

Process Partner









Ankit Bansal

Founder & CEO, Sapphire Human Capital



From the Founder and CEO's Desk

Within the rapidly evolving business landscape, agility and innovation have become pivotal for survival and success. Originally rooted in software development, agility has transformed into a guiding light for organisations across all sectors. It's not just about speed but adaptability and foresight—the ability to execute changes and innovation continuously.

At the heart of this shift are HR leaders, who play a pivotal role in fostering a culture of agility. In 2024, as businesses navigate challenges like Al integration, hybrid workforces, and market disruptions, HR has emerged as a key driver of transformation. These HR leaders are guiding organisations away from rigid structures toward flexible, cross-functional teams that embrace experimentation and collaboration. By nurturing an environment of continuous learning, HR helps businesses remain adept, competitive, and prepared for the unexpected.

Innovation is now embedded across all levels of agile organisations. HR professionals are cultivating ecosystems where employees feel empowered to take risks, share ideas, and push boundaries. This creates the foundation for organisations to not only respond to disruption but to drive it, staying ahead of the curve in a fast-changing world.

"India's Most Agile HR Leaders 2024" celebrates HR professionals who have fully embraced agility as a strategic advantage. These leaders understand that agility is more than a method—it's a mindset that fuels innovation, resilience, and growth. Their influence has helped create organisations that are adaptable, collaborative, and ready to face the challenges of tomorrow.

As we honor these leaders, we also look to the future, where agility and innovation will continue to define business success. The ability to pivot, experiment, and innovate at speed will determine which organisations lead and which follow. The HR leaders we celebrate today are at the forefront of this movement, and we are excited to see how they continue to drive transformative change.



ABOUT SAPPHIRE CONNECT

Sapphire Human Capital stands as India's premier integrated human capital firm, excelling in executive search, research-based advisory, CXO peer group communities, and B2B events. With over 16 years of extensive experience addressing complex human capital challenges across various sectors, we have partnered with some of India's largest businesses and blue-chip multinational corporations, securing a significant market share in all our operational domains. Our dynamic team of over 150 consultants operates from offices in Mumbai, NCR, and Bangalore.

Sapphire provides an unmatched value proposition to its C-suite stakeholders. The leadership team boasts more than 150 years of collective expertise and is guided by a highly esteemed and experienced Board of Directors. Sapphire Search, our executive search division, is well-respected by clients, having successfully placed over 1,100 CXOs with more than 250 clients. Meanwhile, Sapphire Connect is recognized as India's leading innovative B2B event organization.

Sapphire Connect is committed to creating platforms that promote knowledge sharing and networking. Our offerings include conferences, business meetings, webinars, virtual symposiums, customized events, a Coffee Table Book, and the formation of vibrant business communities.

The establishment of **Sapphire Connect** is rooted in the founders' decade-long dedication to delivering the highest standards of quality and service. Our platforms focus on the current industry landscape, tackling existing challenges while paving the way to overcome future obstacles. We equip stakeholders with comprehensive insights, providing invaluable takeaways and, most importantly, experiential learning. Serving as a hub for pioneering industry leaders, our platforms cater to those aiming to drive transformative change within their fields. Our custom platforms are designed to create tailored solutions that align with client objectives, incorporating diverse event formats featuring India's thought leaders and fostering an exclusive, intimate audience.

Our commitment extends to enhancing and enriching the content of all our initiatives through expert collaboration. The results of these efforts culminate in insightful research papers that elevate the realm of knowledge.







ABOUT INDIA'S MOST AGILE HR LEADERS 2024

In an era characterized by ongoing economic fluctuations, climate challenges, and the lasting effects of the pandemic, businesses are continuously confronted with a myriad of obstacles. In response, many are beginning to view organizational agility as the cornerstone of resilience, essential for rapid recovery from unexpected disruptions. However, fostering agility is no easy task; it requires not only skilled leadership but also a widespread commitment to cultivating agility across the organization.

At the forefront of this endeavor are agile leaders—those who inspire and guide their teams through significant challenges. In the HR landscape, an agile mindset goes beyond the use of post-it notes and scrum boards; it signifies a shift away from traditional HR practices towards a more experimental and adaptable approach that delivers real value, validated by employees through their direct experiences at work

At **Sapphire Connect**, we firmly believe that success is rooted in a continuous cycle of experimentation and learning. HR leaders possess the power to transform the landscape and actively participate in shaping the future of work. By evolving and addressing the diverse challenges of a complex and unpredictable business environment, they can pave the way for a new era.

In this spirit, we are excited to introduce the 4th Edition of "India's Most Agile HR Leaders 2024" Coffee Table Book. This edition highlights HR leaders who have embraced experimentation, learned from their experiences, and ultimately transformed their people-centric operations to better align with human needs while driving meaningful business impact. Their achievements transcend industry boundaries and organizational types, demonstrating that adaptable strategies can flourish in any context.

Process Partner



NOTE FROM EY

The 4th Edition of India's most agile HR leaders Coffee Table Book is a celebration of excellence in HR leadership, highlighting the critical role that agile HR leaders play in shaping the future of organizations in these ever-evolving times. This edition aims to honor compassionate, visionary, transformational, and forward-thinking HR leaders. As the process partner, EY has diligently incorporated learnings from the previous years, crafted the selection process and developed a comprehensive framework for evaluating the entries, ensuring a robust and transparent assessment.



This event celebrates the outstanding contributions of HR trailblazers, showcasing their significant accomplishments. The selection process was notably meticulous, ensuring every nominee received thoughtful consideration. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated jury members for their patience and valuable insights. Congratulations to all the winners!

- NIDHI GUPTA, Partner People Consulting, EY India



ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The commencement of a remarkable chapter for Sapphire Connect started 6 months prior to the event, as we garnered an impressive influx of 235 nominations for evaluation. Our esteemed process partner, EY, furnished a robust framework encompassing processes and criteria to meticulously assess these submissions.

