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The Changing Role of Human Resources in the Asia Pacific Region

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Book Summary

The premise of this promising book rests on the principle of laws of attraction which asserts that *'thoughts become things'*. In this world of business uncertainties and corporate fragilities, acknowledging good human resource policies and practices can certainly influence economic, societal as well as environmental aspects of an organisation. It may trigger collective thinking of the HR/business community, economies and societies at large for transmutation to take place, for common good.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Abstract: With globalisation and evolving focus of the businesses and organisations on the Asia-Pacific region, the HR profession and practices in this part of the world has been undergoing a massive change. Today, the profession is perceived by its stakeholders as not merely administrative but also strategic. But are the HR challenges and practices industry-specific? Given each industry has its own complexities, is it not a necessity to assess and analyse industry specific HR challenges and best practices? Can then HR be responsible for the rise of industries? With such rapid changes going on in the workplace, is it not a prerequisite for HR professionals to develop competencies and enhance knowledge to raise the bar to the next level and be game changers to impact their respective industries? This chapter provides all of the basic information that the reader will need to understand the book. Such things as the background and rationale of the book; its significance; how it relates to the readers and other related stakeholders; what kind of general principles and methodologies has been used to research the topic and evaluate the hypothesis and finally, the overview to benefits that readers and stakeholders may draw from the book.

Chapter structure

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Why focus on the greater Asia Pacific region?
- 1.3 Six focus industries and changing role of human resources
- 1.4 Research and Methods
- 1.5 Structure of the Book
- 1.6 Conclusion

Chapter 2: Six major industries across the APAC: An overview

Chapter structure

- 2.1 Introduction to the chapter
- 2.2 Tourism and hospitality industry
 - 2.3 Retail industry
 - 2.4 Health care industry
 - 2.5 Education industry
 - 2.6 Security industry
 - 2.7 Energy industry
 - 2.8 Conclusion

Abstract: This chapter provides in-depth analysis of the six focus industries- Tourism and hospitality, Retail, Healthcare, Education, Security and Energy (including Oil and gas and renewable energy) operating across the greater Asia Pacific region. The business dynamisms, complexities of each particular industry, competitive advantages and its significance on the economies and rest of the world (ROW) have been reviewed.

Chapter 3: Like it or loathe it: Changing HR landscapes across the APAC

Chapter structure

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Labour market efficiency in a knowledge-based economy and role of HR
- 3.3 Like it or Loathe it: Changing HR landscapes across the APAC
 - 3.4 Conclusion

Abstract: Labour market efficiency and role of HR in labour market efficiency has been examined in this chapter. Ten parameters of labour market efficiency has been analysed for the 17 focus countries. The current available data and the data of how the countries fared 5 years ago were compared. Finally, our experiment of examining social media profiles of senior HR professionals from across the greater APAC region provides some interesting insights into the characteristics of those who are holding the baton of the HR profession. It also indicates how the HR landscapes are changing-whether we like it or loathe it.

Chapter 4: Best HR practices: Insiders' view

Chapter structure

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Ten Case studies
- 4.3 Conclusion

Abstract: Smart organisations know the benefits of going beyond status quo. Innovating HR practices and policies, they surge ahead creating sustainable future. This chapter consists of 10 case studies from organisations (listed below) in the specific industry in the region and examines how they have been dealing with their respective business as well as HR challenges.

Case study 4.1- India Tourism Sydney: Cheerfully welcoming all to Incredible India!

Case study 4.2- Singgasana Hotels and Resorts: A majestic presence with a promise of superior services

Case study 4.3-Grand Hotel- New Delhi: Providing Comfort to Customer

Case study 4.4-OfficeWorks- Australia: Taking Care of Big Ideas at Lowest Prices

Case study 4.5- Unilever Sri Lanka: Winning with People

Case study 4.6-Nokia India: Connecting people through innovation and adapting to change

Case study 4.7-GSK China: Helping people to do more, feel better and live longer

Case study 4.8-Tata Group: Bridging heritage and innovation in the education sector

Case study 4.9-AMR India Limited: Growing with confidence

Case study 4.10-JK Organisation: Cementing its century-old 'caring for people' tradition

Chapter structure

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 How are our focus industries faring in the face of key HR challenges?
- 5.3 Can HR be a game changer in sustaining industry growth?
- 5.4 PROACT to sustain
- 5.5 Conclusion

Chapter structure

- 6.1 Introduction
- 6.2 Content overview
- 6.3 Discussion
- 6.4 Conclusion

Chapter 5: HR's role in sustaining the growth of industries across the APAC region

Abstract: This chapter presents a broad and integrated approach to signify the role of HR as being a game changer in sustaining an industry. It summarises how HR can be a key pillar in creating economic, environmental and social growth. The approach is based on the premise that organisational human resource policies, practices can, if properly aligned, provide a direct and economically significant contribution to organisational performance.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Abstract: The book has looked at the HR profession and HR practices across six focus industries in the GAPAC region. The different HR typologies and models show that the work done by HR managers is wide ranging, with the responsibilities of an HR manager in one organization being totally different from those of an HR manager in another organisation. The purpose of the book is to help progress the HR profession by listing the key challenges it faces, identifying the necessary skills and competencies required of a HR manager, while gathering evidence to reinforce our conviction that HR can be a game changer in sustaining industries. Finally, despite Western typologies of HRM having analytical usefulness, it seems a more distinctive 'Asian HRM' (Rowley, Benson, & Warner, 2004) will prevail in the region as a result of institutional and cultural underpinning. The book could represent a clarion call for more Asia-centric frameworks and typologies, models and theorizing.



