

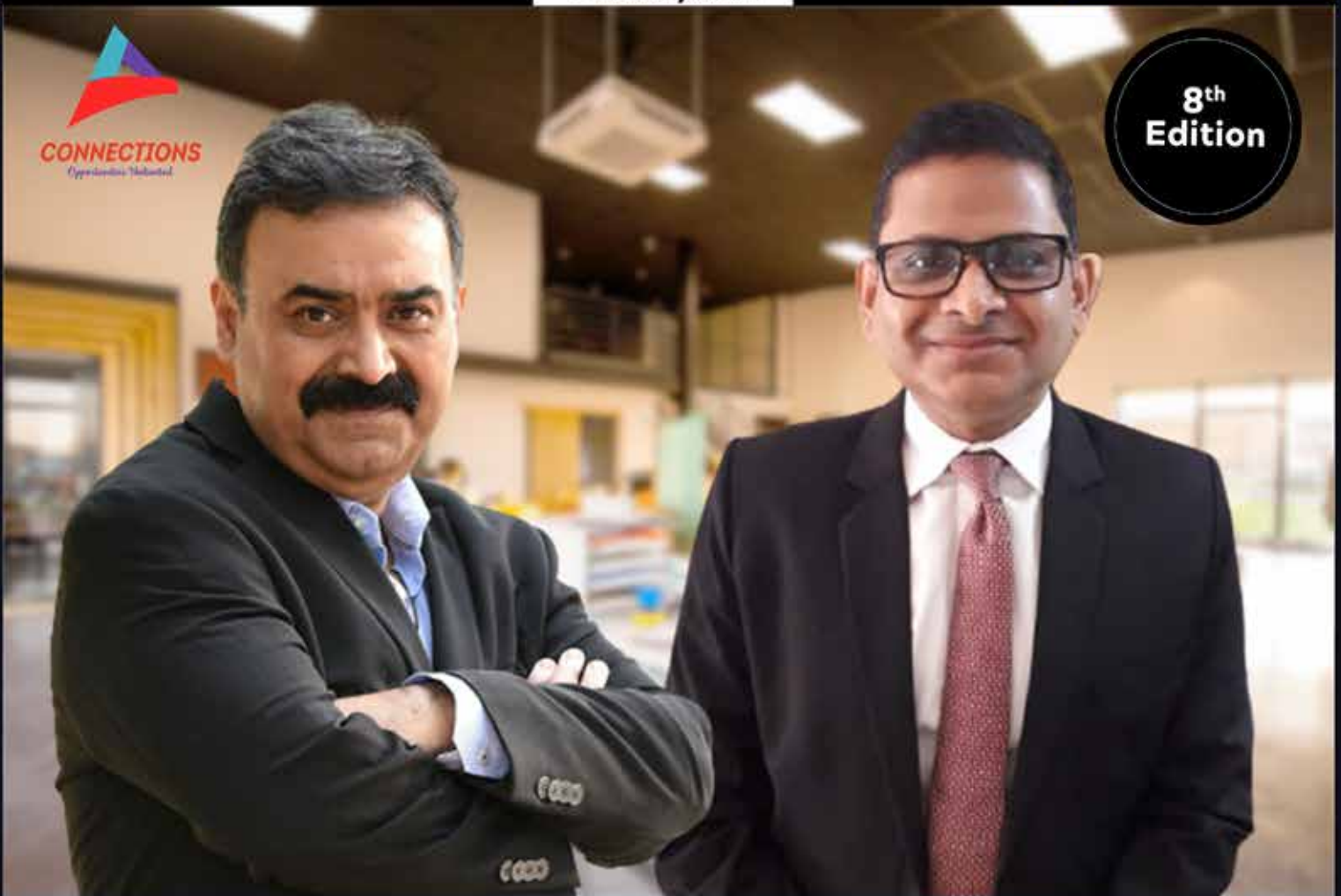
# LET'S TALK TALENT

Volume 8

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Edition



*Exclusive - Abhijit Bhaduri*

*Spotlight - Swayam Sen*

## A CONNECTIONS INITIATIVE

### Special Contribution

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Subir Sinha

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Ruchira Bhardwaja  
Rajesh Balasubramanian  
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## ABHIJIT BHADURI

