But we have to recognise those extenuating circumstances and let people 'off the hook '. It will be more useful for ourselves and our company.

We should always appreciate and acknowledge some one's genuine business skills from which we have benefited. This is called legitimate flattery. But false flattery can easily backfire. To be most effective, we make the person whom we flatter look good in the eyes of others in his company.

Mentors as well as confidants can lead to very effective business relationships. From the former, you seek advice and direction, out of your trust and respect for them. With the latter we share our personal feelings from time to time, and pass information that does not affect us. People may like

what you tell them, but on a deeper level of trust, they don't like the act of your telling them.

A sense of humour is the most important asset in business, besides common sense. It is your ability to laugh at yourself or the situation. Laughter is the most potent, constructive force for diffusing business tension. It creates most favourable long term impressions. It is also the best way to start a meeting. A pleasant remark at the outset will create the right atmosphere for everything that follows.

How to take the edge?

Taking the edge is the gamesmanship of business. It is the ability to tilt a business situation to our advantage. It is winning through intuition. It is knowing the players and all the knowable aspects of the game. It is also knowing how to play the game itself. In any business situation, there is an edge out there for the taking without being greedy, pushy and impatient, we should keep looking for it. Eventually, it will show itself.

You cannot take an edge until you have first taken a look at the facts which can protect you from handing over the situation to others. There are many short cuts in business, but this is an exception. Every effort has to be made to learn everything you can about the companies and the people you are dealing with. The operative facts, the ones that define the situation, will start to present themselves.

We must act instead of react or never over react to any business situation. We must think 'on our feet' and hear what people say, the large and underlying meaning as well.

'Luck is the residue of diligence' as the saying goes. We have to take advantage of it', instead of waiting for it to hit us in the face. This is the basic difference between those who are fortunate ones in business and who are not. 'Getting lucky' is mostly a matter of recognising when have been. Then it will be easy to turn it into an edge.

Even crises can be turned into opportunities. When a crisis occurs or is about to occur, we should be analysed in terms of its potential for opportunity as well as for disaster. Then only our response should start. This enables the crisis-manager to be clear headed in dealing with the problem. Instead of being caught up in the crisis, we can take an edge out of it.

Many executives think that they are street-smart but only some prove that they are really so. The former languish in middle and lower middle management, but blame everything and everybody, for their lapses and non-performance. Ironically, such people are very perspective and even intuitive. But their instincts are bad. They misuse their perception, blurt out some indiscretion. They cannot tell things as they are. This is business immaturity that affects business professionals in any age-group.

How to get ahead in business

It is interesting to observe that in spite of similar backgrounds and capabilities, some reach the helm of affairs where as others remain in the middle management. Mark H Mc Cormack explains that the answer for the above paradox lies in understanding the difference between “capabilities” and effectiveness”, and using those capabilities to achieve their results. Those who merely workup to their capabilities do not become business stalwarts. Real stalwarts combine their capabilities with other things like know-how, people sense etc. They are the real achievers and can show results. They can effectively 'sell' their ideas and themselves inside the company as well as outside the company.

Climbing up the corporate leaders us certainly a game. Both the employer and the employee are the players in the game. While the former should constantly try to recognise real talent, the latter should let the true decision makers know how good they really are. Getting ahead is the real world concern of business life. An MBA or PGDM degree can get you in the door. But once you are inside, you need to find a way to let people know your real worth. You should know the rules that make up the game. You should acknowledge the hard core realities that influence relationships within the corporate structure. These realities vary very widely from company to company. But there are three general rules which everyone should keep in mind. They are

1. Survival of the fittest, 2. Your peers are your natural allies, 3. There is always a system

Some people are actually very good at what they do, but they take great pride in flaunting their weaknesses as well as their strengths. Practitioners of lobe-me-for-myself syndrome seem to view it as a mark of security, when in reality it is very much the opposite.

There are three “hard-to-say” phrases which most chairmen and CEOs know how and when to say them. They are, 1. I don't know, 2. I need help, 3. I was wrong.

The inability to say the first phrase, can give us an insight into their business character. It is interesting to note that when we do not admit what we don't know can lead to suspicion about what we know. Secondly, your accepting help and your giving it are going to be remembered and acknowledged by any sort of enlightened management. Thirdly, an ability to say “I was wrong” is essential to success because it cleanses our guilt of ignorance.

Employees are trusted by the company more than others because their judgment and character are so solid. Loyalty is another form of trust. If an employee has another job offer, but wants to remain with the present company, he should 'stress' the importance of his loyalty, in somewhat effective terms.

We should never attempt to change the system of the company we work in. Instead, we should work through it. It is futile to waste our time fighting against the system. The brighter ones spend

their time learning how to be an effective part of it.

It is very important as to what do we do beyond our job description, employees may come and go but the job is constant. Most positions are 75% functional and 25% personal. The degree to which we can stretch the latter is the one by which we will stand out in the company.

To do away with burn out and boredom, we should plan our time for exercise, relaxation and rest. Boredom occurs when the learning curve flattens it out. It can happen to anyone at any level of corporation. It occurs most often in successful people. If we are bored, it is nothing but our fault. It implies that we are not working hard enough at making our job interesting. When we love what we do, we will be the ultimate winners.

Thus, in this article, the golden views of Mark H Mc Cormack are presented in precise form, to enlighten the students of management.

Source

“What They Don't Teach you At Harward Business School” Profile Books, 2013.

Call for Papers

Aurora's Journal of Management (AJM) a quarterly publication of the Aurora's Business School, Hyderabad, India, is a journal addressed to managers in the industry, the government and nonprofit organizations. It aims at disseminating results of research studies that are of relevance to their jobs and capable of being applied at their work-place. AJM provides a combination of scholarly research papers and papers that are conceptual and application-oriented. It does not confine itself to any one functional area, but invites articles relating to all areas of management, marketing, finance, organizational behavior, and human resources, operations, etc. The journal also features articles on various sectors like industry, agriculture, banking, international trade, urban and rural development, public systems, and information systems cutting across functions.

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