Endorsed

By

Mr. Prabir Jha

President & Group CHRO,
Reliance Industries Limited (RIL)
Mumbai, India

..." The book has presented a wonderful collection of lucid stories that show the opportunity and challenges that industries in the region are confronted with. It also is an equally smart introspection on how the HR function increasingly can impact labour market efficiency.... For soldiers and generals alike, Jayantee has produced a master piece. One can ignore the wisdom only at one's own peril..."



Prof. Peter Cappelli

George W. Taylor Professor
of Management And
Director,
Center for Human Resources
The Wharton School of the
University of Pennsylvania
United States of America

..."The story in this volume is a positive one about how good employment principles that have been developed elsewhere can both transform the burgeoning businesses in Asia and also the communities where they operate.

It is a story that deserves to be taken seriously, not just by employers but by policy makers in those countries and in the international agencies that advise them...."

Prof. Dave Ulrich

Rensis Likert Professor,
Ross School of Business,
University of Michigan
United States of America

..."In this exceptional volume, we receive deep insights into six industries throughout Asia: Tourism/hospitality, retail, healthcare, education, security, and energy. By sharing insights across these industries and across countries, the authors show that Asian human resources can continue to provide insights that can be transferred to the rest of the world..."



The Game Changers'* speak

Tourism & Hospitality Industry

- ☞ It is the world's largest industry & creator of jobs across national and regional economies.
- ☞ One of the pre-requisites of becoming a satisfying tourist destination includes how well the society treats its visitors.



Mrs. Madhu Dubey
Regional Director
India Tourism Sydney

...."We have an enormous domestic market to cater to. In our industry, there is an immediate need to bridge the gap between demand and supply of skilled workforce. Over the years, more and more educated youths are entering the industry which is a good sign. However, high employee turnover is a major concern for the industry....We regularly co-ordinate with our stakeholders to address various issues such as steps to substantially reduce the gap in the availability of skilled manpower in the hospitality sector, to create necessary educational and training infrastructure, to facilitate improvement in the quality of the existing tourism infrastructure and encourage the creation of a new infrastructure, to promote sustainable tourism in the country and develop niche tourism products"....

The Big Qs

- ☞ Does HR have a role in developing a communication channel and establish a social dialogue?
- ☞ How prepared are the industry's manpower to deal with challenges such as natural disasters, economic downturns, terrorism, and health pandemics?
- ☞ What role can HR play in helping minimize the business risks while fuelling the growth engines?

Retail Industry

- ☞ The industry is in a constant state of change characterized by a wide variety of products offered, customer sophistication, usage of technology or online purchases, retailer price wars etc.
- ☞ To remain competitive, retailers must take a methodical and well-directed approach to better understand their business and bring in customer delight.

The Big Qs

- ☞ How could customers be delighted?
- ☞ Has a talented, customer focused, engaged workforce has anything to do with that?
- ☞ Studies indicate that relatively low employee engagement levels have significant implications for retailers. Can HR create a culture of employee engagement thereby adding to the business bottom-line?



Mr. Martin Duffy
General Manager HR
Officeworks Australia

..."There are four key challenges we face today. (i) *Diversity: our workforce is a diverse one. Therefore, we constantly strive to maintain a consistent and inclusive organisational culture and find answers to diversity-related challenges like how to address intergenerational issues within the organization, etc.* (ii) *Talent: the challenge is about how we attract good people and also creating opportunities to grow talent.* (iii) *Safety: Creating a physically safe work environment.* And (iv) *social media: How do we increase our online presence and utilise the potential of social media to engage our customers?"...*



Mr. Udayan Dutt
Director HR & Corporate Relations
Unilever Sri Lanka

..."We are a huge global corporation. We are confronted with many business challenges like sustaining growth while getting into newer parts of the world, servicing markets well, bringing out newer products in line with the current context and changing consumer demand and ensuring growth by developing the market. On the people front, we have challenges to develop talent profile to enable the right fit and designing the right organisational structure to drive growth and efficiency. As regards preparedness, it is an ongoing journey. We are a customer and consumer-centric company focussing on execution excellence. We are constantly looking into implementing better talent practices befitting changing consumer behaviour. We therefore bring in and develop talented individuals who are not only experts in their own domain but also understand the business and who can translate business requirements into a functional agenda and partner the business..."

