

DISCONNECTION IN TODAY'S ULTRA-CONNECTED WORKPLACE: STRATEGIC HR MEASURES

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ABSTARCT:

'Human Resources' is a relatively modern management term coined in the 1960s, yet its importance can be traced back to Vedic ages. In The Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna teaches Arjuna the art of Self Management, Anger Management; Stress Management, Conflict Management, Transformational Leadership, Motivation, Goal setting and many other aspects which are now essential parts of any HRM curriculum. Today, many B-Schools consider The Bhagavad Gita a guide to developmental strategies that are so essential in modern management. With the boom in the technology sector in 2000, the outlook to Human Resource Management in India has witnessed sea-change in last two decades. Trends in Human Resource Management have radically changed, as organizations are more dependent on HRM to increase the success ratio in today's competitive global environment making Human resource as one of crucial driver for development and change. This paper tries to highlight how these powerful technological advances on the other hand are intensifying the problem of human resource management rather than managing it. Web-based meetings with global teams, strategy discussions on endless email threads, social networking with "electronic" associates and friends is the depiction of an ultra-connected work place. While these powerful technological advances allow us to make instant virtual connections with our colleagues, they also contribute to a growing problem in business today. Ironically, all of those digital connections are creating a serious personal disconnect. Clearly, the solution doesn't involve opting out of the Internet or giving up our mobile phones to restore the integrity of human resources. But it does mean that we need to implement better strategies for sustainable development of Human Resources.

Keywords: strategy, modern management, technology sector, outlook, radical change

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper tries to highlight how these powerful technological advances on the other hand are intensifying the problem of human resource management rather than managing it and throws light on the need based strategic measures to be adopted for the sustainable development of Human Resources.

Increased connections aren't the same thing as productive connections. In fact, the decline in strong, effective business relationships is now taking a measurable toll: more careers seem stalled, more teams are struggling to perform, and more companies are suffering from unproductive workplace behaviour. Ironically, all of those digital connections are creating a serious personal disconnect. Gone are the days when we would carve out time to discuss our progress, our interpersonal challenges regarding handling difficult situations at work with our mentors and team mates. Today, we rarely have time to reach out for sound advice and candid guidance. With quick rotational assignments and tight deadlines, we may not have the bandwidth or the inclination to professional interpersonal relations that historically improved the human resource management till the recent

past. Even trading meaningful suggestions and insights about team interactions with co-workers over lunch also seems to be a thing of the past today. Need to implement better strategies for sustainable development of Human Resources is becoming imperative.

Implementation of better strategies for sustainable development of Human Resources includes a special focus on the following areas:

- ❖ Improving social fluency
- ❖ Identifying blind spots
- ❖ Eliminating blind spots
- ❖ Gathering feedback

2. IMPROVING SOCIAL FLUENCY

Social fluency requires input from the people around. How well do we communicate and collaborate with others matters a lot in HR management. Are we effective at influencing our peers? How do we handle leadership roles? These are the determinants of success rather than the credentials listed on professionally designed resumes. But to evaluate and improve those skills, an honest feedback from colleagues and co-workers is needed. Otherwise the risk of unintentionally sabotaging careers with subtle behaviors becomes evident all around.

3. IDENTIFYING BLIND SPOTS

Car wrecks not only happen to careless drivers but also to those who have an obstructed view. It is all perception, the way we look at things that matters more. Sometimes the only way to know what's in the blind spot is to ask someone who can see from a different perspective. The same thing happens in professional relationships too. Professional blind spots are the areas where there's a gap between the intended impact on others and the actual interpretation. For example, one might think his/her enthusiasm to share ideas with our team members is helpful, while they perceive it as overbearing. Sometimes intention to be taken seriously by maintaining a subdued professional demeanor at all times might be interpreted as cold and unapproachable. In spite of doing everything else "right" in careers and building the perfect resumes, these subtle behaviors could be inadvertently sending the wrong messages and preventing human relations. Unless one is aware of his/her blind spots, they can't be corrected forever. For this to be fruitful, a strong network of trusted colleagues who are willing to share information without inhibitions is needed.

4. ELIMINATING BLIND SPOTS

The comments so collected either positive or negative, serve as tools for the professional development as a whole. An objective analysis of these comments can help in applying them in a more productive manner. Once the blind spots are uncovered, insights drawn should be put into action. In this process steps should be taken to close gaps if any in between the intended and actual impact in the workplace. And since eliminating blind spots is an ongoing process, it is imperative to keep the lines of personal communication always open with mentors and advisers.

5. GATHERING FEEDBACK

Though embarrassing and uncomfortable, it is important to know how one is perceived from different ends by different people for which a comprehensive feedback mechanism has to be implemented. While this conclusion seems obvious, many a times this is deliberately substituted by an educated guess which is not sufficient enough. To get an accurate picture of professional blind spots, it is important to gather actual feedback from those who have real experience of interacting, observing behaviors and communication styles.

Even if technology continues to depersonalize the ultra connected work place, it is advisable to follow the foot prints of the most successful leaders who better know the value of investing time and energy to maintain solid human relationships. When there is a room to check in, get support and safely hear the truth about one another, a significant edge in the improvement of building human relations is built. The chance to view professional reputations through the perceptual lens of colleagues and co-workers subdues the dysfunctional behavior in the workplace which is the most challenging part of any HR scenario. For this it is imperative to develop honest, open communication to build interpersonal success using principles of being real, taking responsibility, extending respect and building relationships.

Most importantly, setting aside time to develop and nurture the human relations pushing beyond the invisible barricades of technology and its ironic illusion of connectivity leads to the sustainable development of Human Resources at work place.

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