Through a scrupulous assessment process, we identified 55 profiles that underwent meticulous review by the jury. In the culmination of this comprehensive evaluation, a definitive verdict emerged: 29 HR leaders successfully secured their positions among the elite cohort of India's foremost HR leaders for the year 2024.

Identified Potential CTB Leader		Chosen Leaders			
	Initiation	Evaluation	Selection		Chosen Ledders
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The Grand JURY

ANTHONY JOSEPH

Former CHRO, HGS





DR. PRINCE AUGUSTINE

Former Executive Vice President,
Group Human Capital & Leadership
Development - Mahindra & Mahindra
Group & Founder and CEO,
Behavioral Insights &
Transformation Partners LLP



Consultant, Advisor to Lincoln International & Independent Director on Boards

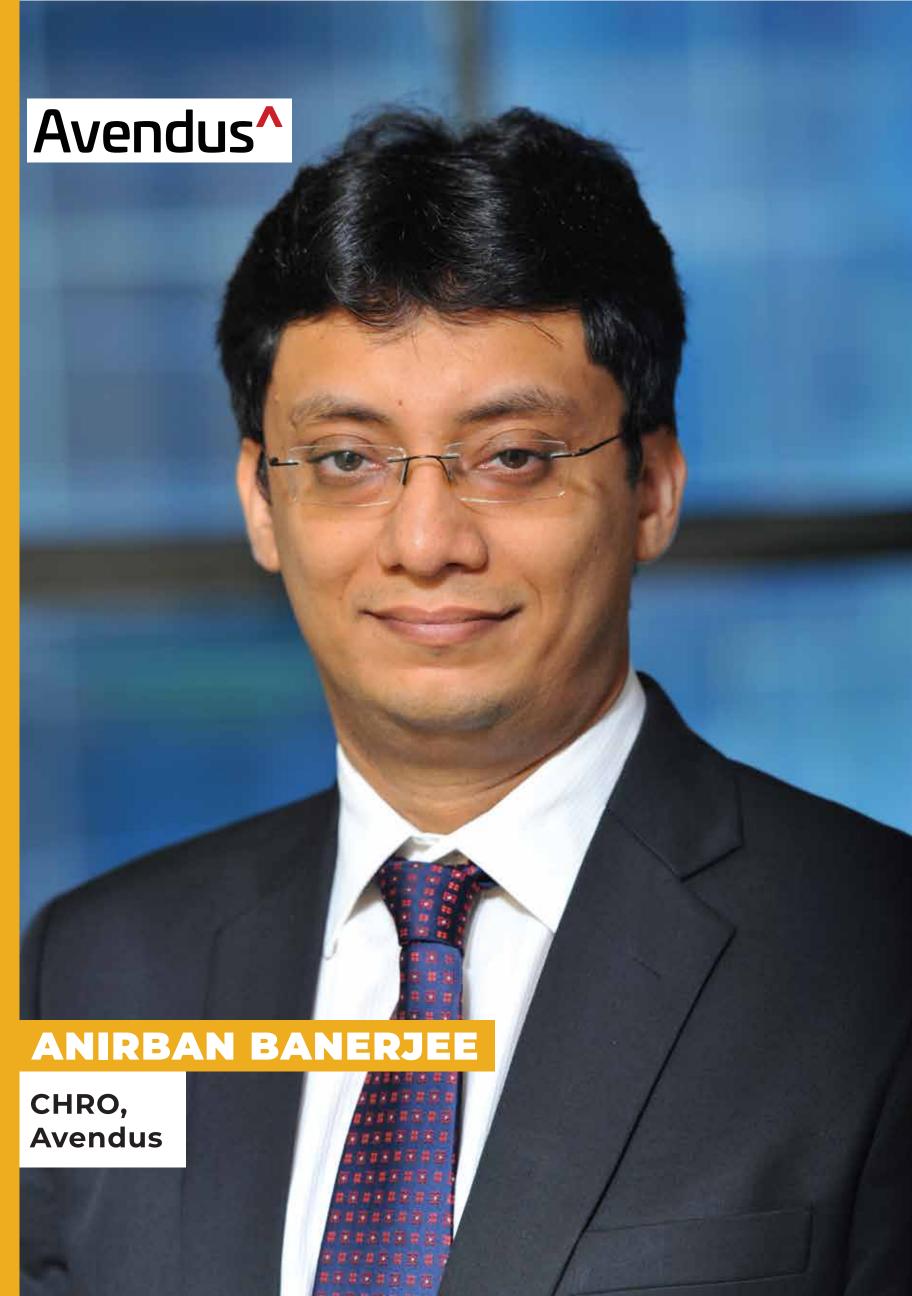




DR. RITU ANAND

Former Chief Leadership & Diversity Officer, & Deputy Head HR,

TCS





I feel fortunate to have been born in a typical middle-class Indian family and to have moved around the country's hinterland as my father's job demanded. After school, I studied Economics at St. Stephen's College, Delhi, and then moved on to XLRI to pursue an MBA in Human Resources. My career began in the hallowed grounds of ITC, where I managed a factory in Bengaluru before transitioning to the FMCG business. A few years in, some friends convinced me to embark on an entrepreneurial venture, leading to the establishment of what is now India's largest wealth management firm (known as 360 One). I spent fourteen years there as the Chief People Officer. For the past three years, I have been leading the HR function at Avendus, a full-service financial services firm that helps high-performing entrepreneurs achieve their dreams.

UPSKILLING INITIATIVES FOR A FUTURE-PROOF WORKFORCE

We are possibly the first set of leaders responsible for more than three generations: Gen X, Y, Z, and soon Alpha. Some of us have also interacted with Baby Boomers early in our careers. As if the complexity of jobs and the pace of change were not enough, we need to upskill just to keep up with the new generation. Jobs are changing rapidly: early in our careers, blue-collar work was expected to be automated; now, Al may reframe most white-collar jobs too. Employees and our partners have a different purpose at work every five years. The ability of an HR resource to be alert, aligned with the business, and one step ahead of the curve is at its peak and will only continue to increase. Honestly, upskilling is not even a choice; it's a must for our own survival.