**Founder and CEO**  
**Abhijit Bhaduri & Associates**

Abhijit Bhaduri is a Talent Management practitioner with global experience across various sectors. For seven years he was the Chief Learning Officer for Wipro, he lived and worked on global talent initiatives across multiple countries. As an alumnus of Microsoft, PepsiCo, Colgate and Tata Steel, Mr Bhaduri has been exposed to globally acknowledged best practices in leadership and culture building.

Abhijit Bhaduri is also the strategic advisor to business leaders and organisations in transition. He dons the hat of an executive coach to leaders on building a culture that attracts talent necessary to drive growth. Mr. Bhaduri is among the top 10 learning experts globally.



Exclusive

## ABHIJIT BHADURI

Founder and CEO  
Abhijit Bhaduri & Associates

Your personal brand is an insurance policy

Till the eighties, people joined one organization and then retired from the same employer with a retirement gift and a pension. A couple of forces have converged to change that. The result is the fading away of the notion of a steady job. The employment contract between the employer and the employee has got redefined. From a life-time contract, jobs are now more like short-term contracts.

What got it started?

### Job hopping

Over the last twenty years, businesses have learned to accept that people change jobs. If the employees in the best of organizations face attrition, there is no stigma attached to people switching jobs and even careers. People have quit successful careers to become freelancers, entrepreneurs and pursue creative professions. In the job market, other things being equal, the candidate with a stronger personal brand gets picked

### Shorter life of a firm

McKinsey believes that, by 2027, 75% of the companies quoted on the S&P 500 even say in 2016, will have disappeared. The average lifespan of companies listed in Standard & Poor's 500 was 61 years in 1958. Today, it is less than 18 years. That means individuals will need to find ways to be employed by

different employers during the course of their career. A strong personal brand makes a candidate even more attractive to a potential employer. The candidate is often headhunted directly.

### New models of employment

Uber and Ola showed that a business can have thousands of people working on their platform without there being an employer employee relationship. Not having these drivers as employees means that the employer can stay flexible even when demand is sluggish. This flex staffing model has moved from blue-collar jobs to white collar jobs. The TaaS (Talent as a Service) model is a flexible workforce framework that allows enterprises to access high-quality technology talent on-demand from anywhere in the world. It enables organizations to scale up quickly. A powerful personal brand makes a person stand out among the peers.

The impact of these three forces pales in comparison to the impact of Covid-19 in the job market. Millions of people have lost their jobs. People realize that their business card can no longer borrow the brand value of their employer. Without a personal brand, an individual gets lost among the 650 million people on LinkedIn. The best time to build your personal brand is when you do not need to. Brand building is a long-term process. Today is the best day to start investing in building your personal brand. Get started.



## SWAYAM SEN

**Chief People Officer  
Avanse Financial Services Limited**

Swayam Sen has around two decades of experience in various facets of HR in Banking / Financial Services and Engineering sectors. He holds competence in the area of Leadership Development, Talent Management, People strategy design and delivery, Development of Initiatives / Program, Employee Engagement, Organizational Development and Effectiveness and Training & Development. Mr. Sen has skills in managing & developing large to mid sized teams and is adapt in managing and driving people processes and transformation in complex and large-scale enterprises.

