

UNLOCKING UNCOMMON LEADERSHIP:

Embed and align coaching in your L&D strategy







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Dear HRM Magazine Asia readers,

s organisations begin to adjust to hybrid work models that are likely to be in place throughout 2022, attention turns to another challenge facing HR and business leaders in the new year: How to attract and retain the best talent.

With the pandemic having compelled many people to re-evaluate their life priorities, many employees are seeking new challenges in their careers, whether that lies within their current employers or

While renumeration, dedication to DE&I, and improving company culture may help organisations address a talent shortage, HR leaders may do well to integrate learning and development (L&D) as an integral component of their talent management strategy.

Having the opportunity to learn and develop new skills and capabilities is now the number one reason why most people join an organisation, and the reason they will stay, suggests Mervyn Dinnen, HR, Talent and WorkTech Analyst, and Co-Founder of Two Heads Consulting.

L&D, he argues, should increasingly be part of the hiring process, and candidates must be made aware of their opportunities for growth and development if they join an organisation.

In this issue, we spoke with Dinnen and Matt Alder, Producer and Host of The Recruiting Future Podcast, as they discuss the role L&D can play in organisational success today, and provide key tips on how organisations can create a new culture of learning in 2022 and beyond.

Also in this issue, read about how Singapore's FairPrice Group has turned the pandemic into an advantage by

reinvigorating training programmes and enabling employees to adapt and adopt to new ways of working and learning; while Pauline Loo, Senior Vice-President, Human Resources, Nippon Sanso Holdings Corporation, shares key insights into how HR teams can step up and be ready to make work transformation a success through organisational alignment.

We are also counting down to the eagerly anticipated HR Tech Festival Asia 2022, which is taking place from May 10-13.

With the theme of Return. Refresh. Reimagine, the 21st edition of HR Tech Festival Asia will be presented in a hybrid format that is designed to prove an immersive and customisable event experience for your needs and preferences.

The week-long festival of HR will feature a lineup of exciting co-located events; some of the most recognised global and regional HR thought leaders, including Mervyn Dinnen and Matt Alder; and some of the most innovative HR tech brands in the market today, including ADP, Microsoft, LinkedIn, Skillsoft, SumTotal Systems and CoachHub, to name but a few.

We look forward to seeing you in Singapore in May and wish you a successful year ahead, as HRM Asia continues to be your trusted source of information and market-leading content for HR across Asia.



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ON THE COVER

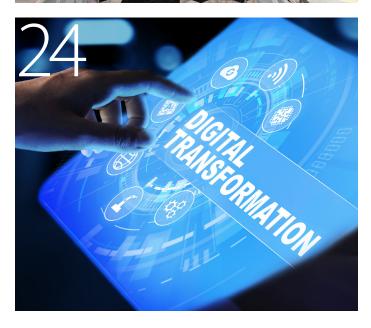
L&D PLAYING KEY **ROLE IN RE-DEFINING TALENT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES**

Mervyn Dinnen, HR, Talent and WorkTech Analyst, Co-Founder of Two Heads Consulting, and Matt Alder, Producer and Host, The Recruiting Future Podcast, Co-Founders of Two Heads Consulting, explain the role L&D can play in shaping talent management strategies and overall organisational success.











FEATURES

HR TECH FESTIVAL ASIA 2022

 Asia's largest and favourite award-winning HR Tech event, HR Tech Festival Asia 2022, is taking place from 10-13 May 2022, and will feature a lineup of exciting events, some of the most recognised global and regional thought leaders, and the most innovative HR tech brands in the market today.

UNLOCKING UNCOMMON LEADERSHIP Ruchira Chaudhary, Author, Executive Coach, and Founder of TrueNorth Consulting, explains why organisations need to start embedding and aligning coaching in their learning and development (L&D) strategies.

NAVIGATING THE MODERN L&D TECHNOLOGY STACK

Josh Bersin, Global Industry Analyst and CEO of the Josh Bersin Company, identifies the five "layers" of tools and platforms to consider when choosing an L&D technology.

PEOPLE-CENTRIC APPROACH TO TRAINING PROPELLING FAIRPRICE GROUP'S GROWTH

Irene Tay, HRPB Lead, FairPrice Group, Food Services, highlights how Singapore's FairPrice Group has turned the pandemic into an advantage by reinvigorating training programmes and enabling employees to adapt and adopt to new ways of working and learning.

NIPPON SANSO TRANSFROMS WORK WITH ORGANISATIONAL ALIGNMENT

Pauline Loo, Senior Vice-President, Human Resources, Nippon Sanso Holdings Corporation, shares key insights into how HR teams can step up and be ready to make work transformation.

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SINGAPORE

SINGAPORE REVIEWS **FAIR EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES**

COMPANIES THAT ROLL OUT attendancerelated incentive schemes that consider workers' use of sick leave will be going against Singapore's Tripartite Guidelines on Fair Employment Practices (TGFEP), said Manpower Minister Tan See Leng.

Attendance-related schemes that consider sick leave utilisation should no longer be seen as a reasonable or fair practice, said Tan, who added, "As a matter of principle, if an employee is unwell, he should seek medical attention, firstly for his own well-being, and secondly, for the well-being of his co-workers."



JAPAN'S **CORPORATIONS** ARE SPENDING **LESS ON WAGES**

CORPORATIONS IN JAPAN

have been spending less of their profits on wages since the end of the bubble economy about 30 years ago, a government study finds.

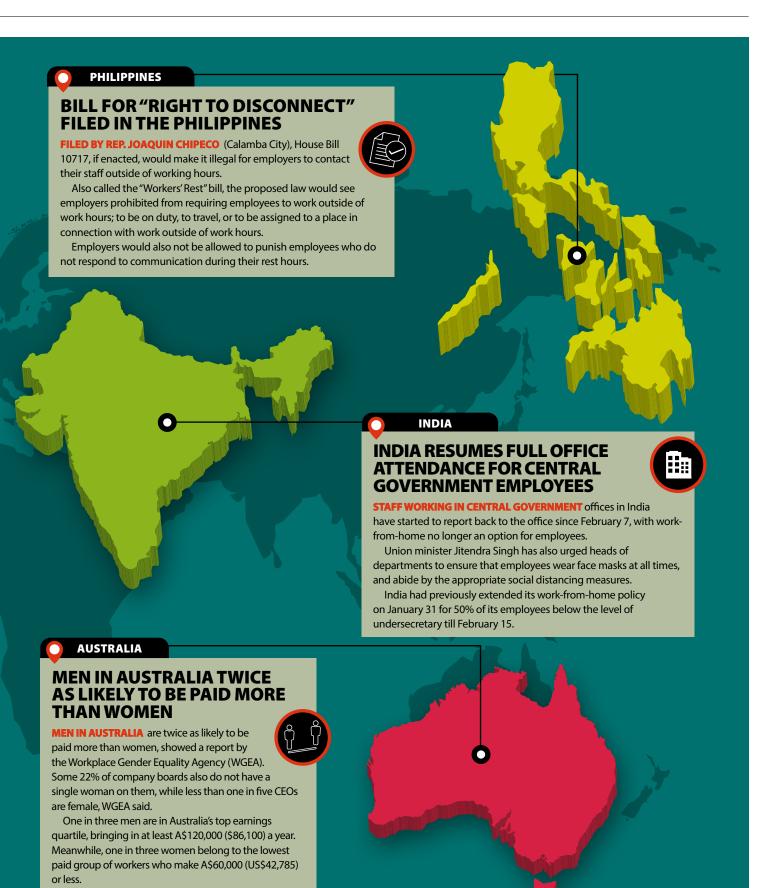
The biggest decrease in spending on labour was from large non-manufacturers. The percent of profits spent on labour fell by 8.2 percentage points over two decades to 48.4%. The situation was similar at major manufacturers, though the drop was smaller at 2.2 percentage points.