INNOVATION AT THE EDGE

Today, Copilot is drafting all our emails. In fact, as I am typing this, my document is suggesting the next sentence. Our days already look very different from what they were five years ago. Our stakeholders need help to do things faster and smarter. Not only are automated skill mapping and ChatGPT-generated JDs becoming common, but regulators are also pushing us to be nimble and eliminate redundant activities. L&D was probably the first to adopt technology in a significant way, from data share points to LMS, LXP, LLPs, and everything in between. New-age sensitivities to D&I and employee well-being are catching on quickly. Unfortunately, compared to business, we are still far behind and have a lot of catching up to do. Hopefully, the next decade belongs to HR innovation.

DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

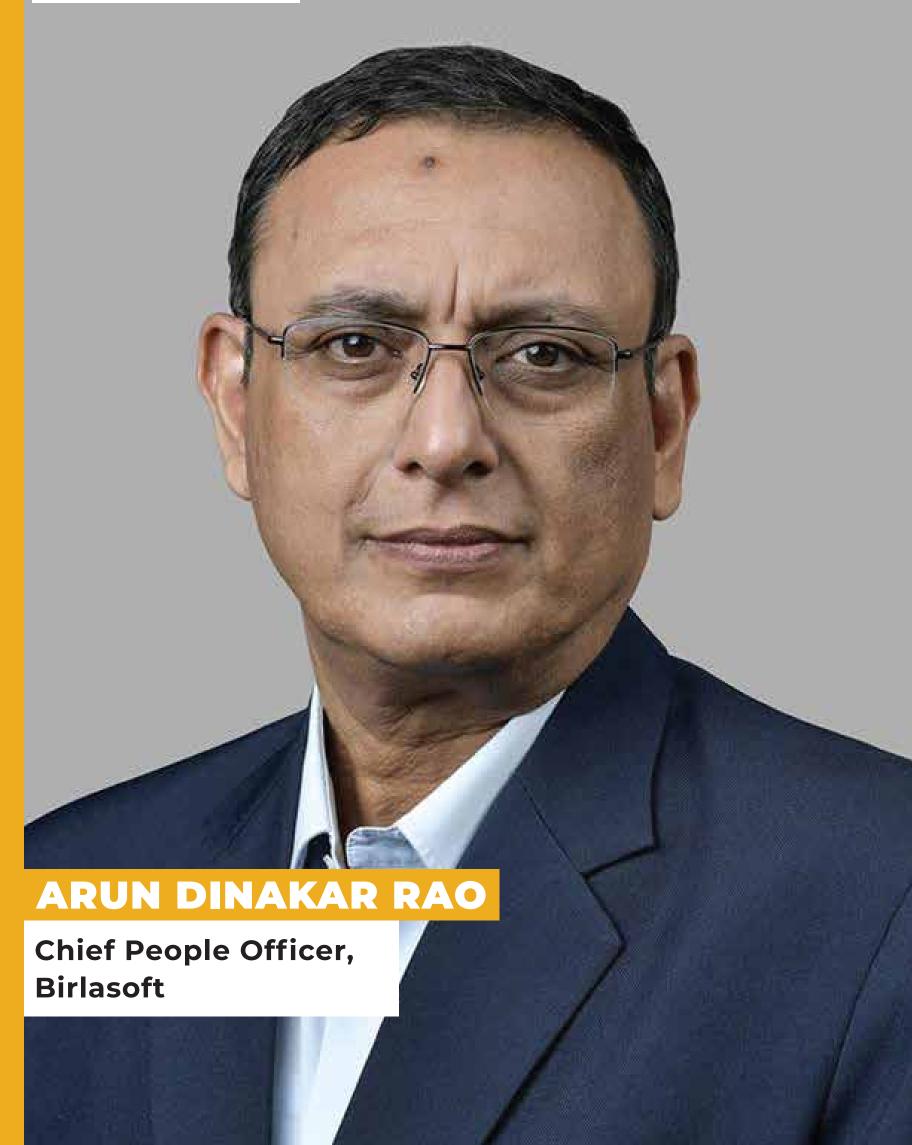
Lines are blurring between businesses and 'partner' functions. Reaction time is shorter, and as hierarchy has diminished, the impact of decisions is sharper and faster. Predictive indicators of ownership, happiness, and engagement are redefining how we hire people and gauge performance. Adaptive learning programs and continuous feedback, while aligning with long-term goals, are gaining more prominence. The average survival tenure in CXO roles has dropped to astonishingly low levels, and those who endure have data at their fingertips. That's the only way to make quick, nimble, and effective decisions.

DRIVING THE BELIEF

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Be humble and stay grounded.

birlasoft





As the Chief People Officer and Member of the Executive Board at Birlasoft, I bring over 28 years of experience across IT/ITeS, finance, and internet industries. My expertise lies in enhancing human resources, learning and development, and talent management functions, managing large-scale operations, and leading transformative change initiatives. I specialize in strategy development, organization design, and performance management, believing in a culture rooted in strong employee connections and transparency. My previous roles at DXC Technology India and Deloitte US India have honed my skills in aligning people functions with business goals and executing key leadership development initiatives. I actively contribute to leadership and talent enhancement forums, sharing insights as a speaker and mentor. My academic background includes a Post Graduate Diploma from XLRI, Jamshedpur, and alumni status from the University of Delhi.

UPSKILLING INITIATIVES FOR A FUTURE-PROOF WORKFORCE

I believe that upskilling oneself and one's team is imperative in today's dynamic business environment, necessitated by the pace of change in the business environment, which is all-pervasive. A learning mindset is the need of the hour, not just for staying relevant, but for being future-ready! People capability and engagement are what give organizations elasticity in terms of their resources. I also firmly believe that investments in cross-skilling and upskilling set people up for growth, and that perhaps is the biggest engagement driver. While organizations and their leaders should foster a culture where learning is valued and supported, people should take ownership of their learning paths. Hence, while skilling becomes the currency, individual learning paths should become the cornerstone of career conversations.