## SPOTLIGHT

## SWAYAM SEN

**Chief People Officer  
Avanse Financial Services Limited**



**Having worked with MNCs and large Indian conglomerate, what do you think are the top 3 secrets for success which the younger generation should follow?**

Larger and widely spread the organizations are, more complex ecosystems they are. Needless to mention, we now live and work in globally interdependent communities. In these contexts, paramount to anyone's success are to, first build positive relationships across and make friends both within and outside your work domain. This helps in fostering confidence and helps navigate the system for one to find resources and solutions needed for effective outcome of their job. Secondly, show insatiable hunger to learn and eagerness to do more. Here informal learning plays an important role as much as formal learning. Start creating a career sketch in mind with milestones and think about the skills that you will need to start developing so that you can progress. Doing more, offers richness in your job and helps build the perfection which adds to overall competence. Last but not the least, advocate your ideas and behave professionally. It's important to express your ideas without inhibition. It's a gift that you can give to your organization. Take ownership of the work entrusted on you, manage time well, not only for meeting the delivery timelines but also to help achieve a proper work-life balance.

**What challenges do you think lies ahead for HR leaders post COVID from a employee morale and aspiration perspective?**

Covid has impacted human lives on three critical aspects - Psychological, Economic & Social. The impact has been widely seen and sensed across organizations. This has not only created compelling reasons for the organizations to consider and adopt newer ways of working but has clearly brought in a mindset change bringing in new imperatives to deal with these issues.

Not only HR, but every leader in an organization will have to play an even more important and consistent role in creating an environment of positive and focused communication, a shared approach in decision making which is ethically right, high level of care in listening and counsel. An effective design of employee wellness program to support employees manage physiological and psychological health issues will be a must have. Incentivizing and sensitizing employees on adopting healthy ways of managing their lives is supreme.

With the ways of work shifting to remote and work from home, team alignment to the work goals, transparent and easy flowing information, sensitivity and respect towards the work and personal life boundaries, ensuring safer climate for communication and reviewing along with feedback will be essential.

For building trust in an organization, there is no alternative to creating a culture of meritocracy, fairness and objectivity. Employee aspirations will need to be managed in an effective, objective and timely manner focusing on career mobility, rewards and learning opportunities.

## How do you foresee hiring trends to shape up post pandemic?

Post pandemic the economic activity and conduct of business will take considerable time to revive. At the same time, this will have ushered in new opportunities to review business and people strategies for future. In response to the present and the evolving situation, the talent strategies and workforce dynamics will undergo a significant transformation which will be effective and commercially viable. Depending on the industry and the nature of the roles, we will see growing need for -

Blended workforce - need of the organisations will be to have more flexible focusing on a lean workforce which will necessitate having a mix of permanent, gig or short term contract workers.

Talent will be assessed on skill fluidity which will offer fungibility to perform multi-roles or ability to shift roles minimizing transition maintenance and productivity loss.

Focus will be on talent who are critical to help meet the future growth strategy of the organizations as the business models change. Emphasis on digital and technical skills will increase.

Hiring will leverage technology even more. The pre-pandemic trend on digitization will gain more focus to be able to manage scale and cost of acquisition, hire with agility and to provide enhanced candidate experience

## As a HR leader what steps one should take to ensure that the organisational culture is aligned with larger organisational goals?

Clear articulation of the organisation goals and establishing linkage to the values of the organisation is extremely important in aligning culture to the organisation's goals. How the values of the organization are defined in form of behaviours and how they get understood and demonstrated by every employee to help meet the organizational goals is important. Communication across the mental process and the consequences helps

strata of the organization reinforces the alignment. Linkage to the feedback and develop establish a clear cause and effects relationship.

## There is a lot of buzz about future of work which can be work from home / hybrid work place / work from office coming back over a period of time. What do you think will work in your industry?

It is too short a time to make conclusive remarks on how different combinations of work place will impact the business outcome in future. Employers have developed plans and have confidently applied hybrid models in their efforts to protect and enable people at work. However, determining the nature of role fitting in which model, is complicated. This requires insight into the right blend of what is possible under regulations needed in terms of operational efficacy, customer experience, cost arbitrage and business transformation plans. These need to be feasible and preferred from the perspective of employees and their mental and physical wellness. Needless to mention, the combination of all possibilities are strong but will be largely dynamic.

