

A GUIDE TO THE BEST HR PRACTICES

When it comes to establishing HR policies for your organisation, a lot of it depends on the organisational culture and the people working there. However, there are some universal HR practices that lead to good results (increased business performance) every time, regardless of industry type or company strategies. In most cases, the best HR policies are an amalgam of these universal practices and customised approaches for your specific organisation. In this article we'll discuss some of these practices to help you achieve your organisational goals.

JOB SECURITY

Constantly feeling like your job isn't secure can be scary, so one of the best HR practices is to have solid plans for your employees whether its part-time or full time, so that there's a clear idea of what employees are expected to do, the terms of employment, how much they'll earn, etc. Having a reputation for dismissals hurts employer brand reputation, and can soon lead to high turnovers, which is a huge loss incurred on all the investments made on employee boarding and training. Furthermore, these people are more likely to work for rival companies.

ESTABLISHING EXPECTATIONS

For getting the best performance out of employees, it's very important to have a clear goal-setting process, where both parties have a clear idea about an employee's duties and responsibilities, metrics and KPIs. It's not uncommon for HR and management to be totally out of touch with employee experiences and perceptions. Likewise, employees often don't have a clear idea of their roles, performance expectations, etc. which leads to subpar performance.

CROSS FUNCTIONAL TEAMS

Teamwork is crucial in achieving goals, especially in a corporate setting, where a lot of work is team-oriented. Teams are great for generating



great, unique ideas because it has a diverse set of people working for a common goal. Creating such diverse and high performing teams is one of HR's main responsibilities. Understanding individual employee's strengths and crafting cross functional teams, and encouraging teams to work together is very important for an efficient and effective organisation.

According to Rawnak Zaheen Wasi, HR Global Graduate at BAT Bangladesh, "To achieve optimal performance in a high performing organisation, it is of vital importance that all team members are perfectly aware of and are communicated a series of specific, measurable and achievable objectives within

a stipulated time period; the more aligned a team is, the more collaborative and successful it is likely to be."

FREQUENT FEEDBACKS

When it comes to annual or biannual performance reviews, an entire year's worth of feedback is often packed into an hour, so naturally they lack optimum depth and clarity. Both organisations and employees are better served when there is a frequent feedback mechanism. Employees can make quicker changes to their work, and have a better idea of what they can improve. Managers themselves are more involved, and this gives them a better understanding of employee skills and

progress. Similarly, appreciative feedback to the good work of employees greatly increases their work satisfaction and also makes them more engaged, motivated and confident in their abilities. A 360-degree feedback system, which encompasses feedback from supervisors, peers and subordinates, is a great tool for understanding and evaluating overall performance, and can be easily adopted as well.

PROPER TRAINING

While all managers agree that training is important and necessary, in many cases the training doesn't yield proper results. So it's very important to run a proper needs assessment to make sure that training is suitable to the

employee needs and task specifications. Training should be collaborative, interactive and mentorship style, to better aid in learning and retention. The work environment should be encouraging to ensure that employees actually get to use the skills they've developed while training.

DEVELOPMENT AND CAREER PROGRESSION

Developing employees for future roles is beneficial for both organisation and employees. It makes sure that future management roles are filled with trusted long-term employees who are more familiar with the organisation. Outlining clear development and career plans for employees makes them feel valued and empowered, which leads to them being more eager to contribute to the success of the company.

PERFORMANCE-BASED COMPENSATION

Having fair compensation schemes in terms of market rates is important for attracting and recruiting top talent, and reducing turnover. Performance based reward systems are also a great way to incentivise employees and reward the ones who go the extra mile. By linking higher business outcomes with individual rewards, an employee is incentivised to strive for better performance and business outcomes. According to Sharier Mahumud Tushar, HR Lead for Nielsen Bangladesh "It establishes meritocracy; in the global competitive corporate world, merit-based pay is the life-blood for any organisation to attract and retain the best talents from the market."

TASHFIA MAMUN

Tashfia Mamun is a final year business student at IBA, DU and an avid dog lover. Reach her at tashfia.mamun@gmail.com

Utilising the best online courses available: Part 1

Best online courses offered by top-tier institutions

Thanks to the internet, self-learning and training has been made easier in the last few years for a wide group of people. Today, there are online courses for almost anything and everything that you want to learn. The courses from ivy-league schools and other reputed institutions like MIT, Stanford, etc. have been made available online for people like us sitting a thousand miles away. There are intensive courses on computer science, engineering, programming languages, machine learning, digital marketing and any sort of technological skill development needed for the vastly changing demands in the job market.