MINIMUM WAGE UNDER **CONSIDERATION IN HONG KONG**

HONG KONG'S MINIMUM WAGE, which has been frozen at HK\$37.50 (US\$4.8) since 2019, may be raised in 2022, said Secretary for Labour and Welfare Law Chi-kwong.

He added that the Hong Kong administration will inform lawmakers at a later stage regarding the long-term path to be taken regarding the minimum wage, first implemented a decade ago. Law also urged unions to negotiate with employers on working-hours guidelines.





CALIFORNIA ASSEMBLYWOMAN

EMPLOYEES

Buffy Wicks has submitted a proposed bill that will mandate that all businesses require their employees and independent contractors to receive the COVID-19 vaccination.

If passed, the bill will require new employees to get at least one dose of the vaccination by the time they start work and the second dose within 45 days of being on the job. The mandate would stay in place unless the federal Centres for Disease Control and Prevention decides that COVID-19 vaccinations are no longer needed.



US

US BUSINESSES FACE WORKER SHORTAGES

WHILE BUSINESS SENTIMENT is continuing to improve, 57% of US businesses are facing skilled labour shortages, according to a recent survey conducted by the National Association for Business Economics (NABE).

Nearly one quarter of businesses also struggle to find unskilled labour, with almost a third of the respondents who participated in the survey expecting labour shortages to continue into 2023, and possibly beyond.



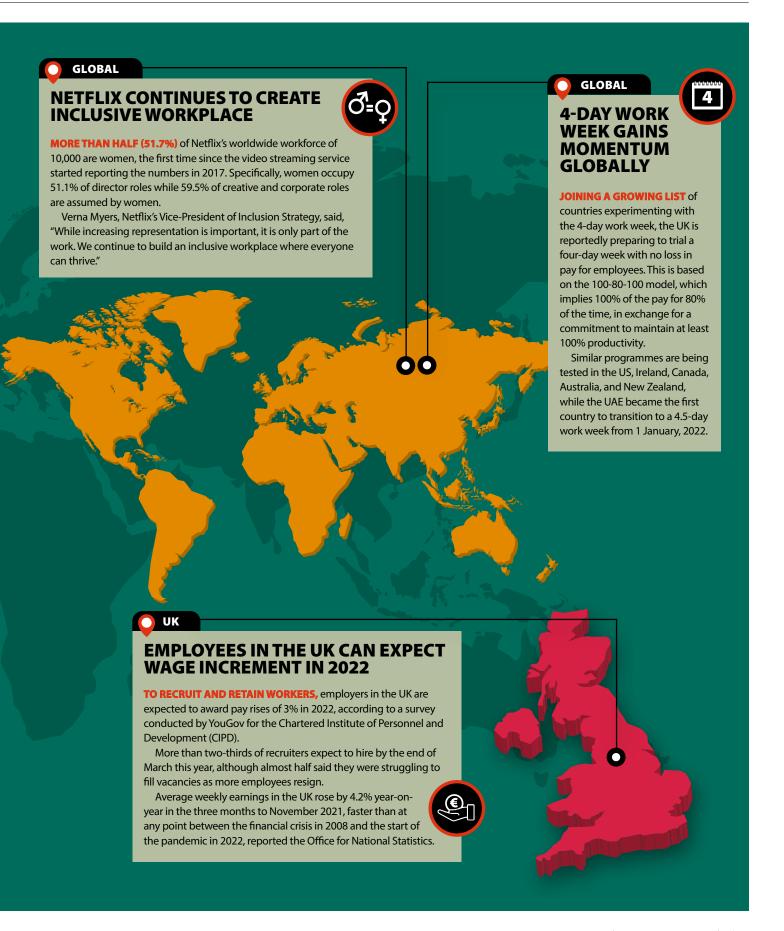
EUROPE

EUROPE'S ECONOMIC RECOVERY HAMPERED BY STAFF SHORTAGES

KEY CHALLENGES REMAIN on the path to a sense of normalcy in the European Union, even as the economy continues to recover from the pandemic, said the European Commission in its winter 2022 forecast.

After enjoying an economic turnaround for much of 2021, growth is expected to slow to 0.4% in the last quarter of 2021, compared with 2.2% in the previous quarter. One of the challenges member nations are facing, said the European Commission, is the inability to find enough people to put to work because the pandemic has sent many into quarantine and caused long-term illness.









L&D PLAYING **KEY ROLE IN RE-DEFINING** ANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

BY SHAWN LIEW

esides serving as the focal point for HR leaders to drive organisational growth, learning and development (L&D) is also increasingly becoming a core component of many organisations' talent management strategy.

Specifically, when it comes to talent attraction and retention. HR leaders will do well to recognise that having the opportunity to learn and develop new skills and capabilities is now the number one reason why most people join an organisation, and the reason they will stay, suggests Mervyn Dinnen, HR, Talent and WorkTech Analyst, and Co-Founder of Two Heads Consulting.

Speaking exclusively to HRM Magazine Asia, he recommends, "An organisation's approach to supporting and enabling

their people to grow has to be front and centre of their employer brand, and overall employment offering. L&D should be increasingly part of the hiring process, ensuring all candidates are aware of their opportunities for growth and development should they join, and being open about the approach to internal mobility."

Dinnen is also co-author of the new book Digital Talent, which takes a deep dive into how organisations can find, develop, and retain the people needed in a world of digital transformation; and offer insights into how to support people and helping them to get the digital skills they need.

Organisations must make it a priority to show that people who join them will have the opportunity to grow, develop, and learn new skills and capabilities, says Matt Alder, the book's co-author, and Producer and Host of The Recruiting Future Podcast.