INNOVATION AT THE EDGE

As the Chief People Officer, I believe I am the culture custodian, an employee advocate, and a business leader. I look at technologies as ever-changing, and therefore, I believe that my biggest role is to champion ideas that make the organization a better place for its citizens and help it win in the marketplace through its sustainable and leading-edge solutions and offerings. I believe my job is to promote meaningful risk-taking and create a safe harbor for people who test conventional boundaries in creating something new. I believe in creating a resilient organization where technology and ideas are leveraged for transformative changes that bring significant value to the business.

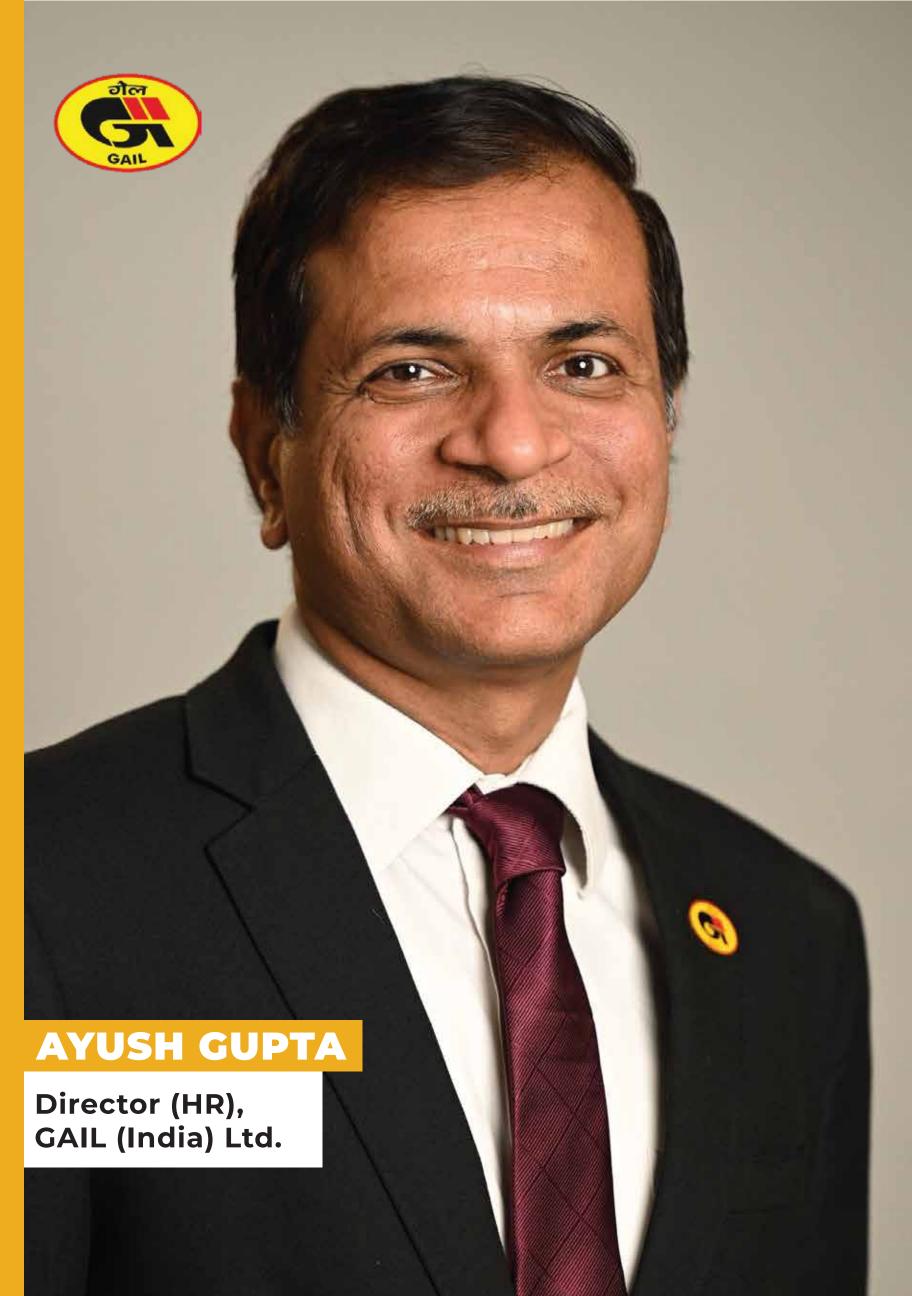
DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

I have leaned on bringing data and technology together to make real-time strategic decisions in HR. This data-driven approach has enabled the organization to make informed decisions regarding recruitment, employee engagement, and retention strategies, ultimately fostering a more agile and responsive HR function. I advocate for a culture of data literacy within the HR team, empowering my colleagues to utilize data insights effectively.

DRIVING THE BELIEF

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As a leader, I believe true success lies in crafting a compelling talent agenda that aligns business imperatives with employee aspirations. With culture as our glue, it's vital that the organization embodies our six cultural tenets while leveraging technology to attract, develop, and retain top talent, ensuring our people practices are effective, ethical, and transparent.





I am the Director of Human Resources at GAIL (India) Limited, Chairman of GAIL Mangalore Petrochemicals Limited, and a member of the Board of Directors of China Gas Holdings, GAIL Gas Limited & ONGC Tripura Power Company Limited. An IIT Graduate & Chevening Scholar with 32+ years of experience, I have contributed to HR Development, Talent Acquisition, Leadership Development, Performance Management, Project Management and Operations & Maintenance. At GAIL, I lead innovative HR strategies, drive transformative initiatives that enhances employee experience and promote Diversity, Equity & Inclusion.

