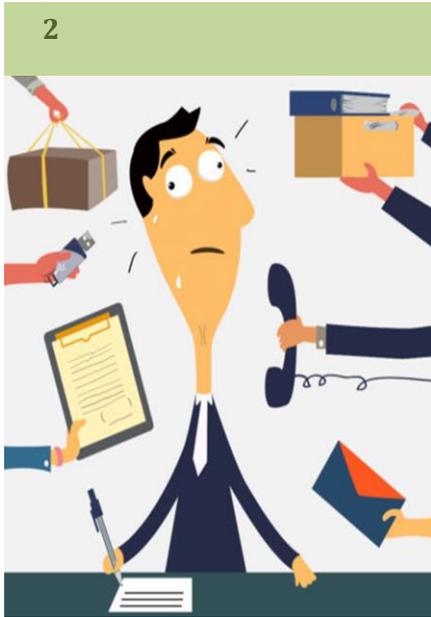




UNILEVER USES ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TO RECRUIT & TRAIN EMPLOYEES

By Avni Sampat – Forbes, 14 December 2018

Unilever recruits more than 30,000 people a year and processes around 1.8 million job applications. This takes a tremendous amount of time and resources. As a multinational brand operating in 190 countries, applicants are based all around the world. To tackle this problem, Unilever partnered with Pymetrics, a specialist in AI recruitment, to create an online platform, which means candidates, can be initially assessed from their own homes, in front of a computer or mobile phone screen. First, they are asked to play a selection of games that test their aptitude, logic, and reasoning, and appetite for risk. Machine learning algorithms are then used to assess their suitability for whatever role they have applied for, by matching their profiles against those of previously successful employees. The second stage of the process involves submitting a video interview. Again, the assessor is not a human being but a machine learning algorithm. The algorithm examines the videos of candidates who answering questions for around 30 minutes, and through a mixture of natural language processing and body language analysis, determines who is likely to be a good fit. The system is also designed to give feedback to all applicants, even those who aren't successful. All applicants get a couple of pages of feedback, how they did in the game, how they did in the video interviews, what characteristics they have that fit, and if they don't fit, the reason why they didn't, and what they should do to be successful in a future application. This helps in saving 70,000 hours of interviewing and assessing candidates. Another machine-learning-driven initiative is helping new employees get started in their new roles. Unabot is a natural language processing (NLP) bot built on Microsoft's Bot framework. People interact in different ways, like a policy document is written in a particular way, its three or four pages of what an employee shouldn't do. But an employee tends to ask questions like how does this impact my life, where will I find this, what can I do? Machine learning – particularly NLP – can overcome this due to its ability to detect which questions are repeatedly asked, even if they are asked in different ways, and present the right information. Currently, all of its data comes from internal sources, such as company guidelines, schedules, policy documents and questions asked by the employees themselves.



MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE

By Neha Joseph- Bamboo HR, 17 October 2018

Mental health awareness has exploded over the last five years. One area, however, that has stayed behind the curve regarding these important discussions, is the workplace. Social stigma in discussing not only our mental health but also our emotional health persists in the workplace among employees and supervisors. This is understandable; no employee wants to give the impression they are overwhelmed or that they cannot handle the job's responsibilities, nor do they want to feel belittled or treated differently due to a personal issue. Supervisors may feel awkward or unqualified to address mental health concerns, or they may be

In a 2015 research study conducted by the National Alliance on Mental Illness of Massachusetts, fewer than one in three employees who struggle with a mental health condition reported receiving the help they need. Furthermore, the report states that 62% of missed work days have been attributed to mental health conditions. These statistics alone would seem to suggest the possible advantages of providing support for employees suffering from mental health issues.

Organizations have tried to indirectly combat mental health in the workplace by offering office perks intended to make the workplace more fun and inviting, like free food, game rooms, and other benefits. But while ping-pong tables and soda fountains do make office life more amusing, they don't provide the mental health support that's truly lacking.

Here are ways business leaders and organizations can use to deal with mental health in a better way

Four Mental Health Initiatives for the Workplace:

1. Mental Health Days

Organizations often lump personal days and vacation days together. Personal days are just that; they could be spent catching up on family time, running much-needed errands, or even sleeping in. A first step to breaking through the stigma of mental health is to separate those days. Personal days should also include specific references to mental health; for HR professionals, this could be accomplished simply by explaining how much the organization values employees' emotional well-being. A simple change in terminology could accomplish even more: Giving employees mental health days makes the intent clear, and is especially inclusive of those employees who may be considering (or already are seeking) professional treatment.