He adds, "The L&D team are therefore key stakeholders in the hiring process. Too often the important conversations around growth are left to either hiring managers or the recruitment team, but it should be L&D who take responsibility to have these conversations and demonstrate how candidates can grow within the business. They need to ensure that they are seen internally as being a key part of the hiring process through promoting the importance of learning to attract and retain people the business needs."

With remote and hybrid working continuing to grow, Alder and Dinnen also identify 'robot-proof" skills as being critical skills to acquire today. These refer to stronger conversational and analytical skills, as well as having the self-sufficiency and intellectual curiosity when faced with challenges or problems.

This in turn, is compelling organisations to recognise their employees' intellectual wellbeing as a top priority. Intellectual wellbeing, Dinnen explains, means an individual's openness to embracing new ideas and thinking, and their desire to keep developing and expanding their knowledge, skills, and capabilities.

"During the pandemic, the loss of day-to-day interaction and conversation with colleagues has impacted the more informal learning and knowledge sharing opportunities that tend to come with conversations around the workplace, particularly with more senior colleagues."

Drawing on research he and Alder conducted over the last two years, Dinnen also shared how organisations' desire to invest in helping employees with their mental, emotional, and social wellbeing has at times, come at the expense of their intellectual wellbeing. "We believe that this is beginning to change with intellectual

"Employees are always looking for chances to learn and develop research shows it is the key reason why they join and stay – and L&D are the key stakeholders in this part of the MATT ALDER

wellbeing becoming a top priority, something that L&D is in a great position to promote and support. Employees need access to what they need to know as and when they need it, and learning platforms need to support and enable this."

Creating a new culture of learning in 2022 and beyond

By 2025, half of employees globally will need to be reskilled, and 40% of current skills and capabilities will change over the next five years, according to the World Economic Forum.

L&D teams should take this as their mandate to create a real culture of learning, where employees across the organisation are provided access to information and knowledge as and when they need it, suggests Alder.

"Employees are always looking for chances to learn and develop - research shows it is the key reason why they join and stay - and L&D are the key stakeholders in this part of the talent journey."

He also notes that employees are increasingly demanding access to learning as and when they need it, rather than at times set aside by the company. This 'culture of learning', or the creation of a 'learning environment', can be supported by technology, but the onus in on L&D to be more influential in making the business case for new and emerging learning interventions that can improve knowledge and performance, says Alder.

Organisations can and should also improve the decision-making process in learning technology investment by encouraging employee participation. Dinnen elaborates, "Whilst most organisations rate their employees' experience of using learning technology as one of the most important factors when investing, we found that only 1 in 5 actually involve employees in the final decision-making process. If we are to fully leverage L&D technologies to develop our people, then they must have more involvement in the final decision."

Looking ahead, Dinnen and Alder predict internal mobility and talent intelligence as emerging trends for the L&D space, where L&D leaders need to create and oversee a culture of mobility in which employees can move around the organisation to develop skills and competencies.

Supporting this culture will require having accurate data and insights on employees, their strengths, capabilities, skills, and knowledge. "You need improvements in skills tracking and, data collection and analysis," Alder adds. "Transparency of skills and capabilities around the business is key, and a proper talent management and/or talent intelligence platform should support this. Internal mobility itself usually requires a culture change within businesses as many managers often fear losing their best performers to other divisions."

Invest in a talent intelligence platform where the underlying artificial intelligence (AI) can analyse each employee's skills and performance data, Dinnen urges. "The talent intelligence platform can then match existing employees to open opportunities within the organisation, show where there are adjacent skills for each role, and provide a much richer and more insightful view of everyone working within the organisation, as well as ex-employees too." hrm

"L&D should be increasingly part of the hiring process, ensuring all candidates are aware of their opportunities for growth and development should they join, and being open about the approach to internal mobility."





BRINGING IN-PERSON **CONNECTION BACKTO**

Asia's largest and favourite award-winning HR Tech event is back to greet you in person and online!

Taking place from 10-13 May 2022, HR Tech Festival Asia 2022 will celebrate a week-long festival of HR, featuring a lineup of exciting events, some of the most recognised global and regional thought leaders, and the most innovative HR tech brands in the market today.

With the theme of Return. Refresh. Reimagine, the 21st edition of HR Tech Festival Asia will be presented in a hybrid format that is designed to provide an immersive and customisable event experience for your needs and preferences.

Joanna Bush, Managing Director, HRM Asia, said, "HR Tech Festival Asia is celebrating 21 years as Asia's leading HR tech event, and we are looking forward to bringing Asia's HR community back together in 2022. HR Tech Festival Asia 2022, which will return both in-person and online, will present a week-long offering of exciting programmes and activities that will allow you to personalise your own unique festival experience."

"With 2022 shaping up to be a complex but interesting year

for HR, we invite you to join the biggest gathering of the region's HR community, global influencers, and industry experts to learn, collaborate, and inspire, as we continue to shape the world of work together."

For those who are keen to re-establish in-person connections with the region's HR community, HR Tech Festival Live, which is taking place live in Singapore on May 10, is not to be missed. Be refreshed with high-energy, engaging presentations on cutting-edge industry ideas, and illuminating sessions that will address current HR issues. Collaborate with industry-leading HR solution providers and gain on-the-spot and in-depth understanding of the best and latest product offerings in the market.

HR Fest Awards 2022 will celebrate the outstanding achievements of the region's top HR leaders, companies, and teams from across both the private and public sectors. The winners will be announced live and in-person at the award presentation on May 10.

HR Tech Marketplace, which is taking place from May 10-13, will present the biggest showcase of HR solutions and products from global, regional, and local solution providers under one virtual roof, while the **Start-up Hub**, also taking place from May 10-13, will showcase the best and most innovative HR solutions and upcoming technologies in the start-up entrepreneurial hub.

For those who continue to work remotely but wish to be part of HR Tech Festival Asia 2022, HR Tech Festival Online, taking place from May 11-13, offers the ideal virtual platform to learn from global HR experts, discover innovative solutions, and build virtual connections according to your own schedules.

Stepping beyond the traditional HR functional management, HR leaders are now steering their organisations through enterprise change, talent development and corporate culture. Join the HR **Leader's APAC Summit** on May 11 for a lively and interactive day of peer-driven topical sessions and interactive discussions, and connect with the region's HR professionals as you tackle shared business challenges and critical priorities facing the industry today.

As organisations look to advance workplace gender equity, the Women in HR Tech Conference is also a must-not-miss for HR leaders in Asia. Taking place on May 11, the popular half-day conference will take place alongside HR Tech Fest Online, offering insights into key technologies that can help drive gender equity in the workplace.