UPSKILLING INITIATIVES FOR A FUTURE-PROOF WORKFORCE

Technological advancements like automation, AI, and data analytics are transforming our work, and they should be seen not as replacements, but rather as powerful tools that complement and enhance the work of our HR professionals. This necessitates investment in upskilling to enable employees to effectively utilize new technologies and drive innovation. Upskilling leads to enhanced job satisfaction, resulting in higher retention rates, and helps bridge gaps in regulatory requirements and industry standards, ensuring compliance and maintaining reputation. A well upskilled workforce contributes ideas and drives change, fostering a culture of innovation. I firmly believe that for any upskilling initiative to be successful in an organization, it has to start with the team leader as the front runner and role model. Investing in upskilling is vital for long-term success and commitment to excellence.

INNOVATION AT THE EDGE

Innovation is vital for growth in today's dynamic world. GAIL quickly transitioned to remote work during the pandemic, thanks to its early adoption of digital technologies like SAP in 2005, setting a benchmark for PSUs. Digital transformation has streamlined processes, such as medical reimbursements, now processed within hours, boosting employee experience. Cross-functional collaboration and strategic partnerships with technology leaders further drive innovation. Examples include faceless vendor invoice management, paperless e-office, and employee-centric mobile apps, all highlighting GAIL's leadership in leveraging technology for excellence.

DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

Data insights are crucial for strategic decision-making and operational effectiveness. A strong framework and infrastructure are essential for efficient data collection, storage, and processing. Employee performance metrics and feedback are analyzed to provide actionable insights for career development and succession planning. Real-time dashboards offer quick access to data, while strict data governance policies protect sensitive information. This approach enhances HR practices, optimizes resource allocation, and drives organizational success, allowing for proactive responses to emerging trends and challenges. At GAIL, we've integrated data analytics into our decision-making processes to ensure we always operate with the most up-to-date information. By harnessing the power of our data, we can quickly identify trends, anticipate market changes, and make data-driven adjustments to our strategies.

DRIVING THE BELIEF

I firmly advocate for the Four Cs—Competence, Care, Connect & Commitment — as the cornerstone of all HR initiatives. Through focused interventions like – Ojas & Sarathi for young employee development, Spandan for employee well-being, Samanvay for employee connect we foster a culture of continuous improvement, optimise resources, and ensure organisational growth and employee well-being.

people**strong**



Senior Vice President (Product and Digital HR Transformation), PeopleStrong



As a visionary leader, I define product strategy aligned with the company's vision and market insights. I craft product roadmaps tailored to customer needs and technological advancements, collaborating with teams to achieve tangible outcomes in human capital management. I drive strategic initiatives focused on customer satisfaction and operational efficiency across India and MEA. Through workshops and partnerships, I shape HR strategies and digital transformation roadmaps. Certified in HR technology, I design bespoke solutions for diverse industries, ensuring measurable results.

UPSKILLING INITIATIVES FOR A FUTURE-PROOF WORKFORCE

In today's rapidly evolving digital landscape, I firmly believe that continuous upskilling is not just beneficial but essential for both my team and me. The pace of technological advancement, especially in HR and digital transformation, demands that we stay ahead of the curve. I've witnessed firsthand how embracing new technologies and methodologies can dramatically improve organizational efficiency and employee experience. As a leader, I'm committed to fostering a culture of learning within my team. I encourage them to explore emerging trends in Al, machine learning, and data analytics as they apply to HR. We regularly engage in workshops, certifications, and hands-on projects to enhance our skills. Personally, I'm always seeking new knowledge, whether through courses like the Digital HR Transformation program at LSE, product management from ISB, or by staying active in industry forums. This continuous learning not only keeps us competitive but also enables us to provide innovative solutions to our clients, driving real business value in this ever-changing digital era.

INNOVATION AT THE EDGE

As a leader in HR technology and digital transformation, I'm constantly pushing the boundaries of what's possible in our field. My approach involves leveraging cutting-edge technologies like AI, machine learning, and advanced analytics to reimagine HR processes and enhance employee experiences. I've spearheaded initiatives that integrate these technologies into core HR functions, from recruitment to performance management. For instance, we've implemented AI-driven applicant tracking systems that significantly reduce time-to-hire while improving candidate quality. I'm also exploring the potential of virtual reality for immersive onboarding experiences and blockchain for secure, decentralized employee records. My focus isn't just on technology implementation, but on driving innovation that creates tangible business value. I believe in a human-centered design approach, ensuring that our technological advancements always serve the needs of employees and organizations alike. By staying at the forefront of these innovations, I'm helping organizations prepare for the future of work today.

DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

As a digital HR transformation leader, I prioritize data-driven decision-making across HR functions. By leveraging real-time data insights and advanced analytics tools, I monitor key metrics, anticipate hiring needs using predictive analytics, and address employee feedback through sentiment analysis. Our Al-powered models forecast skill gaps, guiding proactive upskilling initiatives. This approach ensures agile, responsive HR strategies that deliver value to both our organization and customers.

DRIVING THE BELIEF

I believe in democratizing HR technology, making advanced solutions accessible to all organizations, empowering them to innovate and grow regardless of size or resources.





A strategic HR Leader with 18+ years of experience in HR and IR, I have demonstrated leadership across the full spectrum of HR functions. My career journey, spanning three organizations across various locations, has provided me with a deep understanding of HR dynamics. Currently, I serve as the Head of HR & Admin at Adani Power Limited – Kawai Thermal Power Plant. I am passionate about driving HR strategies that align with business objectives and fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

UPSKILLING INITIATIVES FOR A FUTURE-PROOF WORKFORCE

In today's fast-evolving digital landscape, continuous upskilling is essential for my team and me. The rapid pace of technological advancements in HR and digital transformation requires us to stay ahead. Embracing new technologies has significantly improved our organizational efficiency and employee experience. I foster a culture of learning, encouraging my team to explore trends like AI, machine learning, and data analytics. We engage in workshops, certifications, and hands-on projects, while I pursue knowledge through programs like Digital HR Transformation at LSE and product management at ISB. This learning keeps us competitive and drives real business value.

