



HR4ICT Forum 2013

Event Report

Discussion Output

How future HR implications may impact on participants, organisations in the future?

- HR needs to position itself to understand the needs of the business. If we don't understand the business, we will not be able to do what we need to do, this will lead to diminished credibility and will have a negative impact on how we can affect change.
- Knowing the business is critical; this is a challenge not just for HR but also other functions within our organisations – where there is silo-working. The challenge for HR is to cut across the whole organisation to facilitate understanding so that all people appreciate the wider business issues.
- How tall do we stand? We need to build inner confidence to be accepted as strategic business partners.
- Knowing the business is not enough, we need to understand the environment in which the business operates, so that the HR professionals could engage effectively.
- The Ulrich “business partner” concept is OK but transactional excellence is still vital. This was agreed but it was pointed out that the transactional work could be outsourced if HR maintained quality control.
- Discussion of the HR role is a long-standing activity. HR is moving forward but there is still work to do to up-skill HR people, at all levels not just managers. One issue that needs to be overcome is the apparent “fear” of financial matters by many HR people (and maybe other groups too). It is also important to educate management about HR's role, particularly at Board level, where strategic decisions are made.
- HR needs to facilitate the empowerment of line-managers to deal with many transactional issues in order that HR can focus its attention on strategic issues such as capability development, talent, employee engagement etc.

Discussion Output

Creating an attractive working environment to foster long-term employee “loyalty”

- Small gestures / tokens of appreciation (e.g., the Samsung example of providing food at local restaurants) are useful in developing loyalty amongst staff.

- Success has a lot to do with the maturity of the organisation. In Samsung there is around 500 staff in SA, and it is a “mature” organisation.
- Trust is an important factor in developing and maintaining staff loyalty.
- An organisation’s leadership sets the climate of trust & loyalty. If the leadership do not respect the workforce, there is unlikely to be any respect returned and a low level of respect is likely to lead to low levels of loyalty.
- Consistency of treatment is important in dealing with people.
- The provision of good health & safety policies and practices can foster loyalty because staff know that the management care about the safety and good health for employees.
- What is “long-term” in the ICT sector? The sector is impacted by the dynamics of technology and burgeoning consumer demand; so “long-term” is becoming uncertain.
- In Ghana, a study on staff commitment indicated two things; (1) individuals’ loyalty was to their personal career and not the organisation and (2) some level of loyalty could be guaranteed if pension arrangements were factored into the total benefits package.
- The gender perspective is important. It is vital to recognise the changes that are taking place in the ICT sector as more women enter the engineering and related professions.
- In Bangalore, the companies that differentiate themselves by good gender policies have a definite competitive advantage in developing a loyal work force.

Offering the right employees, the right development opportunities

- Those with the right orientation, who identify with the organisation’s principles, priorities & strategies and are technically competent, should receive development opportunities.
- Personal ambition is important. Not all individuals want to progress to management positions – some are keen to remain and grow within their technical / professional environment – development opportunities need to be available to match these differing aspirations.
- It is important to give wider opportunities to people who have a passion for work. There are people working in areas for which they are not passionate, who should be assisted to develop in areas where they would be more focused and potentially perform better, with greater creativity and innovation.
- New graduate entrants often have unrealistic expectations of work; they need to be educated on the realities of the transition from a purely learning environment to one where learning and work go together.
- When organisations invest in the development of their workforce and then bring in external resources to fill higher positions, significant turbulence may occur with some lack of co-operation. This needs to be guarded against. A balance of internal and external recruiting is the best way forward.