

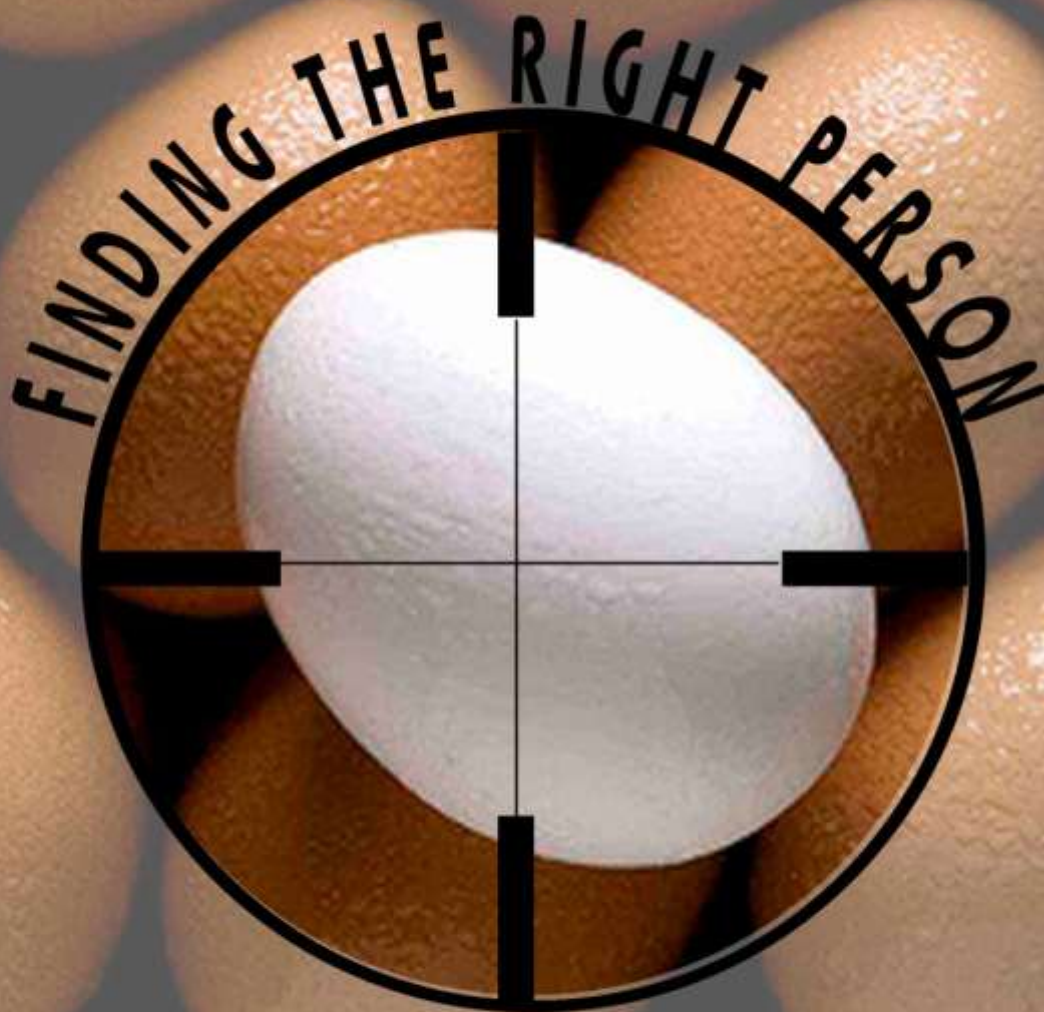
TOGETHER

JUL - AUG 2012

...by usHR



Executive Search Firms – What Lies Beneath



Interview:

Mr Jyotindra Vachharajani

GM, Corporate Relations

Essar Energy Ltd

Editorial

Dear Readers,

With great pride, we present the sixth issue of TogetHR.

With talent becoming scarce, and a global war of talent being waged, companies are finding it difficult to get the right talent for their top positions. This has led to the birth of a new category of firms, called executive search firms. The **Cover Story** of this issue “**Executive Search Firms – What Lies Beneath**” talks in detail about the evolution, growth and future of these firms.

Under the **Concoction** section this time, we have articles focussing on several emerging trends in human resource management. Article of the Issue “**The school of life – Practices of Andragogy in Action**” discusses how the concept of learning is kept alive in organizations and the importance of it. The article “**Management of Indian SMEs – what is missing**” puts forth the challenges that HR managers at SMEs face in the current scenario. The importance of team management has been reiterated time and again in management education. What makes it really effective? Read “**The Three Es of Efficient Team Building**” to know more. “**M Learning – a new face of Learning**” talks about a new concept – learning on the move, an idea slowly catching on in all organizations.

In the **Conflux** section, we have presented our interaction with **Mr. Jyotindra Vachharajani, GM, Corporate Relations, Essar** where he has shared his life learnings with us.

To kindle the spark of creativity amongst all of us, usHR organized a poster making competition, **Enthral-us**, this time. Know more about it and also have a look at the winning entries in the **Campus Buzz** section.

An interesting quiz beckons you, this time, in the **Contest with the Best** section. Answer a few simple questions and get the opportunity to win 500 bucks!!

Team usHR has been continuously getting your support and we extend our gratitude for the same. Do write in to us with your feedback @ hrclub.iims@gmail.com.

Happy Reading!!!

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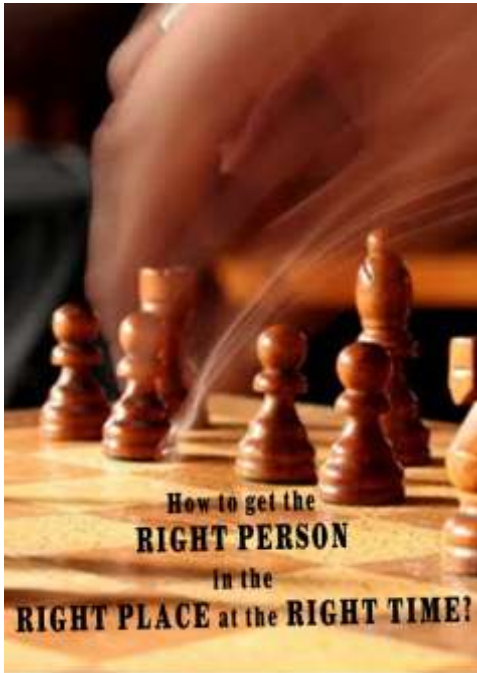
Noopur Borwankar

P Padmini

Sourojit Ghose

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Tell us something about your background



I had a rather curious background. I am a science graduate and completed my B.Sc. in Chemistry. I was University topper and always aspired to become a doctor. However, in those days the admission to the medicine was

after 10+1 and everything was merit based. However, due to my ill-health I was unable to perform. There after I took admission in the University – Department of Chemical Technology (UDCT) in Mumbai where I studied for three years. Having topped the university, I pursued MBA from All India Management Association, a distance learning program.

After MBA, I worked for 6 months in another company before joining Pidilite as General Manager. I worked there for 10 years as Production Incharge at Vapi, Gujrat. I had always dreamt of becoming an entrepreneur. When I came to Ahmedabad, I found partner from my school days. He was a marketing guy and he wanted a production expert. We started a pigments supply company. During my entrepreneurial experience, I got the opportunity to travel throughout the world and I believe that the greatest learning for me came from travelling and secondly from interacting with people from all the walks of life from different parts of world. Travelling gave me the confidence to talk to anyone. Also third, my reading habit helped me a lot as I understood people whom I worked with.

In 2007, after my kids settled, I thought of coming back from a travelling job. That is when I joined

Greatest learning for me came from

- **Travelling**
- **Interacting with People of various countries**
- **Reading**

Essar. I am presently heading Corporate Relations. There are 7 companies in Jamnagar with around 3000 employees. As the Corporate Head, I am responsible for maintaining liaison with the Government of Gujarat, dealing with 52 departments, licensing etc. Secondly, I am also responsible for handling the media. Thirdly I look after the CSR activities of Essar.



Tell us something we do not know about Essar

Promoter directors are very generous people. They never fire anyone, atleast in the last 5 years I have never seen anyone get fired. Only in one aspect the company is strict: No male employee should take wrong advantage of any female in the organization. The company had come up in a hard way. It will be a 25 Billion dollar company next year. We hire the best brains from all over the world. Ours is a paperless office. Everyone till the DGM's level have access to Blackberry phones to stay connected from all over the world.