INNOVATION AT THE EDGE

In today's fast-evolving world, innovation is no longer just a competitive advantage—it's a necessity. At Adani Group, innovation is a core principle that drives our strategies and actions. As part of this vision, the group is investing in building a Global Capability Centre and an Advanced Centre of Excellence to foster innovation and promote data-based decision-making. In line with the group's focus on building a future-ready workforce, I have actively worked on integrating data analytics and technology into our HR processes. One of the key initiatives I have led was the creation of an HR Metrics Dashboard that provides real-time insights into critical HR metrics. These insights help the senior business leadership team in data-based decision-making and have transformed how HR interacts with the broader business, moving us from a transactional role to one of strategic importance. My team and I regularly explore new ideas and emerging technologies and discuss how these can be integrated into our daily processes. By collaborating with departments like ACoE, IT, and Finance, we challenge established practices and find innovative ways to solve complex problems, whether through digital transformation or enhancing employee experience.

DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

Data is not just about numbers – it's about gaining actionable insights that can transform business outcomes. In my role, I actively use data to analyze trends, predict challenges, and identify opportunities. For example, the HR Metrics Dashboard that we have developed provides real-time insights into key HR metrics such as manpower utilization, talent acquisition, employee engagement, learning and development, and attrition. These metrics allow us to make decisions based on concrete data rather than assumptions, enabling us to react quickly to emerging trends. As we continue to move towards a more data-driven future, my focus remains on leveraging technology and data to enhance our decision-making capabilities. By integrating data into every aspect of the HR function, we ensure that our strategic choices are aligned with business goals and that we can adapt quickly to the ever-changing business landscape.

DRIVING THE BELIEF

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I firmly believe that in today's fast-evolving world, continuous learning and agility are the keys to navigating challenges and seizing future opportunities.





I am an experienced CHRO. Over the years, I have been recognized as a trusted business partner, talent developer, and change leader. All my roles have been ambiguous and unstructured, requiring agile problem-solving skills while leading cross-functional teams. My peers and team members vouch for my collaboration and coaching abilities. My role as CHRO has often involved handling external stakeholders, including community relations. My roles have focused on HR strategy that covers talent and leadership strategies, a culture of innovation using breakthrough ideas, building high-performance teams, and the future of work and workplace design.

UPSKILLING INITIATIVES FOR A FUTURE-PROOF WORKFORCE

There is never a better time than now to upskill ourselves. Changes are occurring in every industry segment, and technology is making rapid strides within human resources as well. With accelerated changes in customer and investor expectations, the demands on Human Resources have also evolved. I am personally focused on developing my influencing skills for business impact and Al. Another crucial area of focus is on organization and leadership transitions, where I can apply my coaching and influencing skills. To scale HR teams and address development gaps together, my focus is on developing and nurturing talent with an emphasis on HR operating competencies, inclusion, and digital and analytics.

INNOVATION AT THE EDGE

It's crucial for HR leaders to lead by example. In my current role, I have led an initiative to build inclusivity skills. Inclusion is not just a buzzword but a set of skills to be developed and cascaded across all employee groups. A cohort of leaders is going through the Inclusive Leadership Development journey so that the inclusion agenda can be accelerated. It's a tough process to align stakeholders and provide a common direction.

I have also led initiatives on organization simplification by creating a One HR model to support distributed teams across multiple business lines and adding significant value to business outcomes.

Additionally, I have successfully demonstrated leadership using digital initiatives to deliver an impact on employee motivation and create positive employee experiences.

DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

I have led an initiative to focus on employee experiences using AI and chatbots. The digital tools provided real-time access to employee engagement levels across the company and helped us address open issues both long-term and short-term. Of course, I would concede that while we have successfully implemented data-driven decision-making, we still have a long way to go and need to improve our abilities to make an impact every day.

DRIVING THE BELIEF

I'm inspired by my father, a surgeon, and strive daily to use my skills to improve lives, no matter how small the impact.





I am an experienced HR leader with over 3 decades in the field, currently serving as the CHRO at IL&FS Group. In this role, I oversee HR and administrative operations during this critical resolution phase. I've held leadership positions at companies like Liberty Mutual, TATA-AIG, AVIVA, and Blue Dart DHL, managing cross-cultural teams across regions such as Southeast Asia and the USA. My expertise includes talent management, leadership development, and business excellence. I'm passionate about fostering innovation, ethical practices, and empowering employees for organizational success.

UPSKILLING INITIATIVES FOR A FUTURE-PROOF WORKFORCE

Keeping in line with the rapidly changing landscape of work and work culture, the most important focus is on upskilling, as skill is the new currency and it's critical across all generations at work. The two important elements I have picked up are Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). All is reshaping industries, and embracing diverse perspectives fuels innovation and agility. I have made it a priority to learn as well as prepare my team for the same. This is needed to cultivate a growth mindset, inclusivity, and innovation, thus making ourselves ready for the dynamic landscape of the work environment and ecosystem.

INNOVATION AT THE EDGE

Based on our adaptability to accept the change offered by AI, the speed of execution and data accuracy is now a norm. The present trend is about pushing the boundaries of traditional thinking and exploring new avenues. The diversity of the workforce also augments having an open mind toward new solutions and looking at transformative teams. I am fostering a culture where continuous learning, diversity of thought, and bold experimentation are prioritized. We embrace the latest advancements and technology and develop new solutions that are inclusive and future-ready. This growth mindset approach helps us remain competitive and adaptable in a world that is changing very rapidly.

DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

Interactive dashboards and data that depict the real situation are the cornerstones of discussion; they also help in removing bias that can arise. The employee life cycle as well as organizational requirements are based on these data-driven decisions.

DRIVING THE BELIEF

Communication is the foundation of effective leadership—being clear, empathetic, and transparent drives collaboration, empowerment, and growth.