56,675,969 people suffer
from depression in India as of 2015.

That's **4.5%** of India's population.

(Source - WHO)



Nearly **38.5%** of corporate employees
sleep less than 6 hours a day,
causing diseases like depression,
hypertension, sugar etc.

(Source - ASSOCHAM)



2. Ensuring Emotional Well-Being is a Priority

A lot of health plans offer incentives and credits to employees for achieving wellness goals, like quitting smoking or attending fitness classes, but things like healthy eating, exercise, and team-building activities are even better coming from inside the office. Organizations that reinforce these goals by offering their own incentives are not only improving their chances of having fitter, healthier employees; they're also creating a cultural platform that improves their image internally and externally. Some organizations have even reported including a financial credit as employees hit their health goals.

3. Providing On-Campus Treatment

This may be a more feasible option for larger, more established organizations, but having a trained professional on-site would provide significant benefits to employees needing readily accessible assistance. This would also benefit those who need professional help but have not been able to seek it for various reasons, like time or distance. So long as they are treated with the utmost confidentiality, on-site treatment sends a message to employees that their well-being is truly valuable.

4. Establishing Open Communication between Management and Employees

Scheduling regular check-ins and encouraging thoughtful discussion is critical to establishing the trust and communication vital to positive workplace culture. This can be a fine line for managers to walk, but with proper training, they can be shown the benefits of simply getting to know their employees on an individual level and watching for signs of change that could prompt discussion.

WHO'S AT FAULT FOR THE NEGATIVE PUBLICITY FOR ZOMATO?

By Harsha Dived – HR Katha, 19 December 2018

The viral video of the incident wherein a Zomato delivery boy was seen pilfering a delivery packet and partaking of some of the food has created a lot of buzz on the social media & garnered a strong response from the people. But the pertinent question is that, is only the Zomato associate responsible for the unethical behavior or the organization too should be held responsible? While HR leaders in the industry gave a mixed response on the topic at hand, below are a few aspects which are too important to go unnoticed.



In today's world when the digital food service industry is scaling up & is bringing in a large number of workers, companies are hiring every person traveling on a two-wheeler and willing to join their company, things are bound to go wrong. Inadequate monitoring and review system of the organization is the general cause of such incidents. If nobody is watching things will be at risk of going wrong, but if when there is constant vigilance, the person may think twice before performing any such action. Companies may hire the right person for the job but if they don't mentor them properly & take care of the employees they will not be ready to face the customers and the job function. Also, the company's culture plays a pivotal role in employee performance, happiness & engagement. The issue may seem more complex than what it appears to be on the surface, but the company can make interventions at four levels to enhance the employee, customer & service satisfaction:-

Human level: Companies should hire & induct right kind of people for the role with specific inputs in service-quality standards. They should also invest in proper training & modify its reward system, making its workforce aware of the expectations of the customers. Employees working in unusual shift should also be provided with free snacks by the employer.

Process level: The policies implemented should be of the right kind to deal with stressful & difficult working hours, with the focus on improving the quality and service standards. There should be proper norms, tracking & auditing of the work hours and work conditions of these hunger saviors'.

Packaging level: Innovative ideas should be introduced in the area of tamper-proof packaging.

System level: The companies with the help of apps should ensure that the customer has received a sealed package at the point of delivery. Also, the fact is that not many customers in India provide a tip to the delivery boys while receiving their package whereas in countries like US, tipping is an intrinsic part of the service process. So the customers should put their money where their mouth is — literally so, for a better experience.

Looking at the response from the HR leaders it can be concluded that, the fault lies with both parties but with the adjustments made, such incidents can surely be avoided.



