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Human Resource is the most important resource that a Company and a Nation utilizes for productivity. This is because it is the only live and creative resource which combines every other resources in processing products and services. In an increasingly globalized world, it is not machinery or methods that can give the edge over a competitor because there can be no secret in these aspects. However Human Resources are unique. Each is different from the other and there can be no duplication. Therefore overall productivity depends totally only on this resource.

Sharing his thoughts and opinions in this regard, was Mr. Sudath Berugoda Arachchi, Head of Human Resources, Abans Environmental Services (Pvt) Ltd and AB Securitas (Pvt.) Ltd. Mr Berugoda Arachchi himself was not a committed academic during his university days at Colombo University. He was more artistically inclined towards his talents as a musician and artist. Having a strong social conscience he engaged full-time in serving the university community through his talents and was ultimately awarded "The Most Outstanding Student of the University" at the Sathsineru Sinama Festival -1997 for his contribution towards the well being of the student community. Having engaged in social work, giving leadership to community development activities through which he discovered his ability to motivate and drive people towards achieving objectives, changed his career aim. Having completed his university degree in Arts, he joined an advertising agency as a Trainee Creative Director but was assigned to handle personnel functions and thereby further discovered his talents in the Human Resource Management field. He recognized the need to have a structured qualification in this regard, when he decided to follow the HR path.

Have Human Resources in Sri Lanka been processed to a professional level?

It is difficult to generalize the answer because there are some very successful isolated cases where HR is being processed to such a level. But this too is more in a Corporate and multinational

structure rather than at a National level. This is because at the National Level we still have other priorities and are therefore not concentrating on the improvement of HR. But all this should begin from an early stage, beginning with our basic education.

How should our education system change?

Frankly speaking I am not an expert to give a national guideline regarding this matter but I have some personal opinions.

Why is the school time limited to 6 hours? This is to give ample time for students to engage in extra curricula activities. But as of late tuition classes after school has become the norm and as such this purpose is lost. Don't get me wrong - I am not against tuition. Students who are weak in a subject area need help. However if the majority, if not all, the students from a very young age seem to need the aid of tuition (which is again what they learn at school) then there seems to be a major problem in the purpose of attending classes at school. Children these days have no time to engage in normal childhood activities. They sometimes get back home later than their parents- who have been working.

Another thing is that there is no mechanism to identify students' talents and expose them to a prospective career path through education. Is our education system addressing career requirements is a question we must ask ourselves.

Must this career oriented direction be nurtured from school days?

Everyone should have a vision in life. If you ask a small child what they want to be when they grow up, the answers are fantastic. But few years down the line you ask the same child the same question and the answer will probably be "I don't know" or a quiet smile. This is because the options available are highly academic in nature and having gone through the system, and come out into the professional world, the child realizes that the knowledge they possess is inadequate or not career oriented.

In foreign countries, students who are in school engage in part time jobs. This is not simply to earn money. But the exposure they



Mr. Sudath Berugoda Arachchi, Head of Human Resources, Abans Environmental Services (Pvt) Ltd and AB Securitas (Pvt.) Ltd.

receive into the corporate world - in whatever level - enables them to better cope when they leave school. If the school hours are utilised to a maximum and students gain a comprehensive education from it, then they will have more time to engage in other activities, including a foray into the professional world and thus emerge as well balanced individuals who can understand and identify their talents and strengths by the time they leave school.

Another important aspect is English Education. In the globalized environment in which we live it is impossible to move ahead without knowledge of English. I was very happy to see the TV advertisements promoting speaking English our way. This is what India did a long time ago.

Even after completing their schooling career students find it very difficult to enter Universities. This also causes many problems. Is there a formal system to provide redress?

In Sri Lanka University admission falls into two categories- State and Private Universities. There is no difficulty in pursuing higher studies at private universities or institutions affiliated to foreign universities, as long as it

is affordable. In fact private education has become a lucrative business opportunity. But the majority cannot afford such an education.

What more is needed?

Like I said earlier, all these opportunities are pointless if students haven't recognised the path they need to take based on their talents. This is further emphasized when we look at the plight of Graduates itself.

Unemployed Graduates have taken to protest campaigns in order to assert their rights. What is the reason for this?

Our study programmes in Universities are very academic oriented. How many Degree Programmes are being provided at our National Universities? Is there any guarantee of a profession at the end of it? Only the MBBS can guarantee a profession in the medical field. Even the LLB requires further studies at Law College in order to practice. But if only the Degrees were structured to suit professions and a career path then our graduates would not have such a problem.

Job Productivity depends on the person who does the job. The main purpose of HR Management is to select the right person for the right job. So there is a heavy competition especially in this part of the world where the labour supply is greater than the demand. That is why there are so many tests,

competitive exams, and sophisticated analytical systems employed by Company's in recruiting employees.

In such an environment an academic course is not going to get you anywhere, unless backed by professional knowledge.

The Jayawardenapura University started an Accountancy Degree in line with the Chartered Accountancy programme some-times back. They delivered lectures in the evening thus enabling undergraduates to work during the day time. Some other universities simultaneously followed this system. This is a move in the right direction. The availability of part time study options so as to enable students to work and gain work experience from a young age is also a move that must be thought about. The furthering of English knowledge is also an important factor in higher education.

Do music and sports have a powerful influence on a person's development?

For any type of development, mental health is very important. In this regard it is the ability to strike a balance between extremes that matter. Music, sports, other extra curricular activities enable the relieving of stress and also gives you physical fitness and nurtures team work. So all this are vital components in the development of a young person's life.



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We are seeking an intelligent and enthusiastic Business Development Manger to identify, develop, promote and facilitate trade & investment opportunities for Australian companies in Sri Lanka.

The successful candidate is expected to have:

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 - *: Well developed communication (including highly developed written and business report writing skills), interpersonal negotiation and networking skills together with the ability to represent Australia and Austrade.
 - *: Excellent relationship management skills and demonstrated experience in managing relationships at all levels of government.
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Only short-listed candidates will be notified.

Opportunities for Factory Quality Assurance Manager

Who are we?

Ceylon Tobacco Company PLC is a member of British American Tobacco, the world's most international tobacco group. CTC is one of the leading consumer goods companies in Sri Lanka. Our people, culture and systems enable us to embrace challenges and a passion for excellence continues to drive us to greater heights. We regularly move our talented people across the group and currently several managers are working in key senior positions across the globe.

Who are we looking for?

A dynamic & a self motivated, dedicated individual. The selected individual will be responsible for managing the factory Quality Assurance processes, Product integrity and traceability compliance & driving Product Quality related Continuous Improvement projects. The ideal candidate will report to the Product Assurance Manager.

You should be:-

- 35 years or below
- Possessing a minimum of 2 - 3 years experience in a similar capacity
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By Post:

Supply Chain HR Manager
Ceylon Tobacco Company PLC, PQ 29,
178 Srimath Ramanathan Mawatha,
Colombo 15.

Please indicate the post on the top left - hand corner of the envelope.