Global Head of Human Resources & Corporate Communication, UST



An accomplished, growth-focused People Leader with a wealth of international experience spanning FMCG, Media, Not-For-Profit, Entrepreneurial Ventures, BFSI, and Technology. As an alumna of Harvard Business School, I possess a unique blend of strategic and operational expertise, seamlessly navigating both business and HR leadership roles. Proficient in General Management, Finance, People Practices, B2B/C Sales, Customer Delivery, Customer Experience, and Operations, I stand as a true catalyst for organizational excellence, reflecting a comprehensive understanding of multifaceted business environments. My core expertise lies in architecting agile and optimal organizational structures. I am recognized for shaping robust talent strategies, driving performance management, spearheading impactful learning and development initiatives, and cultivating progressive industrial and employee experiences and practices. My leadership thrives in managing complexity at scale, marked by substantial M&A experience and orchestrating change and transformative initiatives that champion human capital as a strategic imperative.

UPSKILLING INITIATIVES FOR A FUTURE-PROOF WORKFORCE

In today's ever-changing times, I believe upskilling is a fundamental necessity—for myself and my team. The power of three guides my approach: mastering an expertise, embracing a skill of immediate relevance, and preparing for what's on the horizon. For instance, my expertise in organizational strategy helps navigate complex business landscapes, while my intermediate focus on data-driven decision-making ensures we leverage analytics in real time. Looking ahead, I'm actively learning Al-driven leadership, recognizing how it will soon revolutionize team management. This constant cycle of learning ensures we stay ahead of the curve. Upskilling is not optional; it's a strategic enabler that keeps us agile, relevant, and primed for future success. In this environment, learning agility is not just a core competency—it's the key to unlocking innovation and leading through change.

INNOVATION AT THE EDGE

Innovation at the edge is where true transformation happens. At UST, we're redefining how cutting-edge technologies shape the future. Generative Al delivers hyper-personalized experiences, enhances healthcare, and drives operational efficiency. Advanced data analytics unlocks insights, predicting needs and optimizing systems in real-time. We're pioneering digital twins to improve supply chain resiliency and exploring blockchain for transparency and security in global transactions. By leveraging these technologies, we scale insights and drive transformation across sectors, constantly pushing boundaries to create value and sustainable growth for our clients.

DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

Data-driven decision-making is at the heart of agile and impactful leadership. At UST, we harness the power of data insights to transform complexity into clarity, enabling strategic decisions in real time. By leveraging advanced analytics, AI, and machine learning models, we don't just react to trends—we predict them. Whether it's optimizing supply chains, enhancing customer experiences, or driving operational efficiencies, data empowers us to act with precision and foresight. Real-time insights allow us to pivot quickly in a dynamic business landscape, aligning our strategies with emerging opportunities. For example, our predictive models help forecast market shifts, enabling us to tailor solutions that proactively meet client needs. At UST, data is not just a tool—it's our compass, guiding every strategic choice we make to deliver lasting impact and measurable results.

DRIVING THE BELIEF

In a world where change is the only constant, I am guided by the transformative power of connection.

Genuine relationships form the bedrock of our visions, fueling innovation and resilience, while each shared experience becomes a catalyst for collective growth. By nurturing these connections, we empower individuals and transform our shared vision into reality, creating a landscape where every voice is valued and every story contributes to our mission.





My journey as a leader in human resources has been defined by a relentless pursuit of innovation and meaningful impact. As Group Head of HR at ASK Group, I led a transformation that reshaped the organization through strategic vision and cultural reimagination—bridging the gap between people and purpose, embracing the power of technology, and driving sustainability. I have crafted a legacy of building future-ready organizations, upskilling talent, and fostering inclusive, mission-driven workplaces. My story is one of leading with intention, inspiring growth, and cultivating environments where both people and organizations reach their fullest potential.

UPSKILLING INITIATIVES FOR A FUTURE-PROOF WORKFORCE

In today's rapidly evolving environment, I see upskilling as a cornerstone for building a resilient, future-ready workforce. As a CHRO, I recognize that continuous learning is no longer a choice but a necessity. Technology is transforming how we work, making it more engaging and productive, and this shift allows my team and me to focus more deeply on understanding people and solving core issues. By fostering a culture that values upskilling and embraces the latest technological advancements, we ensure our workforce remains agile and prepared for future challenges while nurturing the human connections essential to thriving in this ever-changing landscape.

INNOVATION AT THE EDGE

As a leader, I believe pushing boundaries with cutting-edge technologies and bold ideas is essential to staying ahead in today's fast-paced world. Embracing innovation means stepping beyond the familiar and exploring new ways to solve problems, using digital tools, AI, and data analytics to enhance decision-making and agility. I encourage a culture where experimentation is valued, and learning from failures is seen as a pathway to success. By pushing the limits and aligning innovation with our vision, we empower our teams to think creatively, adapt swiftly, and drive growth in ways that continually redefine what is possible.

DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

Leveraging data-driven insights is crucial for making strategic decisions in real time. By harnessing analytics, we uncover trends, identify gaps, and optimize resources to align with organizational goals. Data provides a clear understanding of performance, engagement, and productivity, enabling informed choices that drive success. Real-time insights empower us to adapt strategies dynamically, respond swiftly to changing conditions, and seize new opportunities. Incorporating data-driven decision-making into our leadership approach transforms it into a powerful tool for fostering innovation, enhancing resilience, and guiding the organization toward sustained growth and meaningful impact.

DRIVING THE BELIEF

Vulnerability inspires and motivates; showing strength alone is counterproductive. Embracing vulnerability fosters trust and empowers individuals to bring their whole selves to work, driving collaboration, creativity, and growth.





My name is Lakshmanan, but everyone who knows me well calls me Laks. Originally from Tamil Nadu, I settled in Mumbai more than three decades ago. After completing my B.Sc. in Mathematics, I pursued UPSC exams to follow in my father's footsteps and become a police officer, but I didn't make it. After eight years in the government sector, I transitioned to the IT industry and held senior HR roles in leading IT companies before joining L&T in January 2013. My spouse, also an HR professional, is now associated with an NGO, and our son works for a large private bank.

