People are HR Brand

In today's rapidly changing technologies, increasing globalization and global competition, shifting demographics, new workforce configurations, erosion of traditional sources of managerial authority, demands for alternative models of education at all level ranging, from elementary to executive education and the widely acknowledged leadership crisis and desperate need for leaders around the globe, are prompting the emergence of new organizational forms and alliances, which represent significant departures from the traditional hierarchical, vertically integrated structures of the 20th century.

Management, education, cyber technology and human resources are becoming more and more structured around interdependencies.

In this age of increasing competition and instant innovation, organizations can count on only sustainable edges like the experience, talent and commitment of their people. It is people, after all, who generate new ideas and build the relationships that fuel business growth today. Across world, employers are coming to realize that their number one job is to attract the right people and then find ways to keep them engaged and motivated to achieve. The question is: will they learn to do all that before it's too late?

It's going to be the decade of the human side of business. Certainly, we are seeing that in the US and Europe other sources of competitive advantage are quickly becoming relatively less important. Technology is freely available, so is capital, even strategies can be duplicated. Having a good strategy is clearly important, but people must make it happen. Also we should not forget that people must also design the strategy.

In the midst of enormous competitive volatility, the human side of the business is becoming critical for success. Customers are becoming more demanding, companies are becoming more global, product life cycles are shortening, competition is higher; almost every major trend that exists strongly supports the contention that people are the key to success. It is people who must leverage environmental threats and opportunities create that's very encouraging from a HR perspective.

"People are our most important assets". Do you hear or speak these words? What do they really mean? These words are spoken frequently, but how often do we give meaning to the phrase?

Ask any CEO what makes their company better than the rest and the answer is usually, "It's our people!" However, few CEOs can practically apply the idea of the importance of finding and hiring the right type of employees. In other words they fail to implement an underutilized, but effective technique to identify talented and quality staff is pre-employment assessment.

Like other assets, people must be used effectively to maximize their contribution to the success of the organization. With physical assets like computers, automobiles, desks, chairs, etc., maximizing the contribution of each asset is easy. We use computers to make word processing faster, calculating quicker, and data manipulating easier, plus a host of other uses. Automobiles are straight forward in their use--we use automobiles to keep appointments and to deliver products and services. As with most assets, effective use is easily determined.

Why people as assets are so much harder to use effectively? Answer, personalities influence behavior, that's why.

We maximize our people assets when we have matched personalities to the job rather than force the job on the personalities. Have you ever wondered why certain people were better at certain jobs than other people, even though their education and work experience were similar? The answer is simple--personalities are different.

People are the heart and soul of any business. In order for your business to truly succeed, it's vital that you manage them effectively.

As an employer, you know that people are the most valuable resource in your business enabling it to achieve high levels of productivity and respond to your customer's needs.

In today's swiftly altering world, providing terms and conditions which attract and motivate your staff is crucial to your business's continued success.

Managing people effectively is not done through understanding theory, but rather through effective managerial behavior.

Managing people effectively requires both knowledge and skills. Managing people requires more than the ability to "tell" people what to do. The manager must develop those key interpersonal skills necessary to lead people effectively.

To be competent at any skill, a person needs to understand it both conceptually and behaviorally, have opportunities to practice it; get feed back on how well he or she is the performing the skill; and use it often enough so that it becomes integrated into the persons behavioral repertoire.

People should consider as human beings, not simply organizational resources. Their activities and individual differences are considered and respected, because they are endowed with unique personalities and intelligence, and differentiated aptitudes, knowledge and abilities. And the new philosophy goes even beyond this - some more advanced organizations do not even talk about managing people, because this concept could imply that people are simply passive agents who depend on decisions from higher levels.

Now, human resource researchers talk about managing with people, as if peoples are business partners rather than foreign elements apart from the organization. This concept means that people at all levels of the organization are considered responsible for, as well as involved, in the company's business, just as midwives are responsible for the health of a mother and child.

Being "responsible" means that employees use available information, apply their abilities and knowledge, and make adequate decisions that achieve the desired results. Besides the competitive advantage obtained through more competent personnel, this is the true difference between the old and new philosophies.