Tell us about your experience in Essar

I had a wonderful experience in Essar till now. My work involves dealing with internal customers, meeting CEO and MDs of the industries, dealing with Government and CSR activities. The culture of the organization is such that they

are very open to suggestions and the communication channel is good. CEOs are made the de-facto owners of the business and hence they have the power to take major decisions. **The company has literally empowered us.** All that I need to do is to inform. I can say that Essar is one of the best employers. Once they employ you, they empower you to the maximum level. Having worked for Essar for five years now, I am very happy.

Since you are from a production background and also have run your own production facility, can you comment on the recent violence in the Maruti plant at Manesar, what do you feel should be done to prevent such incidents and maintain cordial relations between management and the workforce??

I owned a company and used to employ 100 people. HR is a very important part of the company and we cannot take people for granted. **Proper HR thought process is very necessary to succeed in a labor intensive company.** If you don't have the right HR thinking, you are bound to fail. Any breakdown in the communication channel is detrimental. As an employer, we have to solve the problems of the

HR is a very important part of the company and we cannot take people for granted.

employees. I need to understand your needs, your issues. Any kind of breakdown will cause problems. Though we cannot compare scale of our pigments company

with that of Maruti, I think good HR policies should solve major problems. **Policies are only bare minimum, one can go beyond policies to make things right.** That is why exit interviews are so important and should be properly framed so that you find the real cause that is leading to the exit. Especially in this era, attrition in the industrial sector is huge,

especially in areas like NCR where there is so much of development happening. One should

It is necessary to find that at which point the monetary benefits are not attracting the workforce. You should try to find that how you can make them feel that it's their own company.

understand workforce and try to retain them.

Also, it is necessary to find that at which point the monetary benefits are not attracting the workforce. You should try to find that how you can make them feel that it's their own company. As you grow as an organisation, the most important person on the shop floor is the head of HR. Technical people are easy to find but there is a lot of demand for good HR guys because the most difficult thing to handle is the human resource.

Can you tell us something special about HR practices at Essar? Also, in 2011, Essar Energy declared it as The Year of Internal Talent Mgmt. what steps has the company taken in that regard?

Essar runs various talent management and engagement programs to harness employee morale and skills. The



performance of the business reflects the dedication and commitment of the company. Essar views its employees as

its biggest asset and is therefore highly focused on developing people right across the business. So, to achieve this mission, **we named 2011 as the Year of Internal Talent Management.**

There is an e-portal in our organization called as **'Next Move Portal'**. It is for internal recruitment process. For instance there is a DGM in oil and steel plant requires JGM (Joint GM). We put the requirement in our portal. We try to find the talent internally first. Within the pool, if someone finds himself to be eligible, he can apply. So, the DGM can apply for this post. Then begins the process of interview, if they find the candidate suitable, they will first appoint them. The preference is given to internal applicants before going out i.e. the talent internal to the organization are given preference. **It's all about managing the internal talent. In this way everyone, employer and employee will be contented. Employee understands the risks and applies and employer gets the person who already knows the work culture.**

Energy sector requires lots of technical experts, how does Essar ensure good workforce? What are its recruitment methods?

We start with the premium colleges like IITs and offer very good packages. During the first three years of hiring, the employees undergo rigorous training in a program called as 'Saksham' through which they are moved from department to department with job rotation on the shop floor. By the end of the third year the employee becomes an expert and efficient in all company processes. COOs and CTO have a close watch on the progress of these young boys and girls. We

usually recruit more than required due to high attrition rate in this industry and long training process involved.

We have liaison with IOC Panipat plant where we send our new recruits for real life training in batches of 125 members. We do not go for lateral recruitment normally until it is utmost necessary. For recruitment of top level executives, we consult head hunting executive search firms. We do promote 'women empowerment' quite a lot and we have almost 125 female engineers.

For recruitment of top level executives, we consult head hunting executive search consulting firms.

Objective of CSR should not be Brand building but should be to work for a better future.

How important is CSR to actual overall growth of the company?

Well, one cannot exist without doing service to the society. One has to help the environment in order to grow. One has to share profits with all the stakeholders. Any company cannot exist without CSR, Education and Empowerment. Objective of



CSR should not be Brand building but should be to work for a better future. How can a company be successful if its future workforce is sick and incapable to lead? HR is a crucial step here also. HR department should make this ideology penetrate the core of the organization.

How can a company be successful if its future workforce is sick and incapable to lead?

HR as a function is not valued much. What are your views on this? How important is HR as a strategic function

and how it can augment organization to grow? How do you think HR can be made popular and friendlier to attract greater talent?

Well, it's a myth. My group president of HR draws a salary four times the Director. My head of refinery is 60 years while

the HR head is 52 years.

Break the Myth. To remove the myth from the minds of the

HRM cannot be done by everyone. There are too many things associated with it and one can be innovative and bring in some new ideas and concepts to the organisation. HR is a coming up field. It will RULE THE WORLD.

youth, you need to bring more and more people from the industry and the corporate world for interaction. HRM cannot be done by everyone. There are too many things associated with it and one can be innovative and bring in some new ideas and concepts to the organisation. HR is a coming up field. It will RULE THE WORLD. Keep doing good things and people will surely recognize the niceties in it.

What do you feel can be the special measures taken for tapping human resource potential in the North East?

There is a lot of potential to develop North East Indian Workforce. The most important thing is to bring them to the mainstream. It can be done by Training, Propagation using seminars and by increasing awareness levels because

awareness is the most important thing needed to be spread to target people and tell them the real picture. There would be many people here who are aspirants, target such people so that the real picture is clear to both the parties. I would suggest, start on a smaller base first and then expand. Target smaller groups, Enlighten audience and then go to the next step. Spreading awareness can be done by writing articles in the local languages. I know it's a time consuming process but this is what is required. Even I am not an HR guy but I have been educated on this through various resources. I attend seminars etc. and hence I become aware. You need to adopt the same strategy for the people here. It is a very nice strategy, become the Flag Bearers and make this mission possible.



There is a lot of potential to develop North East Indian Workforce. The most important thing is to bring them to the mainstream. It can be done by

- ***Training***
- ***Propagation using seminars***
- ***By increasing awareness levels***

TOGETHER

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TogetherHR
covered topics of various
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- HR Analytics | Generation Z as Human Resource | Change Mgmt
- Defining the HR MAN | Talent Supply Chain Management | Metrics
- Succession Planning | One Size Doesn't Fit All | Mentor Mentee Fit
- Talent Management | Employer Branding | E-Recruiting | Law in HR
- Comp 'N' Ben: The O2 of Employees | Green HRM | Middle Managers
- High Impact Performance Mgmt | Employee Sabbatical | Labor Issues

Anniversary Attractions



lots of
Surprises!!!

Surprise!

Surprises!!

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

India's growth in the last decade or so has shown a phenomenal pace. A vital role in this growth is played by Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) by employing 600 people and contributing 45% of industrial output and 40% of exports for India (SME Chamber of India Report). In 2011, SMEs contributed 17% of the country's GDP. Apart from contributing to our economy, SMEs have also pioneered innovations and patents in different industrial sectors - Manufacturing, Precision Engineering Design, Food Processing, Pharmaceutical, Textile & Garments, Retail, IT and ITES, Agro and Service sector; creating opportunities and a better life for people in rural India. However, SMEs now face the pressure of internationalization, expansion and diversification across the sectors. Add to this the pressure of lowering costs and SMEs have a tough trajectory to follow.

Most SMEs are labour intensive industries that start out as family-owned, cottage enterprises which move on to become recognized nationally or even, internationally. As this progression takes place, the systems and structures at these firms become more sophisticated and globally competitive. However, when it comes to human resource management, professionalism still eludes the SMEs. The Indian SME mindset of bounded rationality fails to give primacy to employee competencies and the strategic value of human resources. According to a 2008 study,



the HRM systems in the Indian SME sector are limited to financial, emotional and social support to employees; for all developmental needs, there is practically no HR department in most enterprises. Since, SMEs are now competing globally; it is high time for the HR departments of these enterprises, if any, to be more than administrative entities.