Use of Technology in Hiring Right People

*By Ashna Solkar- Economic Times,
20 November 2018*

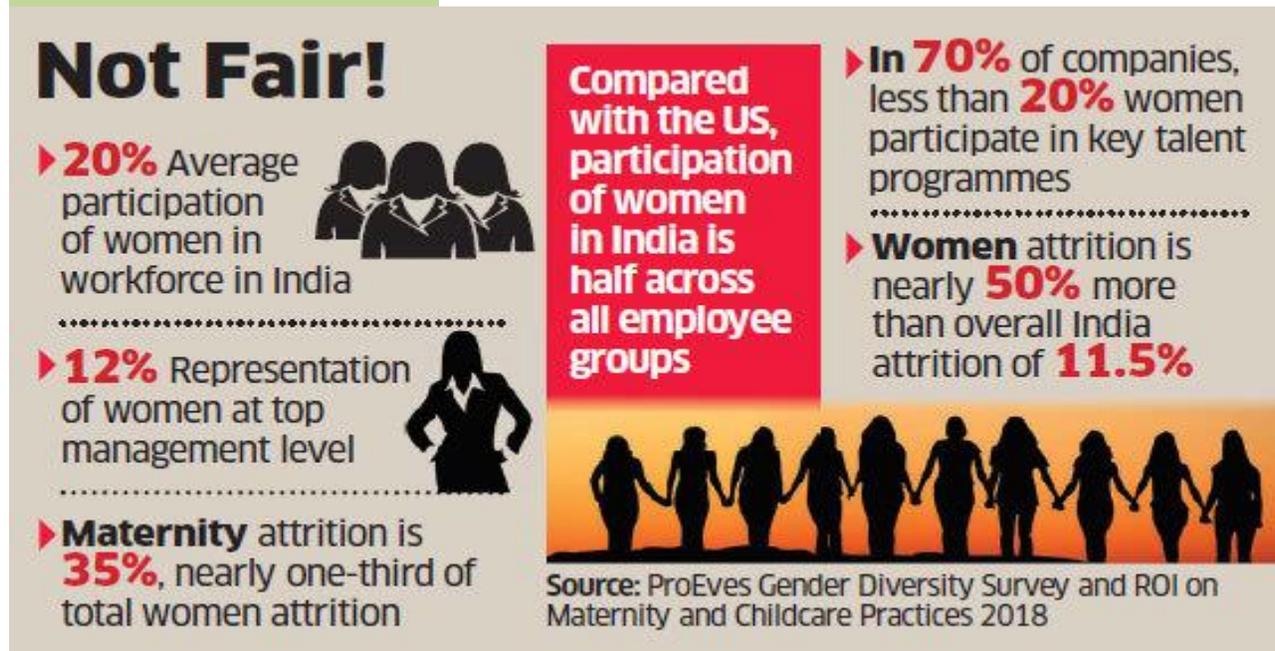
Technology can help remove heuristics and biases in hiring and help hiring managers and leaders enter into the huge talent pool that is invisible today. A Harvard research says, *about 40% of inward job moves or when people take up new jobs within the organization, fails.*

Under the 'Invisible Talent', there are three dimensions to the visibility of talent. The first two are where the talent is and what talent means. A similar is attributed to the failure when you hire externally. The first reason is managers or hiring leaders do not have visibility of what to look for in talent as the environment is constantly changing. Therefore, the skill sets required are changing. The third dimension is whether organizations have a consolidated view of their own talent because there's an interesting separation that internally I'm not able to find people, but my people are employable externally. Which means that the external world is able to see something in my employees that I'm internally not able to see?

Technology can help in identifying invisible talent or finding the right talent from within or outside an organization. It goes very deep and looks from big data perspective, bringing multiple elements to perform analysis and provide insights which are not intuitive to humans. Technology also brings objectivity in assessing people, right from linguistic assessment to facial expression. The next element is technology can help us reach out to the right people. It's a great solution to look at internal talent pools. So, the first thing and the best place to get people for an organization is to look within the ecosystem. And then, of course, as we go along it can also help in building those skills.

The technical part of HR is kind of dispensable. HR has to change its mindset dramatically. Earlier, they were probably the conscience keepers of the organization or they were like the police. That's not going to continue. HR will have to bring in more agility. HR will have to play role in saying how we can make this person successful within the organization versus the traditional paradigm of why he or she does not fit into it. That's the big transformation in human resources.

The mundane tasks will go to bots and artificial intelligence and in the next wave of evolution, they will become more interesting. There will be a time when you could be having a real deep conversation with a bot and not necessarily a human being. And over a period of time, the collective intelligence of artificially driven bots would become higher than the individual experience of a human being.



