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PR-e-FACE: From the desk of Chief Editor **“HR branding alone can help to identify and retain talents”**



Presently, many Corporates in India are facing acute 'talent crisis'. On one side, few big companies are recruiting even 'trespassers', with huge compensation, not matching with the job content. This has raised the expectations of the freshers and other employees. On the other side, many small and medium companies struggle to hunt talents.

Presently, HR departments in all the Corporates are sandwiched between the expectations of the job seekers and the ground reality. At this rate, many experts are worried about where are we leading to? and whether this phenomenon is a bubble or a reality?

Unfortunately, neither the Corporates nor the job seekers have understood the need for hiring quality and skilled talents, which can be sustained for a long time. The entire system seems to operate with a 'short term vision' to

maintain the day to day operations. Many HR experts are unable to judge whether it would be in the long term interest of the companies, employees and the country.

Probably, in another few years, compensation alone would not be the main factor for the job seekers to prefer a company. It is going to be beyond money. Corporates need to seriously start working on 'HR branding' internally and externally to attract and retain talents. They need to communicate effectively as to how they are offering opportunities for career growth in a long term perspective.

Editorial team joins me in wishing all the readers a very happy and prosperous New Year.

K. Srinivasan

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PR-e-CISE – Inside this ezine

- An exclusive interview with Mr B Suresh Kamath, Founder and Mg. Director, Laser Soft Infosystems Ltd, National Award winner
- Exclusive interview with Mr B Venkataramana, Vice President (HR), Reliance Industries Ltd (Retail business)
- Expert views on HR branding
- Survey on HR branding - report
- PR News

PR-eXCLUSIVE

“SMEs should project their strength amongst job seekers”



Listen to the full interview through *podcast* at

<http://www.primepointfoundation.org/presense1206.htm>



Mr B Suresh Kamath (49),
Founder and
Managing Director
of Laser Soft Info
systems Limited
(www.lasersoft.co.in)

was honoured with

National Award by President of India in Dec 2005 for his unique HR Policies and for engaging large number of physically challenged persons in the software industry. For the same reason, IIT, Chennai also honoured him with 'Distinguished Alumnus' Award in 2001. In an exclusive interview with Mr K. Srinivasan of PR-e-Sense, Mr Kamath spoke about the need for "HR Branding" by small and medium companies in India, to attract and retain talents. Full interview in audio may be listened from the link above. Excerpts from his interview:

- Lot of jobs is outsourced to India. Many MNCs have started opening their offices. This has resulted in competition to hire and retain talents. This has become a challenge.
- It's an employees market. They should feel that they are working for good company. HR branding is important today
- Companies expect Productivity, staying in the company for a minimum period of time. good skills (technical and domain), ability to learn and right attitude from the employees.
- Due to scarcity of people, attracting people has become difficult. Companies should think differently to attract talents, rather than giving salary hike.
- Trend of salary and compensation is not healthy. It may lead to India becoming 'uncompetitive' in the International market.

- Long term perspective is needed for freshers. They should take up jobs which provide wide range of skills.

- Anybody's career is like a pyramid. They should start with wide base and then specialize as they get experienced.

- Small and medium companies (SMEs) can provide end to end experience, adopt new technologies quickly and can give individual attention to employees, when compared to large companies.

- SMEs are required to project these advantages amongst freshers and make them to understand that they are required for their future career.

- In a hurry to recruit people, many companies are hiring people without capability, skills and right attitude. After 5 years, they will realise that, it is expensive to do so.

- Giving 30 to 40 % salary hike annually may not be sustainable in the long term.

- Hiring would become 'matured' after 5 years. They will attract people with job content, rather than compensation.

- SMEs should focus on giving right job content. They should communicate with freshers that SMEs provide wide range of experience when they start the career.

- Social Vision is also needed. People will identify and work for the company. This can also be projected as HR brand, both internally and externally. Employees should look for 'right fit' for their skills.

- Software industry should combine social initiatives with commercial initiative. This will ensure 'lower attrition'.