Historically, HRM at SMEs have focused on the unionization and its related issues. One of the primary result areas for the department has been managing employee relations and labour law framework. Some of the HR best practices at SMEs over the past decades have been authoritarian Unitarianism, paternalistic management, piece rate compensation and the like. While, these practices have survived very well, the need of the hour is to beat competition in the international markets for which structured HR practices are imperative. Issues such as strategic recruitment and training, skill development, employee involvement practices, skill based compensation, and flexibility of these practices are critical in today's environment of technological and economic changes.



It is important to note here that while technologically, we might be superior in many sectors, in the cost structure; it might be very difficult to beat countries such as China. The quality of design features and services will determine our supremacy in the world market;

employer branding has become critical. In order to facilitate all this, emphasis on skilled human resource acquisition, development and retention has to increase. The reality of HRM in Indian SMEs is that it is reactive in nature as opposed to being proactive. Most enterprises shift their focus to HR issues only when they become acute (read strikes, lock-outs) and even then there is a probability that the issue will be treated with an operational lens. While aspects such as affordability, sustainability and expertise are critical, what needs immediate attention is the indigenous mentality with which all SME founders are blessed with. Human resources and growth are seldom seen as complementary.

So what are the factors that are essential for sensitive perception of these HR issues at SMEs? Perhaps these can be divided into **founder(s)** and **enterprise related attributes**. The importance given to HR issues depends on the age, experience, educational background and even, gender of the founder(s). Younger founders with new age mindset will see HR issues as significant as opposed to their older counterparts with old school paternal management ideas. More experienced founders will not let human resource issue to crop up but will, in most cases overlook all issues in their early stages. Males tend to have an autocratic style of leadership and thus, are more likely to face HR problems which are development and employee discretion related. Grievance handling is traditionally done better by female owners. Other factors that affect the human resource concerns in an SME are

Factors essential for sensitive perception of HR issues at SMEs

Age, Experience, Education, Gender of Founders

associated to the life cycle of the enterprise. The size, age, growth percentage and performance affect the existence and subsequently persistence of HR issues.

So does one size fit all? Do all SMEs need to turn to development of HR practices? Is the cost of a structured department justified for all Indian SMEs? The answer is may-be NOT. While we as students and future consultants are strong proponents of strategic human resource management at Indian SMEs, we feel that the development needs to be phased out on the basis of the strategic emphasis on differentiation, the environmental uncertainty that the particular SME operates in, the SME growth objectives and finally, the leadership abilities of the founding members.

Life Cycle of SME: Age, Size, Growth%, Performance



The objective of this article was just to draw the attention of its readers to an aspect of Indian SMEs and their future, which has been long ignored.

Sahil Garg, Avantika Tomar | IIM Calcutta

A close-up photograph of a hand in a dark suit sleeve moving a wooden chess piece on a chessboard. The lighting is warm and focused on the hand and the piece being moved, with other pieces and the board in a soft focus. The background is dark, making the hand and the chess pieces stand out.

How to get the
RIGHT PERSON

in the
RIGHT PLACE at the **RIGHT TIME?**



People are the most important asset for an organization. Isn't this something that you hear every time somebody is

talking about human resource management in an organization? Well, that is only because the organizations today have started realizing the importance of the people asset and are strongly focusing on good recruitment processes. One of those includes the process of HEADHUNTING, a recruitment process which involves the serial approach of searching, tracking and selecting the people who are already working in other companies. This job is mostly done by a third party recruiter or head-hunter who acts as the point of contact between its client company and the candidate that it targets for recruiting. Today, these third parties have evolved as the very well-known executive search firms.

These firms are established as major businesses today. The companies prefer to outsource the top level recruitment to these firms who perform a good job by applying their expertise and fulfill the companies' requirements. There has been a boom in this industry owing to the fact that they are pretty reliable and the consultants engaged with these firms have good knowledge of the various industries. The

companies have to put in a lot of trust with these firms before outsourcing recruitment process to them. However these firms have earned a good reputation with their proven capabilities and the companies are no longer hesitant in handing over their top level management recruitment to these executive search firms.



Every new search begins with the meeting of the client and the consultant wherein the consultant is briefed about the requirements of the company. Prior to this meeting the consultants prepare themselves rigorously so that the first client meet materialize into business. Mostly the client contact the firm whenever needed however at times even the firms contact the clients when they realize that the client needs their help regarding recruitment. The firms are



Executive Search Firms – What Lies Beneath

highly vigilant with respect to the market conditions and hence approach the client whenever they find it appropriate. Once the client and the consultant have a meeting regarding each other's expectations, the assignment of the executive search begins.

The firm maintains an up-to-date database of the people who are working at various positions in numerous companies. It keeps on tracking the movement of the people across the companies



and updates the same in their database which helps them in their search when the assignment begins. The researchers working under the consultants begin the extensive search for the prospective candidate. After an initial shortlisting, the candidate is interviewed by the consultant in several rounds where the consultant tries to



assess the candidate in all possible ways so as to come up with the best candidates to present to the client.

They take into consideration various aspects of the candidate like his personal values, skill, job preference, past work-experience, family ties etc. This is done in order to gain clarity about the candidate

and to ensure whether he/she is the right fit for the clients' job or not. Once the firm narrows down to the final list of candidates, they are presented to the client for the final round of interview/talks. The client finalizes the candidate



and the assignment closes successfully. In case, the candidate is not approved by the client or the candidate backs out at the last moment, the assignment begins again. The firms have numerous policies when it comes to taking the responsibility of the newly hired executive and these policies might vary across the firms.

The companies outsourcing the recruitment of the heads to these executive search firms mostly lack the internal resources, network or the proper evaluation skills. These firms maintain good relationship with the candidates and the clients. The need for headhunting firm is felt a lot when the companies want to expand their footprints. For instance, there are many MNCs in the healthcare allied sectors. These MNCs when set their footprints in India, appoint a foreign head, however, after some period of time



the foreign head is replaced with a head of Indian origin. The head hunters help such MNCs in finding the right talent for the right position. The companies not

only save time in such scenarios but are also relieved off looking into the entire nitty-gritty of the recruitment process. They are only involved at the final stages to make the final choice.

The status of the search firms in the past was nothing more than placement firms. The acceptance towards these firms has



increased in the recent

past. Now they are the most sought after by the companies. Firms like Egon Zehnder International, Spencer Stuart, Heidrick & Struggles etc.



are playing a

key role in getting the right talent for the big companies at the top level



management.

These firms also offer services other than executive search. For example they offer services like board consulting, CEO succession, family business advisory etc. They play a key role in advising

their clients on the selection of the director and independent directors.

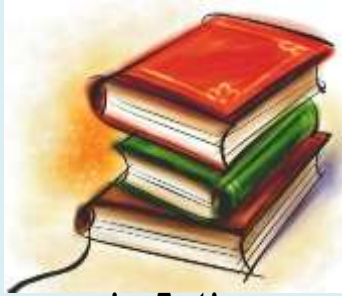
In order to deliver the best quality service, these firms are also trying to bring the best talent on their own board. Many of the senior professionals working in these search firms come after serving in prestigious consulting firms or other big companies. For instance, the consultants in Egon Zehnder have moved from Oberoi Group of Hotels, McKinsey, Coca Cola, P&G, Boston Consulting Group, Schlumberger Oilfield Services etc.

The consultants have moved to this industry after serving at various roles across many industries. The job they perform requires maintaining and fostering good relationship with the client as well as the candidates. The



kind of work they perform brings in immense amount of satisfaction to them. The consultant needs to understand the basic needs of the client, its expectations, its culture and people before beginning any search. They work very closely with the client as well as the candidates. The personalized service that they offer will go a long way in ensuring the success of these firms.

THE SCHOOL OF LIFE



Practices of Andragogy in Action

An organization's ability to learn, and translate the learning into action rapidly, is the ultimate competitive advantage.

- Jack Welch

These immortal words by the great impresario reflect the need for andragogy in the workplace. Andragogy simply put is the art and science of teaching adults. At the workplace, it is a tool to ensure that an employee undergoes directed learning which is concurrent with the organization's goals. As evidenced by Kaplan and Norton's balanced scorecard, learning and growth are integral component for effective and sustainable strategy. The need for Andragogy among adult learners can be seen from the statistics of people's retention power:

- ✓ 20% of what they hear
- ✓ 30% of what they see
- ✓ 50% of what they see and hear
- ✓ 70% of what they see hear and say
- ✓ 90% of what they see, hear, say and do

Organization need to give opportunities of learning to their employees in order to build their intellectual capital and

improve its retention as attraction and retention of talent is a major problem.