In the world-class companies one thing is common that they are all people power companies. People in the wrong positions negatively affect a company's bottom line. The right people in the right positions drive revenue and profits. Companies take a new look at the way employees are hired and retained!

One of the greatest challenges facing senior executives and HR people today is how to capture the potential of the increasingly wide range of current and emerging information technology related options and integrate them into people development and management.

Organizations have realized the importance of focus on people, and HR professionals are the engines which carry the company's objectives through effective human resources – in other words, partnering with their businesses in corporate, divisional and product units.

HR, whether at the divisional or corporate level, manages training and development, succession planning, compensation, benefits, recruiting and staffing, and other specialties geared towards attracting, retaining and developing the best and brightest.

There is an increasing consensus that the main customers of the company are its peoples. This explains the widespread use of external marketing techniques within the organization. The objectives behind this practice are:

- To keep peoples well informed about the company's philosophy, policies and goals.

- To integrate peoples through a range of participative programs.

- To help them achieve their needs and aspirations;

- And make them feel that they are part of the company, and should, therefore, cooperate through dynamic interrelationships.

This change also explains the concept of holistic management, whereby people are seen within an organizational context that is totally human, and not simply as a component of a productive system. Managing jointly with employees, moving toward a new way of conceptualizing business - this is the issue.

HR is responsible for defining the skills, knowledge, and attitudes people require for delivering brand or customer promise. How do they need to behave and how will they be rewarded for doing so? How can they be found and what training is required to get them to behave in a way that is consistent with the desired customer experience? HR is responsible for communicating the brand promise internally.

The onus is also on HR to know more and to look beyond traditional departmental boundaries. Human Resources must partner with Marketing, Sales, and Operations to identify the innermost elements of the relationship between employees and customers.

HR must understand the corporate needs and from it create and sustain a culture that is reinforced throughout the organization.

Against a background of rapid change over the last decades and the outsourcing of some of its traditional functions, HR has been trying to prove itself as a business partner to those whose job is to deliver on promises made to customers and shareholders. Highly complex metrics were constructed by research organizations in an attempt to quantify the impact of HR.

Balanced scorecards including "people" measures, such as employee satisfaction and retention, are established, and business plans developed to include people's development objectives based on standards for training investment per employee. Employees were given titles such as "Chief People Officer" to reflect the importance of people in fulfilling newly articulated mission and vision statements.

These tactics have certainly helped to position HR as a partner in the drive to reduce expenses and increase productivity. But, however poised and ready as it has been, HR as a community of practices has generally failed to demonstrate and consistently realize its true partnership value: the ability to impact customer value and drive revenue growth.

In today's generation, HR has an important role to fulfill. Unfortunately, this is because excellent interpersonal relations and orientation toward service to others are skills no longer acquired through upbringing and life experience—they must be learned and encouraged. From recruitment to retirement, each HR process either enables or inhibits the customer-focused organization to deliver its promises.

Of all HR roles, however, it is that of educator that will, arguably, have the greatest impact. After recruiting the right people, providing continuous education in a variety of ways is the key HR process that builds quantifiable intellectual capital.

Good intentions and communications plans are not enough. The goal of educating people should not merely be to inform them of what customers expect, but to change behaviors to those valued by customers. Whether companies achieve this consistently or randomly are largely driven by three factors: competence, confidence, and commitment.

The degree of success of these initiatives will be directly reflected in future productivity levels and overall organizational performance.

Information technology and human resources can provide that competitive advantage. They are the key growth drivers in this era as they provide creativity, innovation, leadership and customer support service.

In the wake of these forces, the way we live, learn, and work is constantly transforming. Each of these phenomenon is modifying the emergence of a global economy, unprecedented global competition, and rapid advances in technology. This process would be revolutionary on its own, but together they have produced staggering results that are deeply felt by peoples in all walks of life.

Expanded global markets provide consumers with a greater array of choices, and the increased competition of the global marketplace drives producers to improve their efficiency and keep prices low. However, we cannot ignore the fact that Pakistan has yet to solve structural problems in the economy.