Mr Kamath may be reached at

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PR-eXCLUSIVE

“Rolling stone gathers no mass – develop strong fundamentals”



Listen to the full interview through *podcast* at

<http://www.primepointfoundation.org/presense1206.htm>

Mr B Venkataramana, Vice President (HR) Retail Industries Ltd (Retail



Business), Rs.one hundred thousand crore venture. Mr Ramana has nearly 25 years of experience in HR and related functions in different

Indian and MNC organisations. In an exclusive interview with K. Srinivasan of PR-e-Sense, Mr Ramana speaks about the various HR challenges and the need for HR branding. Full interview in audio may be listened from the link above. Excerpts from his interview:

- India has become a land of opportunities for youngsters. HR has gained lot of importance.
- Demand for people has lead to expectations of job seekers. Compensation seems to be the prime factor, vis-à-vis contribution, relationship and growth of the organisations. It is a sad thing.
- HR should manage the expectations of the youngsters.
- When youngsters join the organisation, they should look at overall growth, beyond monetary growth.
- HR is now focusing on huge volume of recruitment, but not able to concentrate on putting in processes, systems in places to retain the talents. Hence there is a large gap and the attrition rate is high.
- HR should be pro-active. Cost of recruitment is very high. HR is directly

contributing to the bottom-line. Most of the business today is HR centric.

- Regular feedback of the employees is needed at different stages, (1) at the time of recruitment (2) on board and (3) at the time of exit.
- At the time of exit, relieving order is to be handed over to the employee and then feedback is to be taken. To get the views correctly.
- HR departments should give right kind of message to the Management.
- HR should be strategic planners. Implementation can be done by the line managers.
- If any machine goes wrong, you can change the part and run. If there is a problem with a human being, it takes lot of time. Many experts are involved to keep them motivated.
- Loyalty and commitment is lacking amongst the employees. They are looking at short term level. If they don't have strong foundation, it will not be good for them in the long run.
- All industries would stabilize within 10 years.
- Internal communication is important to retain the employees and external communication is needed to attract good talents.
- Youngsters should not frequently jump jobs. 'Rolling stone gathers no mass'. Foundation needs to be strong. They should understand the basics. If they develop the fundamentals they can dictate terms. It would help them in long term

Mr Vankataramana may be reached at Venkat.ramana@ril.com

PR –e- STIGE – Expert views

Dr B M Sundaram, Chairman, Hexagon Group, Bangalore sundarambm@yahoo.com
“Employees join any company because they want, not because they are called”

Performance of the company, realistic projected performance and proper vision are the prime factors for HR branding. People join any company not because they are called, but because they want. Human touch is lacking in many companies. HR should provide a level of comfort to their employees.



I find that HR policies of Tata Group are excellent. In Tata group nobody wants to say 'tata' (meaning

good bye). Presently many persons want jobs purely on monetary packages. This will not work in long term. Normally in any Non IT industry, like mechanical, automobile, etc. Any performing stable company will show a net profit of 7 to 20% of the turnover. But in IT industry, it ranges from 300 to 5000% depending on the technology. The rate of change of technology in IT industry is very high. This is highly unstable and will have impact on HR policies in the long run.

Ms Rajeswari Iyer, PR Consultant, Hyderabad raji_iver2002@yahoo.co.in
“An employee is the spokesperson of any organisation”



As far my knowledge goes, 'Employee ownership and corporate performance' are correlated. There is no more space for desired profession. Campus recruitment, immediate attractive money and facilities that matters most to them.

It is becoming increasingly clear that, in today's dynamic business

environment, companies that want to remain competitive must adopt a more strategic approach to employee retention, instead of fresh stocks 'IN'. 'Employee' is the spokesperson of an organization. If he is able to pass on mouth –mouth message being associated with the company for long and his personal experiences working with the company, work environment, growth of the company and himself...that's is going to stand out as credential to the company

Mr Manish Kumar, young HR professional, Kolkata manismba@gmail.com
“Many organisation consider HR departments as expense centres”

I think my real appreciation would be then only when we all will collectively augment the values of HR. Because I generally see that in most of the organizations HR Departments are considered to be an Expense Center and HR Professionals are looked as supportive staff, while they are the line staff. Since I do not have much experience in corporate life even though whatever time I have spent

over there; my observations, experimentations and researches have shown that we, HR Professionals are known as lazy, obsolete, and pay with no work department (I may be wrong in this or your case may be different).