COMPANIES' GENDER DIVERSITY DRIVE YET TO BEAR FRUIT

By Ashwathi Menon- Economic Times, 10 December 2018

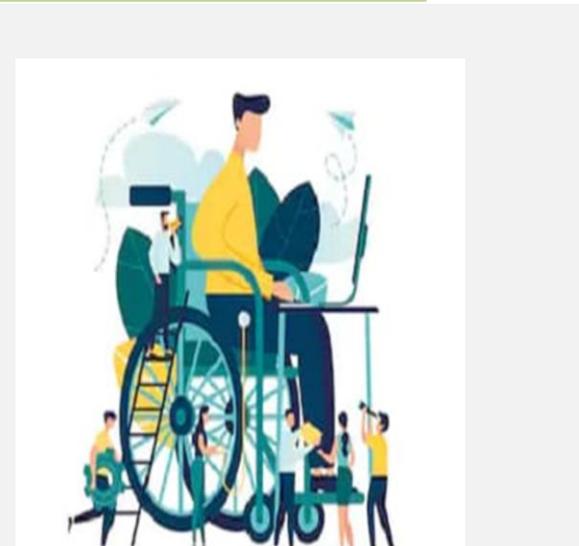
The share of women in corporate India's headcount is stuck at an average 20% for the past five years; an indication that the gender diversity drives some of the top companies may have not yet delivered the desired results. A survey of Indian and multinational companies by gender consulting firm ProEves also shows that at the top levels in India, the share of women was just 12%. The survey findings are based on inputs from 50 leading companies across sectors with offices in India, including Walt Disney, Viacom18, InMobi, Novartis, Mondelez, Flipkart, Whirlpool, Bank of America Merrill Lynch and Philips. At junior levels, women account for 22% of the total employees. The share reduces to 17% at middle management, 14% at senior management and tapers further to 12% at the top level. Compared with the US, participation of women in India is half across all employee groups. But industry expects this to change in the coming years. "The policies (such as enhanced Maternity Benefits Act) or drives by companies to support women returning after a career break are recent in nature and we are yet to feel the good effects," said Naina Lal Kidwai, chairman of the India Advisory Board of Advent International Private Equity. "Policies to have some impact will take some time," she said.

Prabir Jha, head of Cipla said women attrition was often a societal conditioning than an organisational blame. For a range of family issues, women at various stages start dropping out of the workforce, he said. In March last year, Parliament approved a Bill granting women working in the organised sector paid maternity leave of 26 weeks, up from 12 weeks. Several organisations are looking at ingenious ways to stop losing talent resulting from career breaks. These include flexible work arrangements like work from home to returning mothers, providing clarity on role on return, tracking each maternity case and ensuring connect with manager or mentor.

Jha of Cipla, said a larger issue was the drop out of women from the workforce due to marriage, spouse relocation, maternity and other societal commitments. “While many companies have ushered in several progressive HR policies and some legal enactments too have been provided, managers are still struggling managing their workforce planning on account of these realities,” he said. Sareena Singh, global head of controls assurance at RBS India, said: “Companies are fostering the right culture that complements the policies and practices. But things also should be self-driven as much as driven through ecosystems around the person itself.”

According to the ProEves Gender Diversity Survey and ROI (return on investment) on Maternity and Childcare Practices 2018, in 70% of companies fewer than 20% women participate in key talent programmes such as initiatives for high potential, promotion, leadership development and mentoring. Women attrition is nearly 50% more than overall India attrition of 11.5%. Among women who leave their jobs, around one-third is maternity attrition. Falguni Nayar, founder of beauty and fashion retailer Nykaa, said: “I don’t think there is any bias. I have 40% women here and I can see many young mothers who are extremely committed to work.”

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STAFFERS WITH DISABILITIES: ‘PURPLE’ HIRING BOOSTS INCLUSIVENESS

By Jonsina Cardoza- Economic Times, 6 December 2018

EY’s Chennai office reported that a team of over 50% staffers with disabilities is employed to tests applications. The group started off with just two people with speech and hearing impairment and now has more members with disabilities than normal recruits. As a result, even those who did not have any disability picked up the sign language.

From pink to rainbow to now purple, organizations are becoming truly inclusive. Organizations are changing their cultures to tap into this large pool of talent; from fighting biases to making efforts, and to providing customer-facing roles to people with disabilities. EY has launched a programme ‘Purple Champions’ and employees are encouraged to inspire change in culture and reinforce inclusive behaviour. This is an initiative to increase disability confidence at the organization. As stated by EY India partner and talent leader Sandeep Kohli, a core team of partners and senior leaders in each location has been identified as diversity champion and each of these people have their own targets to hire people with disabilities. “Although HR is driving this, we wanted business to be the face of the initiative and give sponsorship to the programme to break biases, barriers and mindsets towards hiring disabled people. We are working with hiring managers to eliminate the biases in recruitment of people with disability and promoting fair evaluation,” said Kohli. Today EY has around 250 Purple Champions, and they have been provided with a ‘disability inclusion kit’ to help them understand their role and make their commitment more visible.