With increasing competition the corporate world has woken up to using training and development as a strategic tool rather than a mere formality. It not only helps to align training with corporate strategy but also helps to align personal goals to those of the organization. At the same time, it helps in satisfying Maslow's ultimate need of self-



actualization. It is not in our nature to be stagnant, we learn constantly, albeit subconsciously sometimes.

Setting an example

To gain an insight into the corporate practices of andragogy, we have analysed how a few learning organizations are engaging and motivating their workforce.



GE spends a whopping \$1 billion on training and education of employees, but they call it investing, and rightly so, the results speak for themselves.

Entry-Level Leadership Programs at GE are for graduates to get them acclimatized to the industry through on the job training and classroom programs.

Experienced Leadership Programs: are for employees with experience who wish to move up. The program fosters collaboration between innovators and employees and intensive on the job training in many functional areas like HR, Sales and Marketing.



Abbott's promise extends to a better life for its employees as well. Their

Moving to Zero CARE program is a behaviour-

based education program that helps prevent accidents at workplace and improve the safety. Concentration, Attitude and Recognition for



Everyone (CARE) helps educate employees on workplace safety.

Mentoring: Deeply ingrained in its culture is the mentorship program, which enhances networking across the globe through informal mentoring. In USA, a formal mentoring web based tool that matches mentors to protégés is in place.



This Consulting giant besides running a leadership program for its

new and existing employees, it also provides opportunities

for team based learning. Diverse teams promote group learning, aided by interactive games

.Teams also provide Coaching and Mentoring to each other.

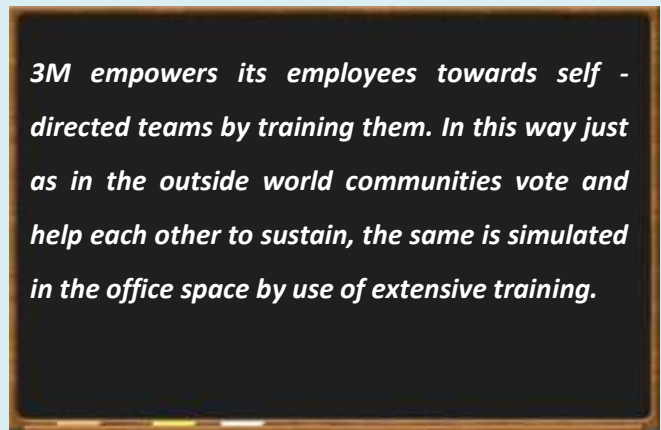


provides area specific programs such as the

Financial Leadership Development Program which helps to integrate undergraduates in the field of finance into the business through a 2 year long job rotation framework so that they develop expertise in every aspect of the field. Global Operations Leadership Development Program (GOLD) provides expertise in the area of Operations, supply chain and quality.

Putting andragogy into Context

Back to School? Well not quite. Adults have special needs and requirements as learners. The best way to enhance their learning is through dialogue. They have enough life experiences which can be shared and new skills, knowledge and attitudes in relation to those life experiences can be acquired. Characteristics of practices of andragogy are autonomous, self-directed, goal oriented and practical. Personal goal attainment, clarity, organizational requirements and personal influence are the major drivers in the learning process of adult learner.



Knowledge absorption capability

Absorption capability is “ability to recognize the value of new external information, assimilate it, and apply to commercial ends” (Cohen & Levinthal). Absorption capability at the organisational level resides within individual employees. It has two elements: **prior knowledge** and **motivation to perform**.

Prior knowledge is mostly related to educational background and job experience whereas, employees motivation is required to perform more inclined towards learning, innovation and their absorption capability through knowledge sharing.

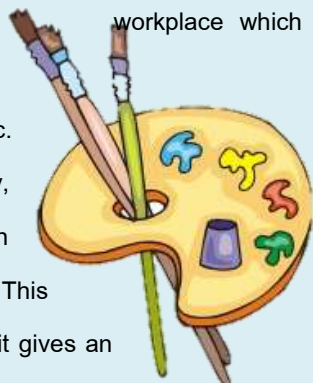


Andragogy practices (like coordination, internal communication and face-to-face interactions) improve employees' absorption ability and motivation to share, and to transfer their knowledge.

Given here are some of the more interesting ways of facilitating Learning



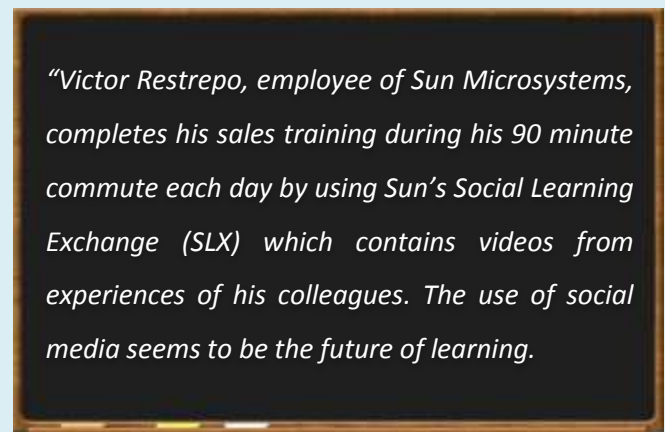
The McGraw Hill Companies uses arts based training at the workplace which is essentially the use of arts i.e. drama, theatre, songs etc. for encouraging creativity, leadership and collaboration amongst the employees. This approach makes sense in that it gives an



environment in which an employee can relax which in turn fosters creativity and camaraderie.



is known for its innovative training modules. Employees can access these modules from anywhere in the world and stay informed.



This seems to be the future of learning, the extensive use of social media for faster and better results. Learning is the source of dynamic growth. Call it a necessity or a proactive strategy; it forms an integral part of the practices in the workplace. An organization's most prized asset is not found in the account books, but in the workplace, learning leading to intellectual capital is the backbone of an organization-the true asset.



Sakshi Kharbanda, Charu Puri | IMI New Delhi

FAST TRACK INFORMAL LEARNING GAINS MOMENTUM

The sphere of work and organization is changing. Now learning is no more just about knowing and not knowing. It is incomplete without 'action' – implementing the knowledge gained over a period of time. It is vital to ensure that learning keeps pace, such that what is learnt does not become obsolete by the time it can be put into action. Learning can broadly be classified as follows:



Formal learning is structured and organized, and includes school-like programs developed in business environment for technical, vocational and professional trainings. Intentional learning is when an individual intends to learn something on his own and identifies ways of achieving that objective. Accidental learning may occur anytime and in any activity, where an individual happens to learn something unexpected. Informal learning ensues from processes which are not organized or structured.

Post recession, several organizations have decided to cut down on the budget allocated for learning and

<p>Classes E-learning Meetings</p> <p>FORMAL</p>	<p>Self-Study Social Media Internet surfing</p> <p>UNEXPECTED</p>
<p>INTENTIONAL</p> <p>Reading Coaching Mentoring</p>	<p>INFORMAL</p> <p>Community Exploring M-Learning Playing</p>

(c) Marcia L. Conner, 2004-2009

development. In other organizations, the senior management expects more ROI from the trainings. Hence, it is all the more inevitable that the focus on informal learning has increased. There has also been a gradual increase in awareness about using technology for informal learning and the inter-relationship between employee

performance and informal learning. In this article, we intend to focus upon M-learning (Mobile Learning), which is a form of informal learning.



WHAT IS M - LEARNING?

M – Learning is *learning on the move*, from various hand devices. As defined by eLearning Guild, Mobile Learning is any activity that allows individuals to be more productive when consuming, interacting with, or creating information, mediated through a compact digital portable device that the individual carries on a regular basis, has reliable connectivity, and fits in a pocket or purse. It enables the organizations to facilitate 'just-in-time', 'just expected' and 'just-for-me' support and guidance to the learners without any constraints of remote locations. It helps to fetch information, fun and learning activities and other contents to flexible, transportable and portable

devices like mobile phones, net-books, digital cameras, e-readers, smart phones, iPads, tablets, etc. Though it is similar to internet learning or e-learning and distance learning in certain aspects, it is distinctive in its approach towards learning across contexts using mobile devices.



It facilitates learning on the go and employees can utilize it in their time of convenience. This mode of learning is preferred by the new breed of tech-savvy employees. Learning through micro blogging, watching videos on the mobile, etc. instantly attracts them and are easily adopted by them. Companies like Microsoft, Deloitte have already started using this technology for training.