Making a debut this year is the **AHDO Summit**, which will examine how to improve human development at work. ASEAN's national HR Association, thought leaders, and the ASEAN professional community will come together to discuss, debate, and establish a balance of economic and human development to the most diverse region in the world.

Besides these exciting highlights, the highly anticipated Content Arena presented during HR Tech Festival Asia Online 2022 will examine some of the most critical issues and challenges facing HR leaders in 2022.

Hear from global influencers and industry experts such as Margaret Heffernan, Author and Professor of Practice, University of Bath; Josh Bersin, Global Industry Analyst and CEO of the Josh Bersin Company; Chris Havrilla, Industry Analyst; Carmen Wee, Board Member, Home Team Science & Technology Agency (HTX), Singapore; Tam Trang Nguyen, Global Head of Human Resources, Unilever International cum Head of Human Resources, Unilever Asia; Mervyn Dinnen, HR, Talent and WorkTech Analyst, and author; Matt Alder, author and producer and host of The Recruiting Future Podcast; and more, as they discuss and provide insights into topics such as planning for a hybrid workforce, refreshing people and business strategies, reimagining the workplace of tomorrow, and more.

HR Tech Festival Asia 2022 will also be supported by global brands such as ADP, Microsoft, LinkedIn, Skillsoft, SumTotal Systems and CoachHub, and more, who will be highlighting the latest and most innovative HR tech solutions in the market today.

2022 will be a complex year for APAC's HR leaders as organisations return to the workplace, refresh talent strategies, and reimagine the future workforce to optimise business impact.

Be sure to be part of HR Tech Festival Asia Online 2022 and learn how you can power up your HR teams for a successful year ahead!

ONEWEEK ONE FESTIVAL. **ONE UNIQUE EXPERIENCE**

It's time to power up your HR teams and reconnect with the HR community this May 2022! Join us in-person and/or online at HR Tech Festival Asia 2022 and personalise your own unique festival experience from all the exciting programmes and activities available for your choosing.



Step out from the virtual to real life to re-establish your connections with the HR community in-person. Be refreshed with high-energy, engaging presentations on cutting-edge ideas, and illuminating sessions addressing current key HR issues. Collaborate with industry leading HR solution providers and gain on-the-spot and in-depth understanding of the best and latest product offerings in the market. Get ready for the largest reunion for the HR community on 10 May 2022!



For those who love the convenience of being online, experience the Festival virtually. Learn from global HR experts, discover innovative solutions and build virtual connections to your own schedule across the 3 days online.



This exclusive one-day programme is set to engage highlevel HR leaders in coming together from across the region. Stepping beyond the traditional HR functional management, HR leaders are now steering the business through enterprise change, talent development and corporate culture. Join this lively and interactive day of peer-driven topical sessions and interactive discussions, and connect with the region's HR as you tackle shared business challenges and critical priorities facing the industry today.



Experience the biggest showcase of HR solutions and products from global, regional and local solution providers under one virtual roof, for you to leverage and integrate into today's digital and fast-paced workplace. Enrich your learning through the case studies, HR technology application sharing and expo features, so you can discover and connect with the best providers and platforms for your needs.



As we enter a new era where the world of work, especially in the fast-growing region of Southeast Asia, is ever changing and evolving due to the rise of technology and contingency workforce, can HR remain as a function? Or is there a bigger role to play – not just as a function, but to develop people on a greater scale in this region? Join us for this inaugural conference with a core purpose of improving human development at work by connecting ASEAN's national HR Association, thought-leaders and the ASEAN professional community to discuss, debate and establish a balance of economic and human development to the most diverse region in the world.



Discover and experience the innovative HR solutions and upcoming technology in the start-up entrepreneurial hub. Showcasing the newest companies that are changing the way we work and manage HR. Don't miss this highly anticipated hive of future innovation and new technology.



The ASEAN Future of Work Conference is back for its third run! Speakers from regional governments, unions, and the public sector will share insights on how they put people first in their strategies to recover from the pandemic. Speakers will also discuss how different stakeholders can work together to balance varying needs and interests, as we adapt to post-COVID business models and ways of working.



A can't miss for HR leaders in Asia Pacific looking to advance workplace gender equity. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted working women significantly more than men in the workplace. Gain insights on the technologies to drive gender equity in your workplace during this Asia-exclusive and popular half-day conference at HR Tech Festival Online.



The popular HR Fest Awards 2022 return to celebrate the outstanding achievements of the region's top HR leaders, companies and teams from across both private and public sectors. The winners will be announced live and in-person at the award presentation at HR Tech Festival Live on 10 May 2022 at Suntec Singapore.



UNLOCKING UNCOMMON LEADERSHIP

ur increasingly competitive business landscape, characterised by rapid and disruptive changes, rising complexity and uncertainty, more than ever before warrants leaders that are nimble and agile. The digital and tech revolution and a shorter shelf life for knowledge is reshaping employee capability mix with a clear accent on skilling and upskilling for future needs.

A recent McKinsey research suggests that a very significant percentage of market capitalisation in public companies is based on intangible assets-skilled employees, exceptional leaders, and knowledge. It goes on to



add and imply that as organisations are increasingly pivoting to a digital, knowledge-based economy, a diverse and vibrant workforce, more than ever. will make the difference between good organisations, and stellar ones.

So how do we build these exceptional or Uncommon Leaders?

In my book, Coaching the Secret Code to Uncommon Leadership, I define these leaders as those that achieve success by helping others grow, taking people along and helping them become a better version of themselves. I believe coaching is that key or that code that unlocks this Uncommon Leadership.

Let me unpack this thought further

and illustrate why I believe coaching, a series of self-enabling and non-directive conversations, or simply put the act of asking not telling, can be that differentiator between a good leader, and a fantastic one.

Coaching, the secret sauce of leadership

Mahatma Gandhi once famously said, 'A sign of good leaders is not how many followers you have, but how many leaders you create.'

Top executives intuitively understand that they cannot succeed without the right talent and skill sets. In surveys, they consistently rank leadership and talent management at the top of their agenda but express frustration with the return on their

investments in this area. That is because companies rarely manage their talent as rigorously as they manage their balance sheet, in part because people development is hard to quantify. To put sharp edges around what is often considered a soft area, BCG impressed on the significance of nurturing and developing internal talent, among other factors. While there are many aspects that a company can focus on as it tries to improve its internal leadership capabilities, numerous studies have shown how particularly effective individual coaching is in building these capabilities.

Although researchers cannot yet precisely measure coaching results on organisational performance—a ton of studies published in Consulting Psychology Journal suggest a positive trend.

