



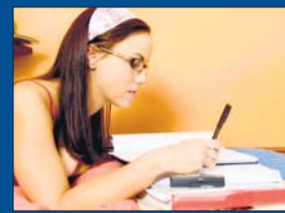
Employee Engagement and their needs

Pg 3



How to make values live in your organization

Pg 6



Aggression at work

Pg 2

Human Resources Manager plays a vital role

C.W. Weeraratna is an honours science graduate from the University of Peradeniya. He has been the Head of Human Resources in a number of blue-chip companies, multinational and international companies and banks for more than 35 years. He has attended advanced post-graduate training programme in Industrial Management in Germany, Australia, Malaysia and Singapore. Weeraratna is currently the General Manager of Human Resources & Administration at Lankem Ceylon PLC.



C.W. Weeraratna - General Manager of Human Resources & Administration - Lankem Ceylon PLC.

Lankem Ceylon PLC is a Sri Lankan owned conglomerate with an annual turnover exceeding SL Rs.11 Billion during the last financial year. Lankem's core business is manufacturing and trading of chemicals. The company operates in agrochemicals, industrial chemicals, bituminous products, consumer products, pest control and agro production. Lankem is the undisputed market leader in the agrochemicals business. The company owns the flagship paint brand Robbialac. Lankem is the island-wide bituminous distributor for the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation. Additionally Lankem is the distributor of the entire range of products of Paras Pharmaceuticals in Sri Lanka. The company has also diversified into tea and rubber plantations and is one of the largest producers of tea in Sri Lanka. Lankem has also diversified into the leisure sector in which the company owns and manages a number of exclusive hotels.

Q) What is the role of a Human Resources Manager and what influence does he/she have on the employees in a work place?

A) The main task of a Human Resources Manager is to recruit the correct people, motivate and retain them in the organization. The recruitment process is of utmost importance for the reason that if this process is not conducted properly then one could run the risk of hiring the wrong people. Every person joining an organization has a "psychological contract" in their mind at the time of joining an organization. Apart from the salary and other basic conditions of employment that are discussed and agreed upon at an interview, the employee has many other expectations in his mind.

For instance a good working environment, a boss who would train and guide the employee to settle down in his job, a friendly and supportive peer group, a properly structured induction program to make him understand the company culture, rules and

regulations and his career path in the organization. These are areas the Human Resources Manager should look into for the new employee to comfortably settle down in his job and to feel that he has joined an organization which he can be committed and loyal to.

In addition, every employee expects recognition for the contribution that he or she makes to an organization. He solicits from his superior officer for praise for his good performance in the presence of his peers, wants mistakes pointed out by his superior officer privately and not in the presence of others, adequate support to balance his work and personal commitments, provide opportunities for career advancement, to feel free to express his opinion and views on the progress of the organization. If these expectations are fulfilled they are likely to remain with the organization for many years to come. This is where the Human Resources Manager plays a vital role.

What should be further noted is that the employer too has a "Psychological Contract" in mind at the time of employing a person. The employer expects the new recruit to be committed to his job, loyal to the organization, adhere to the company rules and regulations, get on well with his superior officers, peer group and subordinates and contribute to the development of the organization.

Q) Most students do not have the opportunity to enter university after completing their school career. How

can young people get a good education which could potentially lead to better job opportunities?

A) Children by the time they complete their G.C.E. (O/L) have received their basic education. Based on the G.C.E. (O/L) results one could safely come to a conclusion whether a student has a chance to enter a university. At this point one can also see the aptitude and talent of a student to continue with his higher studies and enter a university. Those who have a clear ambition to continue with higher studies and has selected a career path I believe should continue with their G.C.E. (A/L)'s and face the high competition at the university entrance level and enter the university.

In the case of other students who have just got through their G.C.E. (O/L) and have no clear vision to continue with their studies should be encouraged to join a technical and pursue vocational training in various fields which are in demand in the job market such as motor mechanism, air-conditioning, welding, computer hardware, hotel management, maintenance of electrical equipments, house wiring etc. This could be a far better option than to waste time in the Advanced Level class merely to continue pursuing their school career for the sake of doing so and end up as a school leaver who finds extreme difficulty in finding a job without any recognized qualification or some vocational training to meet

the job market demand.

Out of the number of students who entered university in 2009, only 6% got admitted to the engineering faculty, 18% gained admittance to the science faculty and only 5% got entrance to the medical faculty. Therefore it is clear that the conventional process of education from G.C.E. (O/L) to G.C.E. (A/L) and then to a local university might not necessarily be an easy task or the best option for a student who has no aptitude, talent and ambition to become a professionally qualified graduate. Today the country needs skilled people in the disciplines I mentioned before to meet the demand in the job market.

Contd. on Page 2

Management Trainees

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