HOW IT WORKS?

Smart phones can be used to send quizzes to learners to evaluate and gauge their performance. Document digests, short audios and videos can be sent to the learners on their smart phones. The employees can also have mobile communities according to their



learning needs where they can share their ideas and learn from others. Blogs, wikis containing latest developments in the company, in the industry helps keep the employees aware of the latest developments and learn about

them. A formal Mobile Learning Management System can be established by the organization which will handle all the technological requirements and the content of the Learning system. It will also supply the users with Help Manuals on their mobile device.

WHO USES IT?

The great thing about m-learning is that it can be used for learning by the employees at any level of an organization.

WHAT IS IN IT FOR YOU?

Organizations can use this to update the employees about latest happenings in the industry and within the organization.

- ✓ It can be used anywhere, anytime, according to the convenience of the learner
- ✓ Employees can share their learning on collaborative platforms like mobile social networking
- ✓ Mobile devices can not only be used for imparting training but can also be used for giving feedback and testing knowledge
- ✓ Once the infrastructure of the m-learning is established, the training cost per person will decrease dramatically in the long run

ROAD BLOCKS

- ✓ Not all employees will have smart phones supporting and having storage space for all the softwares needed for m-learning

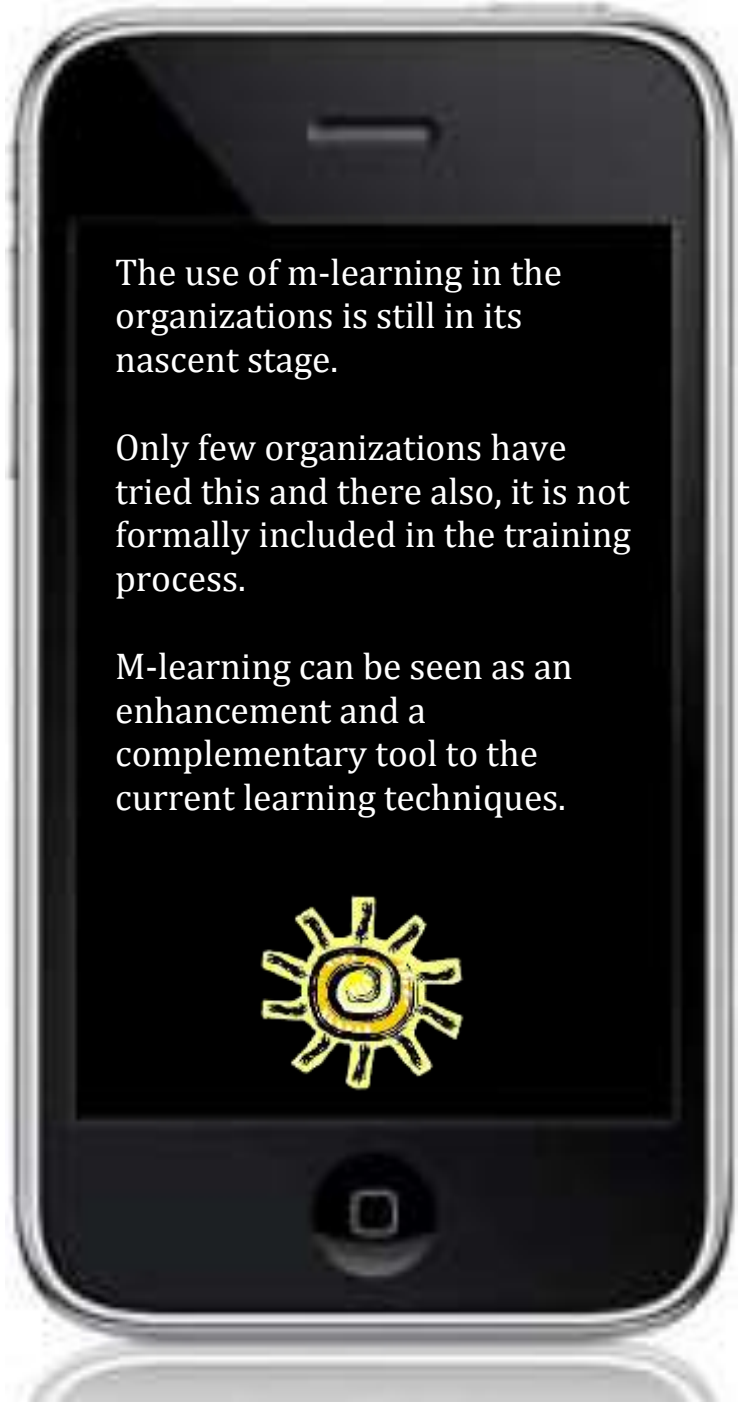
- ✓ Technologies get obsolete very quickly so the organization has the responsibility to continuously upgrade the mobile phones, which might increase the cost of training
- ✓ There might be connectivity problem in some places
- ✓ The small screens of mobile phones make them inconvenient for reading big documents; processing time is also low for lower priced smart phones
- ✓ There are also security issues. The mobile is more susceptible to virus attacks and copying of shared content by hackers

FUTURE AHEAD

In India the mobile subscriber base is 811 million and is projected to cross 1 billion in 2014. Mobile broadband is expected to cross 100 million 3G subscribers by 2015. Also,



according to the ASTD/i4cp study, 57% organizations will design training programs accessible on mobile devices in the next 3 years and 47% will utilize Smartphone apps for learning. With such bright prospects and the increase in use of technology in our day to day life, there are several opportunities still unexplored in this field with regards to training.



A major challenge for the organizations is to

Engagement

develop teams to optimize the synergy.

Though efficient communication is the key to esprit de corps, the success

Energy

mantra does not just lie in what is communicated but how it is

communicated. This has transformed the team building

Exploration

exercise from art to

science with a set of protocols as discussed in this article.



The 3Es of Efficient



Building

the team is based on the following nuances of human behaviour in a team:

On the basis of the study of these factors vis-à-vis the performance of the team, following observations were made:

- ✓ The talent and knowledge level of the team members is secondary, what matters most is gauging their communication patterns and training them in the right direction
- ✓ The members communicate not just with the team leader but equally with the entire team
- ✓ Each member is given a chance to express his viewpoint, wherein every one listens to every other and also ensures that he speaks precisely and to the point
- ✓ The team members are not just restricted to the team ideas but explore new channels to grab new ideas and enrich the team

Communication in a team

According to a survey conducted by the human dynamics department of MIT University, the overall performance of

Voice Modulation while talking to the team mates

Extroversion level of the team members

The level of empathy

Their body language

Other factors like how much one talks and listens to others, the level of interruption

The 3 Es: Energy, Engagement and Exploration

Energy

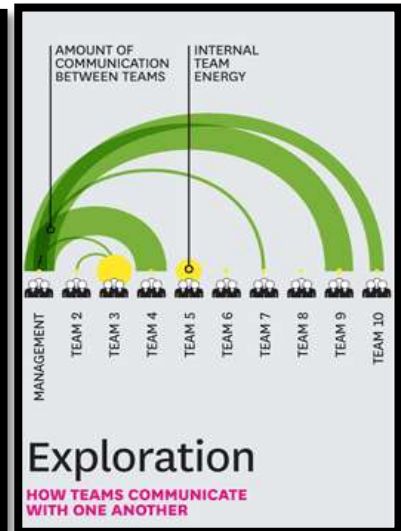
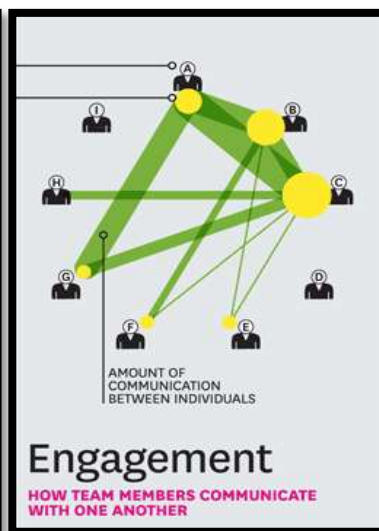
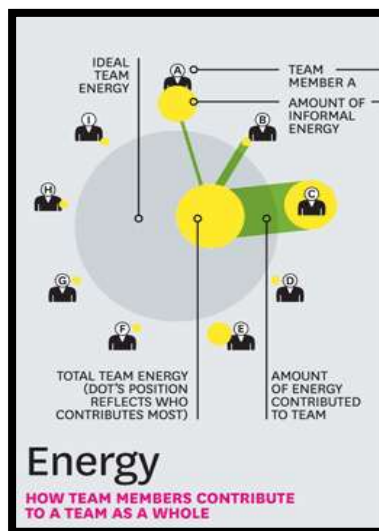
This factor keeps varying depending on the situation under consideration.