Several high-profile leaders have also equivocally endorsed the part coaching has played in their personal success. These range from Indira Nooyi and Sheryl Sandberg to Eric Schmidt and Sunder Pichai. Some of the most prolific Silicon Valley leaders are telling us that coaching others is perhaps the most important job of a leader today. Leadership gurus and psychologists are proclaiming that you are not leadership material if you are not building others.

Coaching, and the future of work

Even prior to the pandemic that has upended our lives in so many different ways, investing in workplace learning and evaluating its outcomes was becoming a key priority for organisations.

LinkedIn's fourth annual Workplace Learning Report 1 (WLR) found that more than 1 in 3 learning and development (L&D) professionals said they were prioritising the measurement of learning outcomes. This trend is set to continue and in fact gain further momentum given the new skill requirements in the postpandemic world.

74% of business leaders believe that building new softer skills like communication, creative problem solving, and leadership is the most critical part of rebuilding organisations post-pandemic. However, there is no industry standard for measuring learning impact, making it difficult for organisations to quantify the value from their L&D investments.

Highlighting the importance of moving further along the coaching continuum,

WLR wrote, "Integrating coaching into your L&D roadmap first, and then eventually into your overall talent strategy, offers an answer to this problem."

Coaching: An integral element of L&D strategy

According to renowned author and researcher Nick van Dam, the defining attributes of the 21st-century economy and fourth industrial revolution are innovation, technology, globalisation, and a rapid pace of change. Therefore, an organisation's capacity to enhance the capabilities of its workforce and create a culture of continuous learning are vital to remaining competitive. These trends make an effective L&D function more critical than ever. As we look into the future, there is growing acknowledgement that the true impact of L&D does not lie in one-off upskilling sessions - but in a holistic paradigm that ensures alignment with the large people priorities derived from a firm's overarching business priorities.

Based on my research while writing my book, coaching some of the best and brightest across the globe and teaching this topic at several business schools, here is what I have gleaned:

Enabling the 70:20:10 learning framework

Some of the most progressive L&D functions embrace the framework known as "70:20:10," in which 70 percent of learning takes place on the job, 20 percent through interaction and collaboration, and 10 percent through formal-learning interventions such as classroom training and digital curricula. These percentages are general guidelines and vary by industry and organisation. L&D functions have traditionally focused on the formal-learning component. It is time to rethink this model. While formal training, the most popular form of talent development is considered an 'event', coaching is a process, which is valuable to ensure that the new knowledge imparted, actually becomes learned behaviour. Coaching provides not only a context for feedback, but also a process to support changed behaviour.

The L&D leaders of the future should focus on crafting and executing a suite of informal learning initiatives like external coaching, in-house mentoring, leadership shadowing, digital learning and so forth -

"There is growing acknowledgement that the true impact of L&D does not lie in one-off upskilling sessions – but in a holistic paradigm that ensures alignment with the large people priorities derived from a firm's overarching business priorities."

initiatives that support informal learning in addition to the formal training.

Embrace the leader as coach approach

Today there is a fundamental shift in how organisations are transforming themselves in the digital era. The change in business today is often not linear, and requires quick shifts into entirely new models, domains. and ways of working. Coaching supports people in these quick shifts needed to meet these changing business demands. More and more companies are investing in training their leaders as coaches—a skill that many savvy organisations recognise needs to develop in good managers (and even individual contributors) at all levels.

Organisations are increasingly faced with the challenge of building leaders with new capabilities in very short spans of time. And they are looking for real business impact—a successful transformation, speed to market, or just top and bottom-line results. The best leader-coaches are able to do exactly this-not just help their own teams to develop individually but do it in the context of the business and specific outcomes. Imparting coaching skills across the board, and encouraging all managers, regardless of the size of their teams, to coach and enable others is the mantra for many new age organisations.

Instil a coaching culture

Many organisations start coaching training programmes with some fanfare, only to find that they did not meet the desired

outcomes. To do so, organisations must deliberately weave a coaching mindset into the cultural fabric of the organisation, or they cannot hope to transform coaching into an organisational capacity. Such a capacity is possible when coaching comes naturally and instinctively to leaders at all levels, where coaching is the norm or, as they say, 'the way things are done around here'. Organisations like Netflix or Microsoft, promote a continuous culture of learning regardless of an employee's role or level. Leaders at these organisations make people as much a priority as their overall financial goals and prioritise the creation of a learning and growth environment by fostering learning conditions.

Today more than ever, we need leaders who can navigate these choppy waters. and steer the ship with a steady hand. They must find that sweet spot between providing their people the flexibility they desire, and the structure and direction they need while strengthening fading interpersonal connections in our new hybrid reality. Today more than ever we need leaders that coach, enable, and elevate their people.

It is time to embed and align coaching in your L&D strategy, and make it come alive – help your people coach their way to Uncommon Leadership. hrm



An alumna of the University of Chicago Booth School of Business, Ruchira Chaudhary straddles the corporate and academic worlds----she is a leading executive coach, adjunct faculty at several top tier business schools and founder of TrueNorth Consulting, which focuses on organisational strategy solutions. Ruchira is also the author of Coaching the Secret Code to Uncommon Leadership, and you can reach her, and know more about her book here.

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NAVIGATING THE MODERN L&DTECHNOLOGYSTACK

ur research has found that the average company has more than 20 different learning and development (L&D) tools and platforms. The combinations typically range from legacy solutions to new tools for facilitating collaboration and personalisation to all types of content resources. New, urgent pandemicrelated learning needs, coupled with L&D technology innovations, have only increased the complexity of L&D architectures.

Today, corporate training is one of the most creative, innovative technology markets in the world. Forward-thinking companies are always adopting new tools. Consider VR, AR; creator platforms such TikTok and YouTube; cohort collaboration tools like Microsoft Teams and Slack, and video tools like Zoom, Webex, and Google Workspace. Then there are solutions for video content indexing, translation, assessment, and prescriptive learning. Every time a new technology is invented, someone tries to use it for education and training.

Back in the day, LMSs were supposed to fulfill all corporate learning needs. However, most learning management system (LMS) vendors have fallen behind when it comes to keeping up with technology innovations. Saba, Cornerstone, PeopleSoft, Oracle, and SAP have all tried to build or buy all the pieces needed to support modern learning requirements, but the rapidly changing market makes it difficult for any one company to take the lead.

How to assess and modernise your tech ecosystem

You will want to create a learning infrastructure that pulls together the different pieces of your tech ecosystem. Essentially, this will be the backbone of your overall learning strategy.