Healthcare Industry

- ☞ Healthcare industry has a role to play in every human's life-from pre-birth to beyond death.
- ☞ With increasing life expectancy, ageing population and plethora of health related problems, this industry is bound to grow.
- ☞ Acute shortage of caregivers and clinical staff, long waiting time for patients are some of the key challenges of this industry.

The Big Qs

- ☞ How defined are the HR policies and practices of this industry?
- ☞ What role is HR playing in areas like attracting and retaining talent, succession planning and dealing with the regulatory matters including checking the criminal backgrounds of the healthcare professionals?

Security Industry

- ☞ With ever increasing and complex type of crimes from cyber to missile attacks, the significance of this industry is perhaps more amplified now than ever before.
- ☞ Though, the security industry is of paramount importance to ensure continual success of any business or economy, this sensitive industry is neither well defined nor clearly identifiable (ECORYS, 2009).



Mr. Deepak Behl
Director HR
The Grand New Delhi

..."I am a former Deputy Superintendent of Police. I served in nine states of India taking on many challenging postings. With rising security concerns in the tourism and hospitality industry, I find my previous experiences as a cop to be a boon. When I joined the hospitality industry over a decade ago, the training I received as a police officer, set me in good stead for my HR role, which back then in India mainly dealt with poor industrial relations, trade unionism, collective bargaining and labour-management relations...."

The Big Qs

- ☞ Are organisations having enough skilled workforces to take care of these growing needs?
- ☞ Could HR play the role of streamlining the industry by defining the job scopes, training and retraining manpower as per the latest security requirements?

Education Industry

- ☞ More and more economies around the greater Asia Pacific zone are striving to be 'knowledge societies'; educating and skilling future and current workforces.
- ☞ It is these workforces which are expected to fill in the talent gaps in various industries and serve as one of the key ingredients of a competitive economy.

The Big Qs

- ☞ How advanced and structured are people management in the education sector?
- ☞ How well are key HR strategies being implemented through the academics who play the role as a line managers?
- ☞ What role does HR has in monitoring the monitors?



Dr. (Col.) Rajeev Kumar
General Manager Learning & Development
Tata Group Corporate Affairs and Media

"...There is a need for more investment in faculty. By this I mean not only competitive remuneration but also an investment in their development. There is also a need for mentoring new faculty as well as a need for reverse mentoring of old faculty by the new. Faculty integration poses a challenge as the generation gap is experienced in this domain also. Where ego is given more value, cooperation amongst faculty suffers. In some academic/training institutions, the performance-related variable in compensation is put in place. This indirectly introduces rivalry amongst faculty members and affects overall efficiency of the institution. Overall, I believe in the education sector. Attrition is a risk. Retention is the challenge. Engagement is the solution....."

Energy Industry

- ☞ The energy industry includes organisations dealing with the production and sale of energy (both renewable as well as non-renewable).
- ☞ It is one of key industries fuelling the growth and development of many other industries including tourism, retail and more.

The Big Qs

- ☞ How can HR ensure workplace safety where human ignorance can spark severe accidents causing irreparable damages?
- ☞ How well equipped are HR professionals to deal with industrial relations, training workforces, and spreading awareness in the areas of environmental issues while encouraging a culture of innovation?



Mr. Dilep Misra
President and Head Corporate HR
JK Organisation

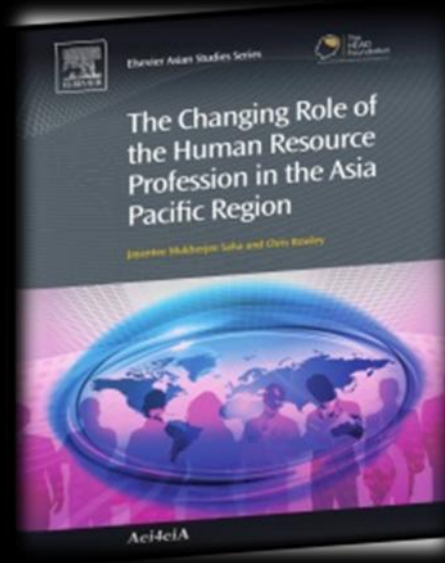
".....The industry is growing very fast but many talents have migrated out of the country. In India, there is now a scarcity of talent. There is a gap between supply and demand of talent at market place. Also, with the growth of the IT industry and perceived lucrative jobs in the IT industry, youths are more attracted towards IT than other relatively traditional industries. Also, with employees' growing focus on monetary benefits, talent retention is, at times, a challenge...In our organisation, we help employees develop through mentoring and coaching. We have always believed in the role of developing leaders to create a high performance organization...."



Mr. Manoj Kumar Sharma
Group Senior VP HR
AMR Group

....."We need to think long term and not just worry about short-term benefits. We need to ensure that the business process owners incorporate long-term issues into the financial model while bidding for projects. We are in a tough job, mostly in remote locations. So another challenge is availability of right skills matching our business models, compensation and job profile"...

** A few affiliations/designations have changed since the time of interview (conducted during 2012-13).*



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For speaking invite, any queries related to the book...

...and further information on this research...

...please contact us info@aei4eia.com.au