However, I am very much committed to my goals and objectives and determined to make this HR Dept. reach the peak.

PR –e- STIGE – Expert views

Mr Thyagraj Sharma, Senior Journalist, The Statesman, Bangalore tyag52@gmail.com
“Media should highlight the good HR practices of small and medium companies”



There is always a feeling that media does not highlight the good HR practices of small and medium companies. They are only after large companies. The first and foremost thing for the media professionals is to keep tabs on the developments in and around a particular sector, if not all. The reason why the small and medium companies get left out is the rush for catching only the prominent people and companies. A little bit of researching, updating and exploring of available industry contacts, however,

can easily enable the more enthusiastic and committed among the journalists to do justice to their job.

I can say for sure that if one (journalist) were to be in regular touch with the chambers of commerce and related industry bodies, it would not be difficult to learn about the new and path breaking work which a large number of small and medium enterprises are doing. All one has to do is to highlight the outstanding work done by a few of these companies. Other firms will automatically take the lead and they will get in touch with you (journalist) to talk about their achievements.

Mr R Saikumar, Reservation In charge, Hotel Sangam, Tiruchy
prerna_rsaikumar@yahoo.co.in

“Employees are the mirrors, reflecting the image of the organisation”

An organisation does need fresh and energetic young people for new ideas. It has to be well balanced team with veteran employees with young energetic people. Veterans can help young bloods, as mentors and share their experience.

Recognition, better working environment, rewards and Training are various means adopted by companies

for employee retention. As old saying is still very relevant - "If I have 8 hours to cut a tree, I will spend 6 hours to sharpen my axe. TRAIN PEOPLE!!"

An employee is the mirror of an organisation which reflects the image of the company

‘Perception study’ precedes ‘HR branding’ - What is Image Audit?



Image Audit is the research tool to study the ‘hidden perception’ of the stakeholders, particularly employees. ‘Hidden perceptions’ of the employees are the basis for HR branding. Normally, employees have hesitation to give their views frankly, when the study is

made by the organisations themselves. They tend to become frank when they are in groups and when they are asked to respond anonymously by reliable third persons.

Image Audit has helped many organisations to identify their ‘hidden problems’ and to take corrective measures.

Visit <http://www.imageaudit.com> or email to prpoint@yahoo.com

PR –e- Survey – Survey on HR challenges



A quick survey was conducted by Prime Point Foundation, as part of December 06 issue of Corporate e-zine PR-e-Sense. The survey was to get the perception of various segments on the 'various HR challenges'.

A set of questionnaire was prepared and were uploaded in our site. The information was circulated in the various groups, inviting the responses anonymously. 148 respondents from across the country participated in this survey.

Conclusions

- Freshers seem to consider compensation and growth opportunity as the prime factors for joining any organisation. Even after joining the organisation, these two factors seem to dominate as prime factors for them to 'stay back' in the organisations. Expectations on 'human treatment' seem to increase.
- The employees seem to take pride based on the Company's performance and on the quality of products/services. (More than 77%)
- Attrition and bad attitude of the employees seem to be the major challenges facing the Corporates. (More than 85%)
- Nearly two-third of the respondents feel that HR Departments are only 'Re-active' and not 'Pro-active'
- Nearly three-fourth of the respondents feel that the 'feedback system' is only moderate or below average.

Recommendations

- The prime expectations of the employees are more on compensation and career growth. Career growth depends on the opportunities available in the company and the right attitude of the employees to develop the skills. While the large companies may be able to provide good compensation, they may not be able to provide different opportunities for sharpening skills. While small and medium companies may be able to provide good opportunity for sharpening the skills, they may not be able to provide huge compensation, as compared to large companies.
- In view of the large volume of recruitment and heavy expectations of the employees, HR Managers and the CEOs are in a confused state. To bridge the gap, the Corporates need to understand the 'perception of the employees' and internally communicate effectively with them, the ground reality and giving them the ways to sharpen their skills for long term benefit.
- Small and Medium companies do not give much importance to internal and external communication. They need to project externally the strength and opportunities they provide to the young talents in shaping their career. This would attract young talents, in spite of the huge compensation provided by large companies.
- HR Departments need to reorient themselves to the changing environment and closely work with the Communicators in working out internal and external communication strategies. They should professionalise the feedback system to get the real views of the employees, instead of resorting to compliance of ISO and other formalities.
- Youngsters, who are seeking employment and those who are

employed, should understand the ground reality and strike a balance in their expectations. They should realise that the current trends of 'huge compensation not matching with the skills' is only a bubble and they should start developing the fundamentals and basics to develop their career systematically. They should not fall 'prey' for such hypes, in the larger interest of young talents, Corporates and the Nation.