According to Raghieb Noor, a third-year undergraduate student of Dhaka University, online courses offer you an amazing experience through which you get to explore different regions of interests you never knew you had the chance to. He said, "It's a very humbling experience as a whole." Self-learning through these courses can help fulfil the predominant gap of skill mismatch. In this article, we will introduce you to a few courses from the ivy-league schools and other reputed institutions that are available online.

STANFORD ENGINEERING EVERYWHERE

SEE offers software and other courses that are free to both students and teachers/instructors. The materials include course syllabi,

lecture videos, assignments and even online exams.

MIT OPEN COURSEWARE

MIT Open Courseware, also known as the OCW, initiated the Open Education Consortium. This project was launched back in 2002, and offers the full content of about 50 real MIT courses online. Later, it included most of the MIT course curriculum absolutely free of cost, along with hundreds of other higher education institutions with their own OCW materials.

MIT VIDEO

This is another MIT online learning project that offers over 12000 talks/lecture videos for free. This project has 100 channels in total, which include theoretical as well as practical courses on architecture and planning, biological engineering, robotics and many more.

STANFORD ONLINE

This is a compilation of free courses available for anyone, anywhere, anytime. These courses address topics of engineering, software and various aspects of skill development including language, writing, etc.

However, making the proper use of these courses to ensure effective learning is another business. From this vast range of courses, finding your

strengths and actual interests is the key to ensure effective learning. Raghieb Noor said, "My opinion is that not everyone is built for everything. Just find something you like, and try out the free introductory courses related to it. Then just build on it gradually." Procrastination will be a huge obstacle in your path towards effective learning. Consistency should not be a problem once you find something that you are truly interested in, and it will take you way ahead.

NAHALY NAFISA KHAN

Nahaly Nafisa Khan is an Economics major currently studying in Dhaka University. She procrastinates a lot, yet is obsessed with meeting deadlines. You can reach her at nahalnafisa@gmail.com.



Making a DIFFERENCE

Bangladesh is rapidly moving towards middle income status by 2021. Our businesses definitely offer immense opportunities for the growing economy and this diversity needs a stage for the stories untold. See Bangladesh make its mark on the global map as Making a Difference brings you our proudest success stories from across the country.

The weal and woe of multitasking

Multitasking seems to be an inescapable route in the age of the internet, all-nighters and endless procrastination sessions. Like everything else, this doesn't come without pros and cons. You might want to recall some of these pointers the next time you choose to keep 14 tabs open at once.

If you can effectively manage time, understand your priorities right while making tradeoffs, compartmentalise your brain while working on something with pristine focus, you may be a good fit for multitasking. Make sure you are on the right track every time you're working on multiple things at once. This will help avoid boredom issuing from one single work, and of course will help you optimise the time needed to get done with all tasks at hand.

In talking about the pitfalls of multitasking, one very likely scenario is if you try to focus on totally unrelated things at the same time. For example, you may want to keep tasks you need to use the laptop for separate from the tasks you're supposed to be



doing practically or physically. For example, answering voice mails while trying to solve a math problem will be very counterproductive. Additionally, the stress from one work may unnecessarily mess up some other very easy task you were doing at the same time, thus jeopardising both.

So while on one hand multitasking helps you get the work done in the least possible time while trying to meet multiple

deadlines, it also adds unnecessary stress to your life, something that could easily be avoided had you not procrastinated till the very last moment. It is up to you to find the balance that works for you and get on board!

ESHANEE SADHUKHAN

Eshanee is currently completing her BBA from IBA, DU. Reach her at eshanee333@gmail.com.



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DO YOU HAVE A BUSINESS IDEA?

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4 DAY-LONG YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP BOOTCAMP IN SREEMANGAL	5 IDEAS WILL EACH RECEIVE A STARTUP FUNDING OF BDT 800,000	COWORKING SPACE FOR ONE YEAR	TOP 2 IDEAS WILL EACH RECEIVE A SCALE-UP FUNDING OF BDT 1,500,000
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