Axis Bank plans to hire over 100 candidates with disabilities under a programme called 'Access', in this financial year for customer-facing roles. When polio survivor Inderjith, an MBA graduate from Tuticorin district of Tamil Nadu, started looking for a job, he got an opportunity to be interviewed at Axis Bank under their Access programme. He was on-boarded into a customer service officer role in one of the bank's Tamil Nadu branches as against taking up any menial job out of desperation. Axis Bank HR head Rajkamal Vempati said, "This opportunity not only improved Inderjith's financial condition but has also developed him as an individual." In the last four-five months the bank has hired over 35 candidates through this channel. The process of conducting interviews is the first challenge companies need to overcome, as far as hiring people with disabilities is concerned. Microsoft India HR head Ira Gupta said in the company's 'Autism Hiring Programme', the interview process is designed to expose the talents of people whose unique skills may not be evident during the standard interviewing process. "Our recruiting and interviewing processes is more about screening in versus screening out. By screening in, we bring in talented people who aren't carbon copies of existing employees, because building a homogenous workforce isn't the best way to innovate and problem solve for the increasingly diverse customers we serve," said Gupta

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COMPANIES ROLL OUT THE RED CARPET TO ATTRACT SECOND-CAREER WOMEN

By Lalzy Thomas, Economic Times – 4 December 2018

As the industries are facing with the ever-increasing challenge of women dropping out of the workforce, companies are now putting in place policies to attract and recruit women who are looking to make a comeback to corporate India. From companies such as Tata Steel in the traditional industrial sector to RBS in financial services, Genpact in business processing and ecommerce major Amazon have programmes to provide a second-career opportunity to women and ensure that their return to work is smooth. The right programme could attract this talented pool of women back into the workplace, helping to build more gender diversity and female role models," said Tania Chatterjee, director of HR & diversity lead at RBS India.

Through the Women in Technology Forum, being led by RBS and supported by key names across various industries, the company is aiming at creating awareness among a minimum 29,000 women across the country on various comeback opportunities. RBS' own Second Careers Internship programme has seen a huge uptake.

Mahindra Logistics recently started a second-careers (comeback) programme called Udaan, with the intention of building gender diversity in the male-dominated logistics space. “We have recently launched this programme for woman professionals who have been on a career break of six months to five years. We are in the final stages of recruitment for the piloted positions in functional roles of HR, IT, marketing, admin, etc.,” said Mehernosh N Mehta, vice president-HR, Mahindra Logistics.

Research suggests that women with previous corporate exposure bring in the key strengths of effective time management, higher productivity and more inclusion, adding value and balance to the workplace. The 2018 Working Mother & AVTAR Best Companies for Women Study found that 51% of the 100 Best Companies have formal programmes to recruit returning women and 9% of all female hires are second-career women. All companies with formal second-career hiring tracks also have structured reintegration programmes to help women returning after career breaks and make smoother segues back to the workplace, she says.

The Tata Group has been running a programme called Tata Second Careers Inspiring Possibilities (SCIP) for returning women. The SCIP policy, said Tata Motors chief HR officer Gajendra Chandel, includes flexible work hours and work from home to help maintain work-life balance post their return to work after a career break. “The intent behind the initiative is to get experienced women smoothly back into the workspace,” said Atrayee S Sanyal, chief diversity officer and chief group HR at Tata Steel.



Take the case of Dipti Aditya Gangal, who joined Tata Motors as a project consultant and had worked for nearly five years before she took a long break to take care of her baby. She recounted: “I felt that my child needed me the most,” but also understood all that she gave up “from a career perspective”. She decided to re-enter the job market, but was unable to find anything suitable after looking for six months. That’s when she applied for the Tata SCIP, as a scheme designed to help women restart their career after a break. At some companies, these policies are constantly evolving, keeping in mind returning women’s needs.

Online retail major Amazon, which launched an initiative called Rekindle last year targeting women who had taken career breaks and now wanted to return, said it keeps on improving setups based on feedback. Deepti Varma, HR director, India, Amazon, said the company provides flexible work arrangements, affinity groups to help make the transition and the freedom to work from any location. There is a strong business case for recruiting such women, said Varma.