## We have seen various kinds of leadership traits over the years and with start-up ecosystem we have seen young leaders who have given different dimensions to leadership. What do you think will work in the long run?

Leadership is contextual. Ability of a leader to manoeuvre its style suitable to the context is important to create the right impact. Leadership does not correlate to age and hence, its effectiveness comes from the degree to which a leader is self-aware of herself or himself. At different stages of an organization's evolution, the priorities for the organization are different. Leadership traits to promote a culture of collaboration and appreciation, entrepreneurial and growth mind-set, execution agility, fairness, inclusivity and governance are success critical and will always remain important.



## **GANESH SHENOY**

**Director & Global Head Human Resources  
Emeritus**

Ganesh S has 17 Years of rich experience in managing & setting up Global teams, Start-ups, setting up Analytics & Innovation labs and Driving Cultural Transformation initiatives across geographies. His passion lies in building sustainable institutions, transforming mission driven organizations and leaving behind a legacy!

**Special contribution****GANESH SHENOY**

**Director & Global Head Human Resources  
Emeritus**

**• 1. Tell us about your early life and how you decided on a career in HR?**

My entry to Hr was more of an accident than a plan. After my campus offer got turned down (due to the Y2K recession), I had to take up some role and the only one that I could find was that of a recruiter at an agency which was hiring for BPOs/ Call centres. I then picked up an MBA so that I could make my HR career formal

**• 2. What are the origins of Ed Tech and how has it changed over the years that you've been involved?**

I am not sure about the origins of Ed Tech, but I suppose usage of technology (in whatever relevant form at the time) to make education easier has been there for a very long time. My stint with Ed tech has been tumultuous to say the least. A phenomenally large part of the ed tech market, considered to be \$240B size, at least in the exec ed space has been unexplored. We haven't even scratched the surface of this industry.

**• 3. What do you think defines an organisation as a top employer today?**

Any organization which has space for people with great ideas, for people who love to experiment (and maybe fail), for people who have a bias for action and has a culture of caring for its people, would be on the path to be the best place to work (literally).

**• 4. Tell us about a recent initiative that you have instigated within your organisation that you are most proud of?**

We are working an initiative that hires, retains and promotes only A+ talent. Multiple initiatives which include structured hiring methodologies (like TopGrading), evaluating existing talent to be 'built for a 10X scale' and also deploying these systems across 4 continents has been a great learning.

**• 5. What is next chapter in your career story?**

Building Emeritus to be a truly global organization and leaving behind this as a legacy for future generations is something that drives me every day. I don't know if this is the current chapter or the next.



## PIA SHOME

**Head - Human Resources,  
SMEcorner**

Pia Shome is the Head of Human Resources at SMEcorner. Pia brings in more than 16+ years of experience in the field of Human Resources, Change Management, Organization Transformation and Culture Building. Prior to joining SMEcorner, Pia has worked at IDFC First Bank, where she was responsible for Talent Management, Culture and Capability Building. She has worked closely on Gender Diversity and Recognition practices. In her current role, she is instrumental in integrating people's practices, policies, talent frameworks. She wants to make HR a true partner in the success of the business. She is a Postgraduate from XISS, Ranchi, and is an alumnus of INSEAD, Singapore.

Pia is on the admission panel of FORE Business school and other reputed MBA institutes.



Point of View

## PIA SHOME

Head - Human Resources,  
SMEcorner

The Leadership Soul !

Times are changing! And they are changing fast! Needless to say that the role of the leaders/managers/bosses are also going through an immense transition!

We have often heard that leadership is hard? Why is that so?

A leaders job is hard because the buck stops with him/her! It is the ultimate decision point! And more often than not, the decision affects the state of the entire organization. So, in these changing times, what should a leader of today do to stay ahead of the game!

**Keep Learning:** I can never emphasize this enough. There is no substitute to this. Specially with the changing times, learning about the future is a way to keep ahead of the times. Leaders should learn, and encourage their teams to invest in learning too. A good way to inculcate this habit would be to include learning updates in the weekly meetings. Create a culture of the team sharing their learnings with each other. This shows leadership action and priority! Ear mark learning days, encourage learners by recognizing their contribution as learning champions!