Today, nobody doubts the importance of structural reform, but it is difficult to achieve a social and political consensus as to the most practical approach. Reform is accompanied by pain, and also takes a long time to bear fruit. But once the direction is set, reform calls for further reform, thereby generating autonomous momentum.

As we know well, the people behind the company are the key to its success. The Company's team is comprised of proven performers and industry shapers in the areas of human resource management, employment/recruiting tool development, start-up business management, and industrial psychology and software/database development.

The HR profession needs to be extremely close to business. HR could effectively contribute to the effectiveness of the company, if the person is able to position himself within the company as a strategic resource for the business of the organization, he can add great value. That in itself is a great thrill or satisfaction that a HR professional can get by being there, making the business happen and creating that environment which enables the business to happen. So creating that environment in which people contribute more than their 100 % to the organization growth and objectives is satisfying.

HR has a very critical role in shaping the careers of employees. A HR professional can derive immense satisfaction from carrying out this task in the best manner possible, by monitoring the growth of employees, providing inputs for improvement and thus contributing towards the growth of the individual.

HR also has to play a role in creating a well-knit organization culture, which binds people together as one team. This is a challenge that would excite any enterprising HR professional.

In short, there are lots of challenges as well as thrills that one can get since HR always plays a strategic role in an organization. It has the ability to grow people by contributing towards career growth, business of the organization, address developmental and growth needs of the organization.

To cover the complex issues and meet the formidable technological challenges ahead, services must have the right mix of professionals who are recruited, trained, and deployed to deal effectively with the agenda of the future. Most of us, I believe, are struggling with this.

Change! In today's global economy like every aspect of development is the most certain thing it is said and organizations are no exception to face this most definite occurrence- in other words they must be competitive and efficient in order to survive. Government agencies should also get active in this regard and must be reinvented to meet the needs of the people who work for and with them.

Private sector organizations have responded to changes in their environment resulting from a technology-based economy, increased global trade, a changing work force, and advances in information technology by right sizing themselves.

They are becoming flatter, thereby lending themselves to a more horizontal structure. When the layers of management are reduced, decision making is expanded throughout the organization. This type of organizational structure relies heavily on matrix management, whereby different perspectives and skills are brought together to accomplish organizational objectives. Top-down management is not as effective, since those closest to the work more often have solutions to problems. Therefore, managers are sharing decision making with their employees.

To meet the challenges stemming from rapidly changing technology and an increasingly complex workload, we must implement different programs that will enable employees to develop the skills necessary to perform well and help them manage their career effectively.

Modern manger is confronted simultaneously by a diverse workforce, greater challenges within the organization, and an increasingly chaotic business environment. Techniques for management that were effective in more stable systems are becoming less applicable, and a new range of skills, appropriate to the new circumstances, are emerging.

Instead of knowing few new facts or practices, the modern manager needs to become more responsive in working with others, more creative in coping with challenges and finding solutions, and more adept at synthesizing various inputs and taking future-oriented actions.

The Human Resource Department examines how your organization enables employees to develop and utilize their full potential, aligned with the organization's objectives. Also examined are your organization's efforts to build and maintain a work environment and

an employee support climate conducive for performance per excellence, full participation, and personal and organizational growth.

Developing and maintaining a work environment where people are your "edge" is the key to realize any company's objectives but it could only be achieved when we bear in mind that competitive advantage requires a system for developing leaders plus Strategic HR Plans, practices and processes that guarantee value to customers, shareholders, and the community as well.

Unless leaders remain reluctant to acknowledge and learn to value their people and tap the potential of their human resources, the aim and dream to get their organizations at the top will never realized.

About the Author

Syed Imtiaz Hussain is Head of HR & Administration in one of the leading multinational Company. As a member of top management team; he develops a highly professional A-Class HR environment in the organization by utilizing his vast practical and visionary experience of HRM and HRD.

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His numerous of articles were Published in leading Newspapers and practitioner journals. He is also the author of "**HR Global Challenges**".

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