- Media has a greater role to play. Presently, media looks for big names and create an 'un-natural hype' by publishing the huge compensations

offered to few people. They need to project the ground reality and guide the youngsters to shape their career path, by developing skills. Many small and medium companies have good HR practices and they contribute a lot in shaping up the talents. They need to be highlighted to educate the young talents.

- There is an urgent need for addressing the HR Challenges by the Corporates, HR Managers, young employees and the Media in the larger interest of youngsters, Corporates and that of the country.

Download the full report from the following link
<http://www.primepointfoundation.org/survey1206.pdf>

PR – e- Groups – Have you joined discussion groups?

Image Management Group – Second largest yahoo group on PR with 1400 plus global members. Click here

http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/Image_Management/

PRpoint Group - The largest Indian group for PR/CorpComm /academic professionals with 650 plus members. Click here

<http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/prpoint/>

New Media Forum Group – A group for Indian journalists with around 350 members. Click here

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/New_Media_Forum/

PR eNews –Mr M B Jayaram gets 'Global Man 2006 Award'



Mr M B Jayaram, GM, Karnataka Power Corporation, Bangalore and Chairman of National Council, PRCI was awarded "Global Man 2006" by Kannada Sangha, Bahrain for his contribution to PR Industry in India at

the World Kannada Cultural Convention 2006 held at Bahrain on 16th December 2006. Mr Jayaram may be reached at cccm@karnatakapower.com



PR eNews – ‘PR Voice’ enters 10th year of publication

‘PR Voice’ a quarterly magazine devoted to Public Relations and Corporate Communication enters 10th year of publication. ‘PR Voice’, started in October 1997 by Dr C V Narasimha Reddi has published 32 issues so far, covering various themes. Dr Narasimha Reddi (70), a veteran Public Relations professional of India is



one of the Founders of Public Relations Movement in India three decades back. He has authored many books on Public Relations.



For details visit <http://www.cvnprfoundation.com/> and he may be reached at drcvn@hotmail.com

PR eTTY - Relax - Focus on ‘solutions’ and not on ‘problems’

 **Case 1:** When NASA began the launch of astronauts into space, they found out that the pens wouldn't work at zero gravity (ink won't flow down to the writing surface). To solve this problem, it took them one decade and \$12 million. They developed a pen that worked at zero gravity, upside down, underwater, in practically any surface including crystal and in a temperature range from below freezing to over 300 degrees C.

Here's what the Russians did. They used a pencil.

Case 2: One of the most memorable case studies on Japanese management was the case of the empty soapbox, which happened in one of Japan's biggest cosmetics companies. The company received a complaint that a consumer had bought a soapbox that was empty. Immediately the authorities isolated the problem to the assembly line, which transported all the packaged boxes of soap to the delivery department. For some reason, one soapbox went through the assembly line empty. Management asked its engineers to solve the problem. Post-haste, the engineers

worked hard to devise an X-ray machine with high-resolution monitors manned by two people to watch all the soapboxes that passed through the line to make sure they were not empty. No doubt, they worked hard and they worked fast but they spent a humungous amount to do so.

However, when a rank-and-file employee in a small company was posed with the same problem, he did not get into complications of X-ray, etc, but came out with another solution instead.



He bought a strong industrial electric fan and pointed it at the assembly line. He switched the fan on, and as each soapbox passed the fan, it simply blew the empty boxes out of the line.

Moral: Always look for simple solutions. Devise the simplest possible solution that solves the problems. Always focus on solutions and not on problems. So at the end of the day the thing that really matters is HOW ONE LOOKS INTO THE PROBLEM and resolves it early.

(Source : unknown)

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