**Make Technology your friend:** One may get lost with where to look when it comes to technology! A good start would be to map out all the processes in your work department. Then look at each process and decide if you really need the process? If yes, do you need the process the way it is being managed? Can it be done differently? Can it be outsourced? Can it be made online? Once all the processes have been reviewed, revised and remapped, revisit this every year to be agile and ahead in your game

**Use networking to benefit yourself and the organization:** Positive networking with the right people can immensely benefit with cross company and industry knowledge. In simple words, it is the ability to leverage your inter-personal skills for mutual benefit. However, note that networking is a two way street. The power of networking will only work on the principle of "give and take". First Give, then take! Be ready to share your knowledge and ideas and get rewarded

with more of it from your peers. In simple words, you can always learn a different perspective, a new thought and a path breaking idea, only by talking and sharing!

**Find a mentor:** Leadership is not an easy task, it is lonely, demanding, and competitive! In other words, "the show is always on" for the leader. So, how does one stay on course? Finding a mentor is a necessary investment that every leader should make for themselves. Some organizations invest in mentors, however, if not, invest in a mentor yourself. A mentor will be a sounding board, will be able to guide you with different perspectives ( and that really helps! ) and will present the facts the way they are and not as we often decode it!

**Learn to hold honest and transparent conversations:** This sounds extremely easy, however one of the most difficult to implement. Encourage honesty in the team. Discourage conversations on the side. Ensure if someone is being spoken about, they are in the room to receive the accolade or defend their stance, what ever the scenario may be. Reprimand and discourage behaviors that encourage gossip. Set the tone, and the team shall quickly understand what works. Remember, the converse is also true!

I will conclude by saying that the journey of leading is immensely rewarding when done right. Look for happiness in your teams success, keep yourself the last and enjoy the ride!





## **SUBIR SINHA**

**Senior Human Resources Consultant  
Subir Sinha HR & Corporate Advisory**

Subir Sinha is a Senior Human Resource Professional with over 30 years of experience in Human Resource function in Manufacturing, FMCG, ITeS, Telecom, Retail, EdTech companies. He has worked with Arvind, Reliance Retail, ITC, HSBC, Reliance Telecom, Reliance Communications, RSPL Ltd. etc.. He was last associated with NetCom Learning as Director HR. Currently he runs Subir Sinha HR & Corporate Advisory and helps SMEs, MSMEs and Startups in building robust HR practices. Subir is based in Delhi NCR with clients across India. He can be reached on [subire-subirsinha1811.com](mailto:subire-subirsinha1811.com).

Special contribution

**SUBIR SINHA****Senior Human Resources Consultant  
Subir Sinha HR & Corporate Advisory****SHAPING THE RIGHT CULTURE IN AN ORGANISATION**

As all of us are different. The organisation culture too is different for each and every corporation. Organisation Culture is an unwritten system of values, beliefs and assumptions present in any organisation created by the shared vision, values and thinking of the founders and the employees. It permeates through generations and gets imbibed in the way the organisation functions. It creates an unsaid and unwritten norm to be followed within the organisation.

Organisation culture manifestations can be seen in the following ways:

- The way the organisation treats its employees, customers and different stake holders. Importantly, the way it does its business
- The autonomy given to employees in proposing new ideas, decision making in their areas of work and freedom of thought, expression and beliefs
- The power dynamics in organizational hierarchy
- The alignment of employees towards the organizational objectives

We have an example of Virgin Atlantic being an Employee centric organisation, where Richard Branson the Founder keeps employees' interest FIRST. We have umpteen examples of sales driven organisations, finance driven organisations, HR driven organisations etc. What is to be noted is that all these drives that are found to be embedded in the organisation culture today were initiated by the founders and employees when the organisation was just budding.