Part of this process is running through a long list of learning options. How much



self-study, video learning, face-to-face instruction, and other modalities should you plan for? Do you want people to be certified or credentialed for certain areas. and if so, how will you determine the criteria? Do you want people to develop and share content internally? Will you want to include online books and reference materials? How about the use of coaches. mentors, or peers to complement learning? Do you want to build career models and associate learning with associated career paths? Will you build capability academies to focus on strategic functional or business

The decisions you make will impact which vendors, tools, and tech you use. No two infrastructures will be exactly the same, just as no two learning organisations are identical. Some are highly centralised and structured. Some are highly decentralised and run by business unit or functional leaders. And the best will have a blend of both, using what we call a federated structure.

And, of course, each company has its own systems for enterprise resource planning (ERP), human capital

management (HCM), and payroll, The L&D stack has to be compatible with all such systems. One point worth mentioning is all major ERP vendors have learning platforms. None of them is complete, nor will these systems ever be. Therefore, if you do decide to use the learning management system (LMS) or learning experience platform (LXP) provided by your core HR vendor, just remember that it will not be enough. The specialised providers will do more, and you will want to look at them.

When choosing an L&D technology stack, there are essentially five "layers" of tools and platforms to consider.

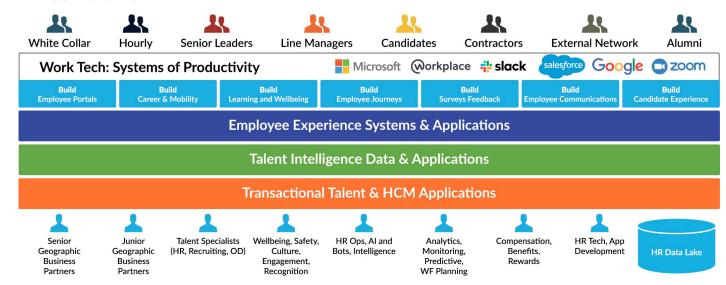
Learning data layer

As you get deeper into skills-centric learning, you are going to want L&D data streams as rich and interactive as the data streams you get from your external website. Why? Because people use many different learning platforms, and each platform collects its own set of data. At some point, you will want to bring this data together—to understand what content is most useful, to see why some programmes fail and others succeed, and to understand what people are looking to learn. Companies spend tens of millions of dollars to build, buy, and curate learning solutions, and without good data, you never know what is working, what is failing, and how to make the experience better. Now we can get such insights with tools such as learning record stores that track and store xAPI statements. We can look at user behaviour in detail and see who is doing what, how well they are learning,

"There has never been a more exciting time for L&D technology... In 2022, corporate learning is all about building systems that bring these approaches together in compelling and productive ways."

JOSH BERSIN, GLOBAL INDUSTRY ANALYST AND CEO OF THE JOSH BERSIN COMPANY.

THE L&D TECH STACK



and the impact of this activity on their engagement, growth, and overall business results.

LMS layer

The back-office systems of learning, LMSs essentially manage the learning process according to established business rules, manage learning programmes and packages, provide e-commerce functionality when needed, and have many features to help you manage all types of content. These systems also include functions for scheduling and resource management.

Programme Layer

This is where you focus on how programmes are structured, what role instructors play, how collaboration takes place, and what types of assignments, practice exercises, labs, or simulations you will need. No one solution does all this well. Many vendors in this layer start their businesses with learning programme systems (offering new ways to deliver training, mix media, or integrate instructors or mentors into the process). Over time, these vendors tend to build more LMS features into their systems, some of which may integrate or conflict with your LMS.

LXP laver

This is where a talent intelligence system (or skills taxonomy) fits in. Employees need a way to find, search, and discover the right learning programmes—that is, the courses,

programmes, and materials they need. Our past approach was to let people browse a course catalogue, but this approach never worked well. Giving employees the ability to search available programmes and resources also is not optimal, as a company could have many courses on the same topic or with similar names. So, we need an intelligence system that arranges, recommends, and organises learning content into paths and curricula. This is typically done in an LXP. You will find many excellent options for this layer.

Access layer

Also known as the presentation layer, this is where employees find and access learning in the flow of work. You can let people log directly into the LXP, or you can arrange the programmes into a portal and create an online university, a functional academy, or even expose the content in your talent marketplace or employee portal. Now that we have learning-in-the-flow-of work tools, programmes and resources can be accessed through Microsoft Teams, Slack, Salesforce, or just about any other system your employees use.

Conclusion

The first step in creating a learning technology infrastructure is to evaluate the current technology you already have. You will want to do a thorough audit to determine what products are really serving a significant purpose and working well. Additionally, make sure that you are using all of the available functionality the

solution has to offer. When adding new technologies to your current stack, you will also want to ensure they integrate with other systems in use. For instance, if your company has made a significant investment in Microsoft technology, you should consider adding products that work well with other Microsoft offerings.

There has never been a more exciting time for L&D technology. And while we want dynamic and compelling digital experiences for employees, we also want to facilitate access to experts, projects, developmental assignments, and support tools to help employees continuously develop and grow. In 2022, corporate learning is all about

building systems that bring these approaches together in compelling and productive ways. hrm **About the Author**

> **JOSH BERSIN** is a Global Industry Analyst and CEO of the Josh Bersin Company. He will be speaking at HR Tech Festival Asia 2022, which is taking place from 10-13 May 2022. Click here for more insights into learning technologies and platforms in 2022.



PEOPLE-CENTRIC APPROACH **FOTRAINING PROPELLING FAIRPRICE GROUP'S GROWTH**

s iob roles and functions continue to evolve because of technology and the disruptions caused by the pandemic, organisations are increasingly looking to deliver new business models by reskilling and upskilling their workforce.

Where Singapore's FairPrice Group is concerned, the priority is to invest in employees, and help them to reach their full potential through various learning approaches. Irene Tay (IHRP-SP), HRPB Lead, Fairprice Group, Food Services, tells HRM Magazine Asia, "Our employees are actively encouraged and nudged regularly to attend trainings to acquire and refresh their skills and knowledge. They are sent for a variety of training programmes under the Skills Framework and given options to apply for courses that are relevant to their professional development."

Developed by SkillsFuture Singapore (SSG), the Skills Framework aims to create a common skills language for individuals,



employers, and training providers, as well as facilitate skills recognition and support the design of training programmes for skills and career development in Singapore.

To allow employees to learn in their environment of choice, FairPrice Group's training programmes are delivered via various platforms and formats, including classroom, virtual, hybrid, peer-to-peer, and microlearning.

Tay elaborates, "With NTUC LearningHub as our strategic partner, we develop and curate programmes to strengthen employees' skills and increase their readiness for future roles and challenges. We have not wasted the pandemic but made use of the crisis to enlarge learning options, reinvigorate training programmes and enabled employees to adapt and adopt to new ways of working and learning."