Elated events would normally boost the overall energy levels while the challenges may sometimes lower the energy levels.

Engagement

This is the overall distribution of energy in the team. In a team comprising of 3 members, X, Y and Z the engagement can be calculated as the average of energy between X and Y, Y and Z and X and Z.



through interaction with the back and side channels and exploring new perspectives.

With finite energy, the engagement and exploration lie at a trade-off situation. So, if energy is concentrated inside the team, the energy allocation for exploration is reduced. Visualization is an effective way to understand the distribution of the 3 Es. This can be done with respect to members of the team and with respect to time.

Criteria 1: Mapping w.r.t the team members

This criterion has the members as its reference. The advantage is that it helps to identify the engagement and exploration on one-to-one basis, making the assessment of the team members easier and also targeting the dominant and unengaged team members for optimization of the performance of the team.

✓ From the diagram it is evident that A, B, and C

Exploration

The success of the team is not just restricted to the internal communication levels but also to the external ones: channelizing the energy to other teams, to gain insights enriching the overall team performance

have most of the energy contribution in the team due to which the overall distribution is skewed towards the right. This generates the “team within the team” and other members simply feel ignored.

- ✓ The skewed energy distribution also impacts the engagement of the team. The most lethal effect is from the “localized team formation” within the team who take the position of the decision makers, with little or no output from the other members. **The high energy members form a closed-network, with minimum contribution from the other members.**
- ✓ Exploration can be a tricky as there is always a trade-off between engagement and exploration. The decision of prioritizing is left to the team members. In the figure above, teams with high internal energy would not perform well on the exploration front as the team members would be channelizing their energy into the internal engagement, than engaging outside.

the changes in the communication pattern with changes in the activities of the organization. Let us take a look at the pattern during a new product launch.

- ✓ Initially, the management has most of the communication and is primarily through the emails. The teams do not have much interaction with the other teams. **(DAY #2)**
- ✓ As the teams begin to work on their assigned tasks, the face-to-face communication develops between the sales and support teams as they have to work in collaboration. However, the other teams still do not have any communication, while the management interacts through the e-mails. **(DAY #6)**
- ✓ Eventually, the interaction between the sales team and the development team catches up. And as the deadlines for the product launch approach, the

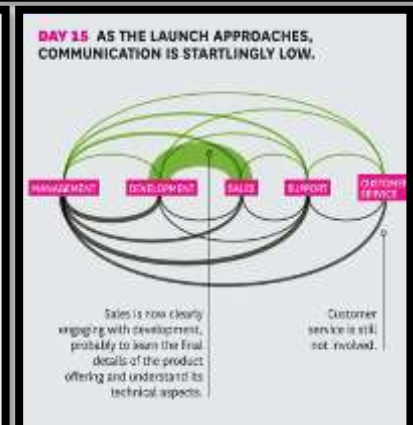
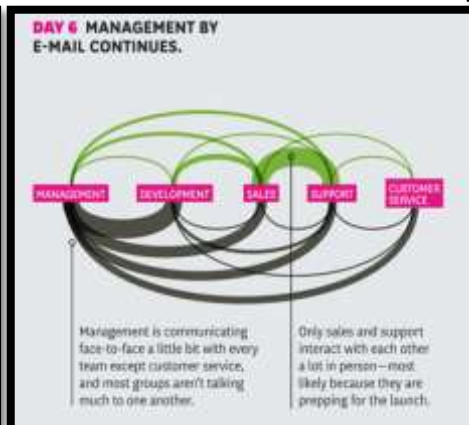
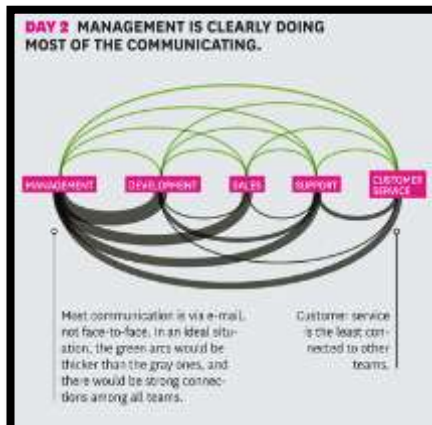
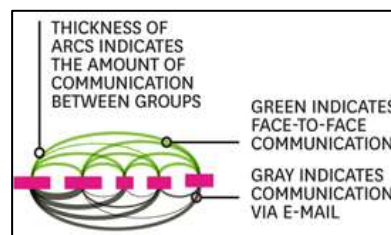
Application of this method: It is helpful in geographically diversified teams as *it ensures equitable distribution of energy, better engagements and exploration.*

Criteria 2: Mapping w.r.t time

This method helps to understand the patterns of interaction i.e. *the face-to-face communication over the other methods like texts and e-mails.*

It comprises of finding out the crucial departments connected to the other teams and

e-mail



communication of the management is reduced while teams begin to explore the other teams through face-to-face communication. (DAY #15)

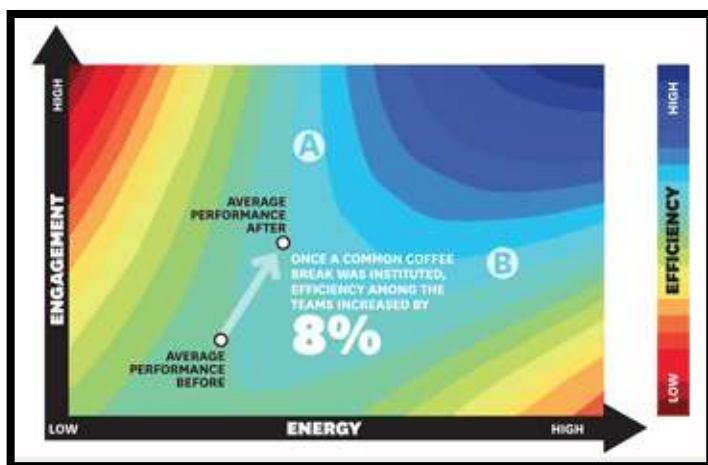
- ✓ After the product launch, the pattern of communication is reverse. The face-to-face communication supersedes the e-mail communication. The customer service is in constant communication with the support team on fixing the customer's issues. (DAY #23)

Application of this method: This model is helpful for the organization entering into new ventures *to understand the communication patterns that would evolve over the time frames.*

Performance vis-à-vis Energy-engagement

The most efficient teams were the ones that had high energy-high engagement.

However, the unbalanced states like low energy-high



engagement or high energy-low engagement were detrimental to the team's efficiency. On the contrary, low


energy-low engagement teams outperformed than these unbalanced teams.

From the figure, point A and B have same efficiency, though they have different combinations of energy and engagement. *Thus, it can be concluded that maintaining a balance of energy-engagement was imperative for the efficiency of the team.*



The visualization pattern is useful tool to understand the communication patterns and identify the bottlenecks hindering overall team efficiency. The discussion boils down to focusing on the members with the right attitude and not just sufficient knowledge. Having considered this viewpoint, we can synergize the output of the teams, whether physically connected or parted.

Ela Koshal | Welingkar Institute, Mumbai



Let's get creative.

After two months of summer internship period spent away from the campus, usHR - the HR club of IIM Shillong was once again back with its

campus activities. This time, a **competition centered on innovation and vision, "EntHRal-us"** was conducted.

With the new batch in campus the HR club threw open all boundaries of imagination open for the participants of both the batches through a poster making competition.

The theme of the event was mainly focused on Human values and HR centric topics. Yet again this competition had a twist alongside. The poster making competition was to be undertaken maximum in teams of two which would again **ensure team building qualities** and the **presence of communication and coordination** amongst the team members. Free flow of thought and creativity was ensured through this competition by not restricting the medium of presentation of ideas. The medium varied from soft copy – Photoshop, Corel Draw, word to Hard Copy – paintings, sketches.