The apt definition for Organisation Culture is, the way organisation functions or carries out its activities. Is Organisation culture important? Yes, indeed it is. It is the bedrock of how the organisation does business. It binds employees with a common purpose and identity, enables differentiation from other organisations, steers employees towards organizational goals and objectives, determines the communication channel including the grapevine in the organisation, fosters mutual trust among employees and most importantly helps to enhance employees' level of identification with the organisation.

The question is how do we foster right culture in an organisation? The seed of Organisation Culture is sown right at the inception of the organisation. The role of the founders in clearly enunciating the purpose of the organisation, play a very significant role in shaping the organisation culture.

Values that the organisation promotes are vital. Values emanate from beliefs of the founders and the key employees of the organisation. Integrity, trusteeship, entrepreneurship, customer centricity and meritocracy are some of the values which shape the organisation culture. How much importance these values get from the Founders in their dealings in business determines and defines the organisation culture.

Hiring of like-minded people who espouse the values promoted by the founders is another important factor in molding the organisation culture. Efforts should be taken to hire right set of people who have similar background and are culturally fit for the organisation. Skills can be imparted but culture fitment during the hiring process needs to be judged. This is the reason why we need to have panel interviews in which both senior and new managers are present and they minutely evaluate the traits of the candidate. It is imperative that the founder and/or core team member of the organisation be present during hiring to validate the culture fit of the candidate based on his experience and organizational values, etc.

Functional heads and leaders are the builders of the Organizational Culture. They need to be totally aligned to the organizational values and culture and be above board so that employees emulate their way of working.

Communication both top down and bottom up plays an important role in shaping the right organisation culture. Freedom of thought, expression and belief are our fundamental rights and should reflect in the culture of an organisation.

Openness and transparency in dealings is also pivotal for bringing in right organisation culture.

Recognition and appreciation of efforts of each and every employee and rewarding to the deserving employees is essential for promoting right organisation culture. Leaders should always appreciate whatever value the employees add to the organisation.

Shaping right organizational culture also calls for employee centric HR Policies. Compensation and benefits plans, travel policy etc. should be based on scientific studies and the organisation should be transparent in sharing the philosophy behind them. The fact that the organisation is fair has to be perceived by all the employees and the community of which they are a part.

Organisations exist for their customers and some go as far as proclaiming that Customer is the King. Fostering right organisation culture also calls for employees to be in customer's shoes to understand what they want, like, dislike, etc. Hence, it is also important for employees to spend time with customers or as customers to build right organisation culture.

Defined career plans, growth, training and professional development are also hallmarks for shaping right organizational culture.

Projecting and promoting Organization's culture at various forums, social media etc. helps in creating the right organisation culture as it creates a pull factor to attract talent in the organisation.

It's a desired organizational culture where leaders walk the talk or participate with the employees. Presence and participation of leaders in various activities of the organisation in any way will send right signals across the organisation and help build healthy organisation culture.

Constant reinforcement of values of the organisation by the leaders plays a key role in shaping the right culture in the organisation. Vision and Values of the organisation have to be constantly reiterated in all possible ways.

Weeding out of employees who are not aligned with company's core values needs to be practiced if we are looking to have the right culture in an organisation.

The physical setting of the work place and the tools provided to perform tasks etc. also play an important role in shaping up the right culture in an organisation.

Social media and all places where customers and vendors have an interface with the organisation and its employees need to be fortified with organization's values covertly or overtly as this too is critical for shaping the organization's culture.

At the end summing up, it would not be an exaggeration to say that shaping the right culture in an organisation is all pervasive and whatever happens in the organisation determines its culture. If the organisation functions in accordance with the values for which it stands, it will enable the organisation to shape the right lasting culture.





## RABI AGRAWAL

**Head Talent Acquisition  
ClearTax India**

Rabi Agrawal has 13 yrs experience in Talent Acquisition space. Currently he heads talent Acquisition for ClearTax, a high growth fintech startup. In his previous stints he worked with Zivame and CareerNet. He is a keen observer of Indian startup ecosystem.