While digital skills remain critical for FairPrice Group as they continue their organisational transformation journey, 'core skills' such as adaptability, learning agility,

"We have not wasted the pandemic but made use of the crisis to enlarge learning options, reinvigorate training programmes and enabled employees to adapt and adopt to new ways of working and learning."

IRENE TAY (IHRP-SP), HRPB LEAD, FAIRPRICE GROUP, FOOD SERVICES.

customer orientation, problem solving, communication and collaboration are increasingly gaining importance, says Tay.

"Most of our front-facing roles have adopted technology in their daily work. Although there are some who have yet to embark on this adoption, we expect them to learn as we bring in new solutions," she explained. "As change is constant and customer-centric, employees need to be customer-oriented and able to solve problems empathetically in a collaborative manner. The change in mindset in learning agility, adapting to changes, and communicating well are weaved in through roadshows, townhalls, and training sessions."

Creating a people strategy that attracts and retain the best talent

Besides offering a fair renumeration package, many organisations today are focusing on building a strong Employee Value Proposition (EVP). A well-articulated EVP, combined with a great employee experience, will allow employers to market their brand and entice those who subscribe to the same values to join the organisation, says Tay.

She adds, "It is critical to create and grow the brand value to attract talents to join your organisation. At FairPrice Group, we are fair and consistent in our decision making on pay and rewards for employees and we are focused on the people pillars of greater care, convenience, and career, Technology and automation have become the common business solutions and these need people to drive them - people are the key factor in delivering business results."

FairPrice Group is also driving the employee experience with care, bringing convenience and career opportunities to their employees.

Through the MyHR app, employees can track their career milestones, handle requests, and self-automate benefits administration at their own convenience. With this peace of mind, employees are then equipped with the relevant skills that will help create greater job satisfaction and career longevity within the organisation, while internal career mobility is an important factor for talent attraction and retention, Tay reveals.

She continues, "Discussion on skills development forms a part of the performance management review process to engage our employees through a self-led career planning. Across the organisation, the visibility in career opportunities, transparency of skills for the jobs and selection process makes internal mobility accessible and convenient for our employees. This provides a win-win outcome that not only satisfies employee needs at different life stages but also strengthen the organisation position on talent retention."

With organisational transformation a priority for many businesses in 2022, the challenges ahead will largely revolve around building people capabilities and deepening their core skills to stay relevant, Tay predicted.

As for the food services industry, she highlights, "Having the passion to serve, and the appetite to learn, are keys to doing well in food services, and we also need to prepare and be ready for the sectoral Progressive Wage Model implementation in Singapore." Click here to assess the IHRP Playbook for Food Services, which is specially designed to help Singapore businesses in the food and beverage (F&B) sector address their business and HR challenges with a curated set of practical HR resources, tools, and templates. In addition to strategies and solutions. hrm

About the Company



FAIRPRICE GROUP was established in 2019 through the formation of four entities comprising NTUC FairPrice, NTUC Foodfare, Kopitiam, and NTUC Link, with the purpose of making life better for all in Singapore and to fulfil a vision of being a leader in everything food.

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ith skilled employees forming the foundation of a skilled workforce, the challenge is for companies to find the right employees when faced with a shortage of skilled workers.

Describing this as a "growing concern" for companies in Singapore during the pandemic, Pauline Loo, Senior Vice-President, Human Resources, Nippon Sanso Holdings Corporation, says, "Although the 'new normal' did open up new opportunities for companies to tap into the contingent workforce, companies in Singapore must learn to embrace and adopt strategic workforce planning to plan for the skills and workforce of the future."

Speaking with HRM Magazine Asia, Loo highlights the importance of strategic workforce planning as a business planning process that aligns business strategy with the human resource strategy. Most companies in Singapore, she observes, have been on the journey of business excellence for the last three decades.

Loo continues, "Through Singapore's Business Excellence Framework, under Category Two - Strategy and Planning process - companies learned how to align human resource strategy with the business strategy and corporate planning process."

"The pandemic has in fact accelerated the need for companies, big or small, to 'learn-unlearn-relearn' the strategic workforce planning concepts, in order to anticipate skill gaps and be able to recruit the right employees to close the gaps."

With strategic workforce planning in place, companies will be able to hire the right people with the right skills, at the right place and the right time, and at the right cost, to create more successful business results and a higher return on investment.

Successful implementation of strategic workforce planning, Loo elaborates, will help companies in Singapore realise benefits such as identifying the current workforce's competency gaps, and determining what skills companies need to build and develop the workforce of the future to realise their mid-term to longterm business goals.

Through strategic workforce planning, key performance indicators are also established for monitoring business results and conducting necessary business reviews.

"In this current VUCA business climate, the creation of strategic workplans, which not only look at short-term current business needs but also mid-to-long term future business requirements, will enable companies in Singapore to emerge stronger from this pandemic, and to avoid unexpected and potential challenges down the line," Loo adds.

Creating organisational alignment within Nippon Sanso

Representing the Nippon Sanso Holdings Group in South-East Asia, Nippon Sanso Holdings Singapore is constantly looking to promote HR development initiatives among its operating companies.

Guided by the shared philosophy of

Vision, Mission, Values, and Motto (VMVA). Nippon Sanso Holdings Singapore believes in setting a holistic approach to ensure organisational alignment on a continuous basis.

This is achieved through an amalgamation of HR measures, in terms of promoting leadership and talent development, enhancing employee engagement, as well as strengthening regional networking and collaboration, Loo reveals.

She adds. "We continue to leverage our strong foundation based on our shared values, ACTIVE, (Accountability, Creativity, Teamwork, Integrity, Vibrant, Excellence) to conduct business in the region in a professional manner by upholding a higher level of integrity."

"As we catapult our business growth regionally, we remain grounded to our shared values, and our HR strategy continues to focus on the building of a rich talent pool of gas professionals across the region."

"In essence, we aim to ensure the availability of gas professionals who are well-developed in their competencies, and who are highly engaged employees with global perspectives. We strive to ensure that we hire the right talents who share the same values as the organisation, develop our employees with the right competencies, ensure employee well-being, and enhance employee experience."

Describing South-East Asia as providing many business opportunities and talent challenges, Loo identifies the cultural and economic diversity as the biggest challenge of operating in the region. To succeed in multiple markets, Nippon Sanso has had to adopt different strategies to achieve business success, with the constant quest for talent and leadership underpinning the formulation and execution of these business strategies.

Loo says, "We recognise human resources issues as being as critical as business sustainability, competitiveness, and performance. On this note, it is timely for us to turn our focus to the talent landscape in the region to secure and develop excellent human resources in such high growth and competitive markets."

"In terms of talent management, we experience significant challenges with talent scarcity and especially with talent retention. In addition, the leadership

pipeline appears to be weak, due to the difficulty to retain talents with leadership potential."