The teams who had registered for the competition were given a list of topics to choose from for designing the poster. The topics included – **My world- as seen from my eyes, the circle of life, E-commerce: the new future, 2012- the end of the world, Human beings and global warming, recession ahead and human values in business.** The participants also had to write a justification for the design of the poster. The teams were given ample time to work upon their ideas. The judgment decision was given to two of our faculty members: **Mr Sanjeeb Kakoty** and **Mrs. Sonia Nongmaithem.** The judging criteria

Campus Buzz

EntHRal-us : Poster Making Competition
conducted in IIM Shillong

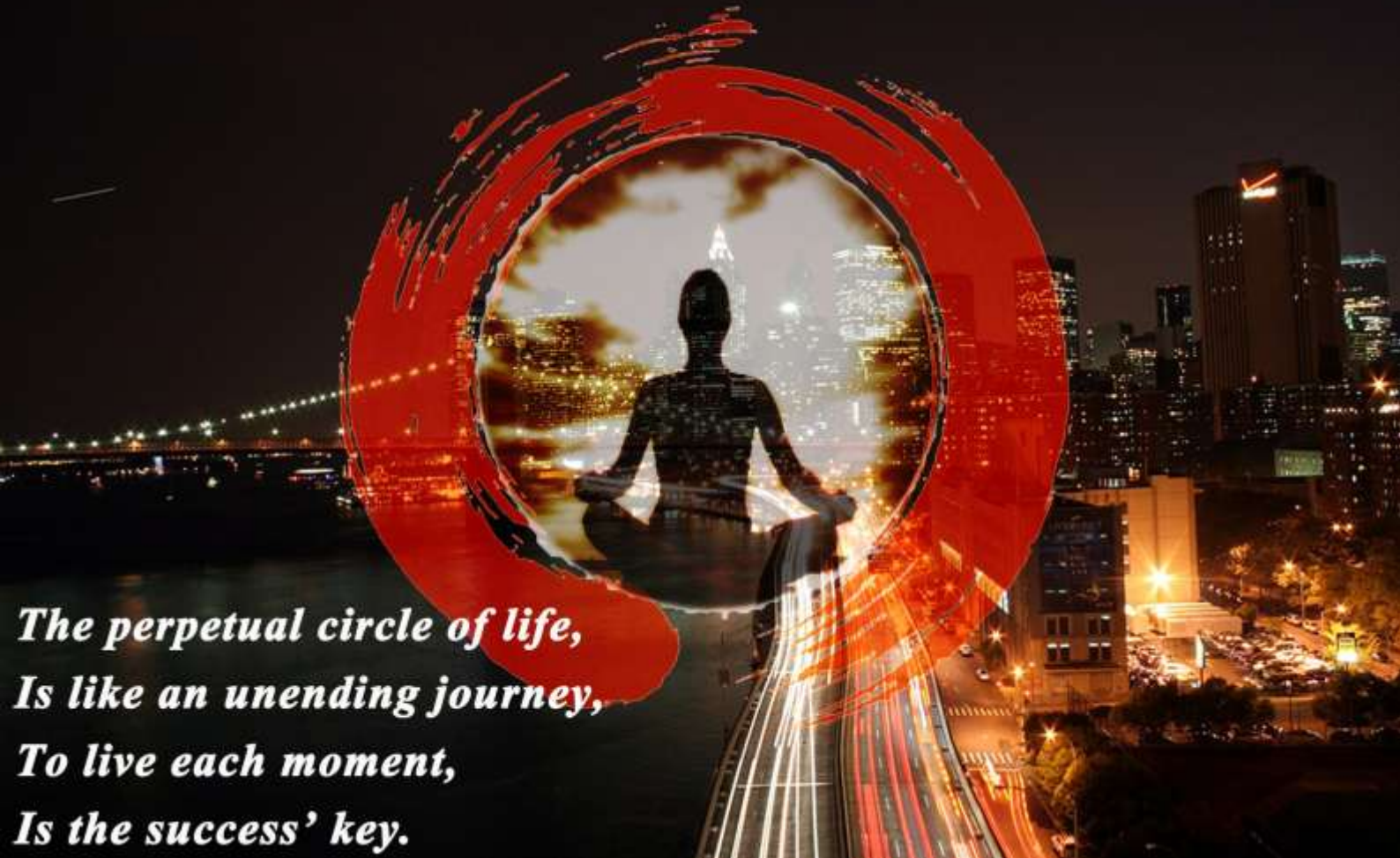
included: **Innovative thinking/creativity, Presentation and justification reason.** The event saw impressive participation from both the batches and an even more impressive set of creative and talented innovators who could pen down their visions with utmost beauty.

The joint winners are **Team Rhapsody** with members Jeremy Simon Nongrum and Lokesh Malviya and **Team Innovators** with members Shupriya Singh and Poulomi Pal. They worked on the topic Human Beings And Global Warming with an idea that human race which prides itself for its genius, finds itself battling against natural forces which are beyond its capability to defeat and if no preventive measures are implemented, the world would soon perish and so would the human beings.



We congratulate all the participants for their enthusiasm and creative designs. We thank all of them for taking their time off and participating making this event a huge success. Some of the top entries have been published here in the magazine.





*The perpetual circle of life,
Is like an unending journey,
To live each moment,
Is the success' key.*



*e-commerce...
...unlocking the
door to the future*

Connoisseur Speaks!!!

Ask
the
expert

I am a fresh MBA graduate and I have specialised in HR. I have joined a start-up company and I am responsible for setting up a system of performance appraisal. I report directly to Head HR who takes the final decision. I am trying to apply whatever knowledge I have from my studies but the Head HR does not like my ideas at all and what he suggests seems impractical to me. I am quite sure he is just trying to delay setting up the process for reasons not known to me. What do I do?

Hello, we do understand the difficult situation you are in where you are trying to apply the knowledge you have gained in MBA to practical life but is unable to do so because of your boss. We understand that he may follow a different school of thoughts and hence is unable to appreciate your ideas. What we would suggest is that when you put forth an idea try backing it up with some logic or examples in the industry where it has been implemented. This may help the Boss conform to your ideas faster. Again the problem might be that the Boss has not developed sufficient confidence in you since you have no work experience and your boss has been working in the industry for quite some time. Give some time to develop the trust and confidence needed. However do not stop giving the ideas you feel are correct because sooner or later he shall see the logic in them and accept them. Till that time be patient. Further try and understand your boss's viewpoint also. For some ideas may sound feasible in theory but may not be possible practically. We hope this advice helps you get out of this issue.

I am working as Manager - Human Resources in a small company and I stay with few of my colleagues who have now become my very good friends. We have been working in the company for quite a few years now and recently I got to know from within the department that there are plans to terminate my friend soon. I do not know whether I should warn him in advance or not?

We understand your predicament- an ethical moral dilemma which we so often face these days. Such a situation has no right or wrong answer. Either ways eventually you will be the person to lose. However what we would suggest is that first try and find out why your friend is to be terminated, in case it is because of some misunderstanding or inefficiency on his part try to talk to him so that he does not repeat it and convince your head to give him another chance. However in case the situation cannot be solved in this manner and you have to make a choice, give your friend a hint so that he understands what the situation is like. In this manner neither would you break the trust of your friend nor the policy of the company in which you work.

Hi, I am the Supervising Head of a manufacturing plant in Gujarat. Lately there have been some issues with the labour union as they have made some unrealistic and impractical demands. When I refused to accept their demands they have threatened to hurt me if I do not make sure their demands are met. What should I do?

This is a difficult situation, we must say. Dealing with industrial relations has never been an easy job. However what we would suggest to you is that communication would prove to be the solution here. Talk to union leader. Listen to their demands and try and understand their grievances. There must be a reason behind these demands. Try and solve those issues because this is the root cause of the problem. We understand that some of their demands may be impractical. Try to explain them the logic where the demands are unfeasible and cannot be fulfilled. Also try to satisfy their grievances which are possible even if it involves you taking an extra step for them. Once you make these efforts we are sure even the union will see your situation and peace will ensue.