## Point of view

# RABI AGRAWAL

Head Talent Acquisition  
ClearTax India

## Gen Z is the newest troop to join the working ranks

Gen Z is the newest troop to join the working ranks. Born between 1997 and 2012, this generation is just leaving college and is already making changes to the way we hire and recruit. Meeting them on their own terms could mean successfully attracting and retaining the largest generation of workers ever.

Here are some ways to successfully hire this generation.

**Go digital** - Gen Z is digital. They don't recall a world without the internet, smartphones or video games. They have been exposed to the global marketplace of ideas and commerce. These workers know the possibilities are endless, and intend to make their mark.

**Improve your career site** - Your career page is the foundation of your recruitment marketing strategy, especially for digital-native Gen Zers. Use these best practices to highlight the most important information, modernize your website and attract more candidates.

**Keep it speedy** - Gen Z expect an offer less than a week after the first interview. Cut down on time-to-hire and provide frequent updates throughout the hiring process.

**Communication Strategy** - Communication is important to Gen Z. Create a digital community or group. Ask the young candidates to join your talent community before they apply, and share content based on their indicated interests. During the interview process, send frequent updates to let candidates know about their hiring status. And when it comes time to make an offer, send a small care package that speaks to your new hire.

**Employee influencer network** - Gen Z relies on referrals when looking for potential employers, so lean on your current employees to attract young talent. Invite team members to share their work lives on social media, and post when you have new open positions. Feature your employees' content with candidates for a more authentic view of your company culture.

Remember that Gen Z Job seekers also know their value and organisations who are aware of this will be in a better position to attract and retain GenZ.

## CONGRATULATIONS!

**Mr. Ashish Mittal**, a 2011 HR batch alumnus of XLRI Jamshedpur, has been recently appointed as the Head of People Function (HR) at Aviva. Mr. Ashish Mittal is a seasoned HR professional with over 12 years of overall experience in companies like Bank of America, Microsoft and Aviva India. In his journey at Aviva since 2013 he has covered a broad spectrum of roles and has played a key role in strengthening the strategic business goals of the organization by 'partnering' with teams for building efficient & effective HR practices. Heartiest congratulations and best wishes to him.



**Ruchira Bhardwaja** for her appointment as CHRO with Kotak Life Insurance. Before this she was the CHRO, Future Generali India Life Insurance

Powered with 23 years of rich and varied experience in the HR industry, Ruchira Bhardwaja is a firm believer of the use of technology in recruitment space. She has worked in six industries ranging from dairy, agro-chemicals, and hospitality to retail, banking, and insurance. Having experienced the culture of such diverse industries, she has closely witnessed the selection and hiring process shift from traditional to a technology-driven, more efficient one.

Our best wishes to Ruchira for her new role.



# CONGRATULATIONS!

**Rajesh Balasubramanian** for his new role as Head of People and Culture at Accolite Digital.

He worked as Global Head - Talent Acquisition Enablement Services with Cognizant before this

Rajesh Balasubramanian possess over 2 decades of experience, working in manufacturing, information technology and services industries, in roles spanning multiple tracks including Sales, Software Delivery Management and Human Resources. He has continuously created, successfully executed & optimally delivered strategies & frameworks to attract, retain, enhance & sustain the best talent across the globe.

We wish Rajesh great luck in his new role.



**Sai Suryanarayana M** for his new role as Chief People Officer at Fincare Small Finance Bank. Before this he was the Chief of HR at AU Small Finance Bank.

Sai Suryanarayana M is a high energy and talented HR Professional with multi-industry experience spanning Banking, Financial Services, Pharmaceuticals, FMCG R&D and Manufacturing.

Over the years, he has learnt to collaborate and cultivate productive relationships with all stakeholders in a boundaryless manner.

He enjoys putting systems and capabilities in place and then drive deployment and execution.

We wish Sai the best for his new role.





# Team Talent



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## Contact Us

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