The next phase of Nippon Sanso's HR strategy thus, is to foster and develop next-generation managers who will be responsible for business growth in each company in years to come, a talent approach that will be "indispensable" for the future expansion of business in Asia. says Loo.

"We will further enhance and promote human resource development and support for all employees, especially the nextgeneration managers from the region, continuously and in a timely manner," she adds.

Transforming work in Singapore as part of IHRP

Away from her duties at Nippon Sanso, Loo has been an Institute for Human Resource Professionals Senior Professional (IHRP-SP) since 2019 and was part of the IHRP COVID-19 taskforce in 2020.

Under the taskforce sub-team know as Advance Team, Loo helped to develop 13 toolkits under three broad pillars of People Strategy, Business Strategy, and Business Processes Strategy, helping HR and businesses in Singapore navigate the pandemic and emerge stronger.

She shares, "During the process of toolkits development, I started developing a sense of belonging to IHRP through this culture of giving back to the wider HR community. This is a two-way ongoing learning journey which opens a lot of opportunities for me to try out new things outside of work and at work."

Bringing what she learnt back to Nippon Sanso, Loo has been organising "IF WORK TRANSFORMATION WERE TO TAKE PLACE SUCCESSFULLY, HR TEAMS NEED TO STEP **UP AND BE READY TO MAKE WORK** TRANSFORMAT

PAULINE LOO, SENIOR VICE-PRESIDENT, **HUMAN RESOURCES, NIPPON SANSO** HOLDINGS CORPORATION (IHRP-SP).

region-wide monthly webinar series based on the 13 toolkits since August 2020. In April 2021, she started a new leadership development programme known as C-Suite LED Talk, which invited C-suite leaders in the company to share their business perspectives and present their thought leadership ideas on the topics under the 13 toolkits.

In 2021, Loo continued to serve at the IHRO COVID-19 CoP 2.0 and was part of the Work Transformation Playbook subteam. Launched in late 2021, the IHRP Work Transformation Playbook serves as a guide to SMEs and HR practitioners involved in developing and implementing transformation-related plans for their organisations.

Specifically, the Work Transformation Playbook provides guidance on the steps to evaluate the impact on business

strategy, workflow on jobs, and workforce capabilities.

Loo reflects, "Although much time was spent after office hours and on weekends to do research and develop the content for the playbook, this journey definitely made me a proud member of IHRP COVID-19 CoP 2.0. Now, I am in the midst of customising the content of the playbook to my company's context to launch new webinar series in the new financial year."

Workplace trends in 2022

With 2022 likely to represent another year of organisational transformation, many challenges and opportunities await businesses and HR leaders.

Loo predicts three main workplace trends to emerge, beginning with the acceleration of digital transformation as workplace culture continues to be reshaped. "Companies that have embarked on the digital transformation journey and transformed successfully are those which focused on reshaping their workplace culture," she points out. "As more companies reach a certain level of maturity in their digital transformation journey, they will need to rely on their skilled workforce to make the culture adjustment and do business the new way."

The future of the workforce will also involve rebuilding the right talent pool of employees with the right skills. In Singapore for example, companies need to continue the rebuilding of the right talent pool of employees with the right skills as the impact of the Great Resignation begin to be felt.

"Strategic workforce planning requires the alignment of human resource strategy to the business strategy to understand what kind of talent is needed to support the organisational-wide digital transformation journey," says Loo.

She also sees the future of HR as involving the reskilling and upskilling of HR professionals to lead work transformation. "If work transformation were to take place successfully, HR teams need to step up and be ready to make work transformation happen. Organisational and workforce planning is increasingly more important, but HR teams may lack the competencies or resources required to succeed as trusted partners to the business units. HR teams must not forget about upskilling themselves to keep up with new emerging skills and capabilities," Loo concludes. hrm



An agile mindset will underpin the transition to flexible working



It is perhaps the dream of every employee to be able to earn more by working less. For employees in the UK, the dream may soon be a reality, with companies currently trialing a four-day work week based on the 100-80-100 model.

Employees will continue to receive 100% of their salary while working 80% of what they previously used to, the caveat being having to "demonstrate a commitment to maintain 100% productivity."

Other countries have gone a step further, with Belgium lawmakers approving a reform package that will allow employees to choose to work for only four days per week. In Asia, Panasonic has joined a small, but growing, number of Japanese companies to offer employees a four-day work week to encourage better work-life balance.

Welcome to the world of flexible work. While it is perhaps a stretch to suggest that a 4-day work week completely equates to employees earning more by working less, it reflects how organisations are increasingly seeking flexible ways of working that prioritise the well-being of employees.

However, merely giving employees the choice of where they are working, when they are working, and how long they work is arguably insufficient to build

and sustain long-term organisational success.

Instead, HR leaders need to cultivate an agile mindset across their organisation that will enable business to be efficient and adaptable to change.

Work models that have worked well for many years may need to be reviewed in the light of the pandemic; clearly, the traditional 9-to-5 work concept is gradually being replaced by activity-based working in a flexible setting.

Organisations must actively support and encourage a dynamic work environment that empowers employees to efficiently produce their best work. Agile working also places the focus on outputs and results as a measurement of success, as opposed to attendance, time, or managers having face-to-face interaction with employees.

Managers thus, have a key role to play in creating organisational

agility. They should be trained on how to manage people more effectively in this new world of work, and should encourage open communication and employee feedback, state clear goals and objectives, and be able to reward and recognise hard work.

To make life easier for managers, organisations can re-evaluate their talent acquisition strategies to ensure that they are hiring people with the right fit. While it is inevitable that educational credentials will continue to play a role in selecting candidates, hiring managers should focus on certain personality traits and behaviours that are often developed through experience instead of education.

During the interview process, ask the right questions that are pertinent in today's work environment. Instead of the trite "Why

> did you apply for this job" question, hiring managers can ask about a candidate's attitude towards change and how they overcame adversities and challenges in their previous jobs.

With the world of work continuing to be in a constant flux of change

Kexible as organisations adapt to the pandemic, candidates who are able to constantly re-evaluate the way they do things in a bid to improve will be invaluable and highly sought after; hiring managers need to be able to identify these candidates. As you would have already read in this issue, learning and

development (L&D) can also play a key role in attracting and retaining the best talent. Employees today are looking beyond the mere lure of renumeration when it comes to choosing their employers.

Providing opportunities for employees to learn and develop new skills and capabilities, and communicating to them of the opportunities for growth and development, can be powerful tools in the hiring process.

Once these candidates are successfully converted into employees, the onus then, is on both the employee and employer to collectively cultivate an agile mindset that will increase productivity and allow the organisation to be ready to quickly and flexibly adapt to the next change that will impact the workplace. hrm



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