You can send us your queries at hrclub.iims@gmail.com. The relevant queries shall be answered in the next issue of TogetherHR



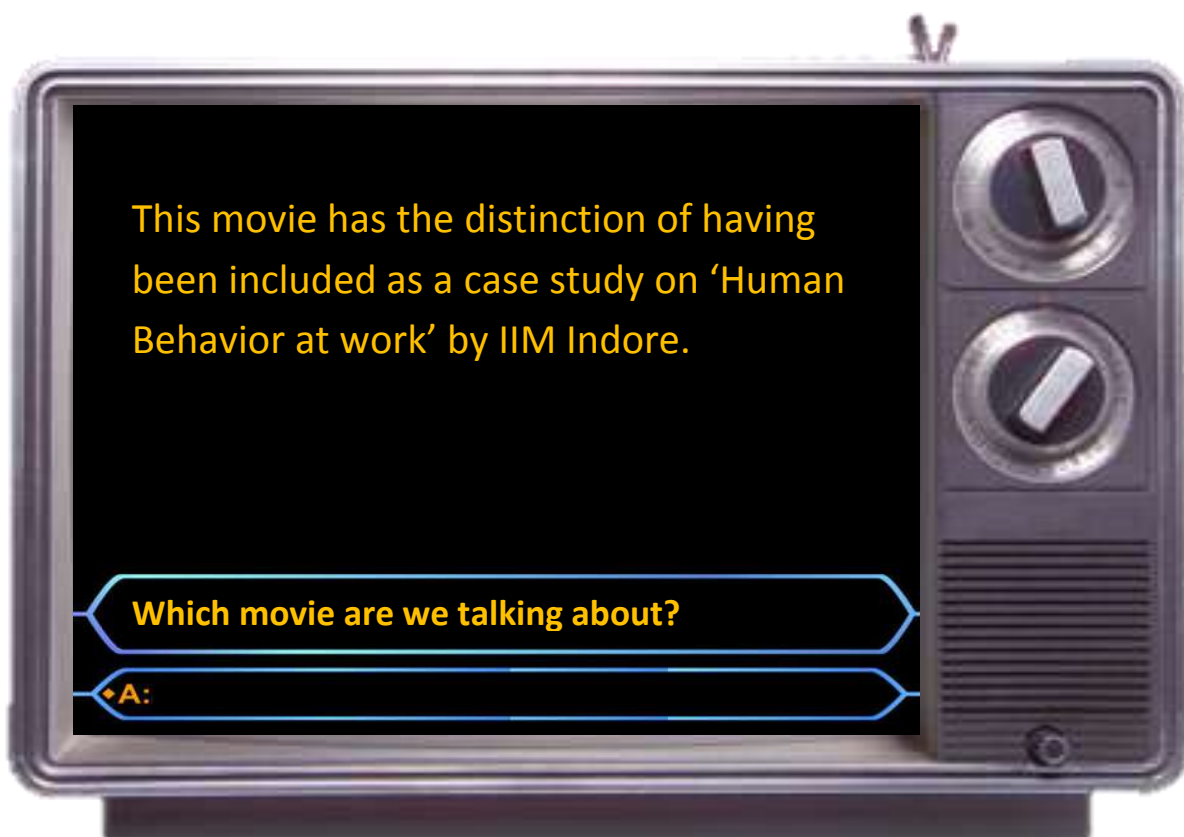
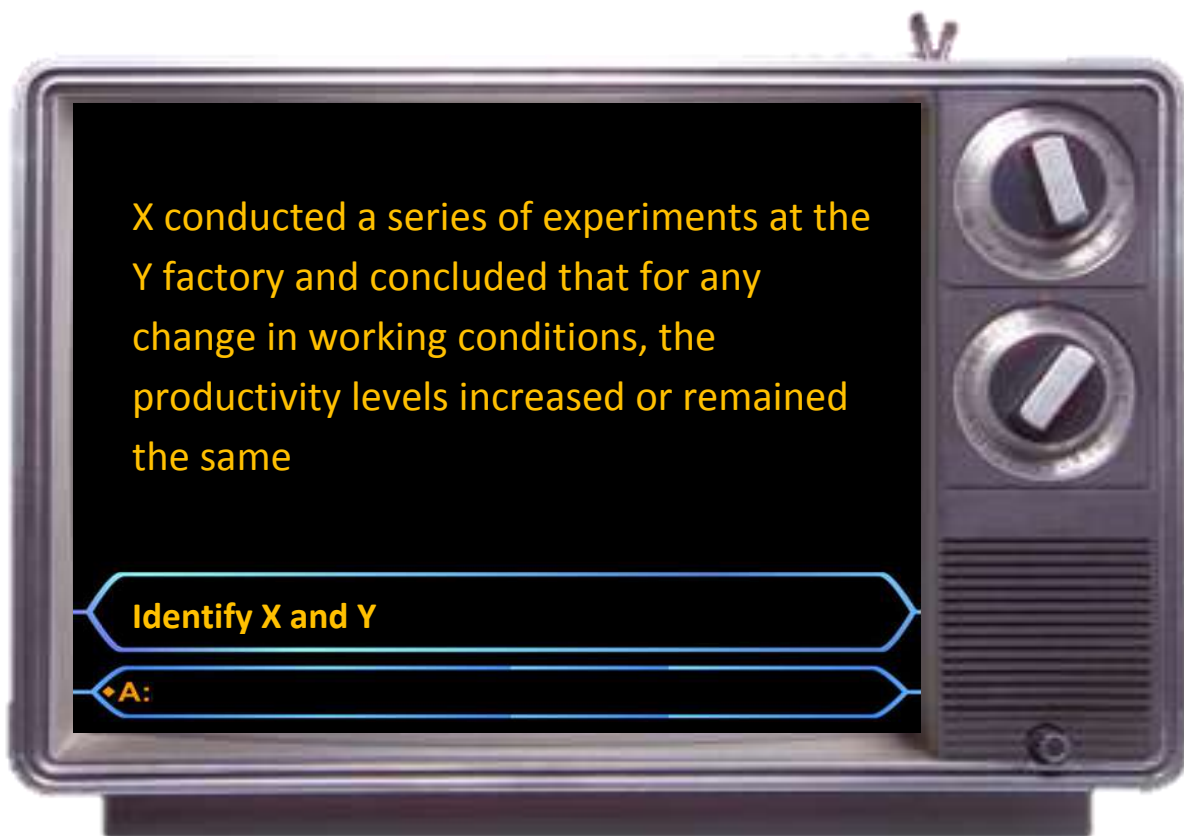
CONTEST WITH THE BEST!!



Connect the following

♦ A:

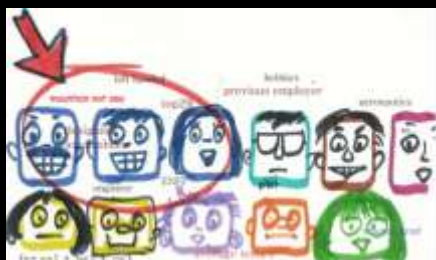
Please ANSWER all the FIVE Questions and send in your entries
Last date for sending the answers for Contest: **August 31st, 2012**
Email ID: hrclub.iims@gmail.com
Subject of the email: **TogetHRContest6_CollegeName**



A strike by the employees of an organization during the term of a binding contract is known as _____

Fill in the Blank

♦A:



Connect the following (Hint: TogetHR)

♦A:

This Issue's Results

- ✓ The prize for "**Article of the Issue**" has been awarded to **Sakshi Kharbanda and Charu Puri** from **IMI New Delhi** for their Article "**The School of Life: Practices of Andragogy in Action**". They are awarded cash prize of INR 1000 and Certificate of Appreciation.
- ✓ All other articles selected for the issue shall also receive Certificate of Appreciation.
- ✓ The prize for "**Contest with the Best**" for **MAY-JUN 2012 Issue** has been awarded to **Vibhav Kardam** from **IIM Shillong**. He is awarded with a cash prize of Rs.500/- and a Certificate of Appreciation.

Announcements

Team usHR invites articles from B-Schools all across India. We are looking for original articles related to field of Human Resources. References should be cited wherever necessary. The best article will be featured as the "**Article of the Issue**" and would be awarded cash prize of INR 1000

Instructions

- **Article should not have been published anywhere earlier**
- **The Article should have a single author**
- Kindly email your article with the file name and the subject as **<Title of Article> _<Institute Name> _<Author's name/Group's name>** by **31st August 2012**
- Article must be sent in Microsoft Word Document (doc/docx), Font: Times New Roman, Font Size: 12, Line spacing: 1.5. The size of the article should be between 700-1000 words
- The cover page of the article should only contain the Title of the Article, the Author's Name and the Institute's Name.
- Results shall be announced in the next issue of TogetHR
- For other updates, check our Facebook page – "**usHR-HR Club of IIM Shillong**"
- The issue details can be checked on our blog www.iims-ushr.in



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