UPSKILLING INITIATIVES FOR A FUTURE-PROOF WORKFORCE

In today's dynamic and rapidly evolving business landscape, upskilling is not just a necessity, it is a strategic imperative. I firmly believe that continuous learning equips both individuals and teams with the agility needed to navigate emerging challenges and seize new opportunities. At LTTS, fostering a culture of learning is one of our core values, and we actively promote this across all levels. Our Global Engineering Academy (GEA) serves as a cornerstone of our upskilling efforts. We offer specialized courses, such as "Leading with AI: A Course for Leaders," which provides an immersive, Gen AI-enhanced experience for leaders across functions to unlock the business potential of AI. By investing in our people's upskilling and development, we are not only enhancing their professional growth but also ensuring that L&T Technology Services continues to lead in delivering innovative and impactful digital engineering solutions to our clients.

INNOVATION AT THE EDGE

Innovation is essential for staying competitive in today's fast-paced environment, and at LTTS, we believe clustering technologies is key to driving impactful HR innovation. We prioritize diverse perspectives by evaluating employee ideas through dedicated forums and competitions like Techgium®, a national hackathon with over 36,000 participants. Internal platforms such as Reveries, Techexpression, and Tech Panorama further foster innovation. In HR, AI platforms like Sense AI and LLMs have significantly enhanced productivity. By challenging the status quo, we continue to deliver sustainable solutions that create measurable value, while also focusing on leadership and relationship-building to future-proof our teams.

DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

Data-driven decision-making is about leveraging data insights to make informed strategic choices in real-time. Insights are not just raw data; they are a blend of data, experience, past knowledge, and most importantly, context. It is difficult to determine what is right or wrong in a specific situation, but when we integrate data with context, we draw insights that help us make decisions that are both agile and aligned with the long-term objectives of the organization. Providing the right narrative by blending data with context brings credibility to decision-making. By fusing data insights with expert knowledge and contextual understanding, one can remain committed to delivering innovative solutions that drive impactful change. This strategic focus ensures that organizations are well-equipped to navigate the complexities of their respective industries, benefiting from decisions grounded in robust data analytics and foresight.

DRIVING THE BELIEF

Curiosity does not kill the cat! Curiosity fuels my growth, helping me push boundaries, innovate, and build meaningful connections—it's the driving force behind my success.





I am a seasoned HR professional with over 25 years of multidisciplinary experience. Throughout my career, I have worked in key management and leadership roles, driving business growth, fulfilling strategic objectives, managing change, shaping a high-performance culture, and delivering the employee value proposition. I had the privilege of serving as the Chairperson of the NASSCOM Telangana Regional Council, which is dedicated to ecosystem collaboration, policy advocacy, and industry partnerships. Additionally, I served as the Joint Secretary of the Society for Cyberabad Security Council and was the founding leader of its Women's Forum, focusing on initiatives for women's safety.

UPSKILLING INITIATIVES FOR A FUTURE-PROOF WORKFORCE

Upskilling initiatives are important for any organization that wants to stay ahead in a changing world. Some key steps to stay relevant include:

- Identifying future skills
- Developing personalized learning paths
- Embracing technology for efficient and engaging learning experiences
- · Creating a culture that values lifelong learning and encourages employees to continuously upskill
- Promoting cross-functional collaboration through workshops, hackathons, and cross-functional project teams to encourage knowledge exchange.

INNOVATION AT THE EDGE

Innovation isn't just about adopting the latest technology; it's about leveraging it to solve real problems and make a meaningful impact. In HR, we push these boundaries by personalizing the employee journey through data, such as creating a talent marketplace for internal mobility and using predictive analytics for proactive support. We also empower employees and managers with technology by automating routine tasks with chatbots, offering on-demand learning tailored to individual needs, and shifting from traditional performance reviews to continuous feedback. By focusing on personalization, empowerment, and fostering a culture of innovation, we build a more human-centric, future-proof workplace.

DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

Effective HR leadership now requires utilizing real-time data insights rather than relying on intuition. Building a data-driven culture starts with upskilling HR teams in data literacy and offering easy access to key metrics through user-friendly dashboards. Leveraging real-time and predictive analytics refines recruitment strategies, boosts diversity, and enhances engagement. Predictive tools also help address retention risks, while sentiment analysis monitors well-being. By embedding data insights into HR practices, we align strategies with business goals, improve employee experience, and drive success.

DRIVING THE BELIEF

I believe in empowering individuals to unlock their full potential by fostering a culture of trust, growth, and inclusion. By providing support, opportunities, and recognition, I strive to create an environment where people feel safe to take risks, learn, innovate, and thrive both personally and professionally.





I am Megha, a Strategic HR Business Partner based in Bangalore, dedicated to fostering positive change in the workplace. I collaborate with business leaders across the diverse APMEA region to implement initiatives that enhance employee engagement through a thoughtful blend of insights and data. Outside of work, I'm an enthusiastic traveler and foodie at heart, always seeking new experiences. I cherish spending quality time with my family and friends, believing that life is a beautiful balance of work and adventure!

UPSKILLING INITIATIVES FOR A FUTURE-PROOF WORKFORCE

In today's rapidly changing business and labor market, upskilling is essential for maintaining a competitive edge. Continuous development is crucial not just for myself but for my teams as well. Upskilling helps us gain strategic perspective and enhances our critical thinking and problem-solving skills. It equips us to navigate complex situations and make informed decisions. Ultimately, investing in upskilling is not just about staying relevant; it's about building resilience that thrives on change and continuously seeks improvement.

INNOVATION AT THE EDGE

As an agile HR professional, I am passionate about using technology to improve our practices. We recently revamped our Reward and Recognition program with a digital platform where employees earn and redeem points for outstanding performance, celebrate success across categories, and enjoy instant peer-to-peer recognition. This has significantly boosted motivation, belonging, and engagement scores.

We are also exploring virtual reality for learning and development, using VR simulations for leadership training to help managers practice decision-making in realistic scenarios. By embracing these technologies, we are setting new standards for HR to drive organizational success.

DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

I use data insights to guide our day-to-day decisions and strategic initiatives. I work closely with COEs, business leaders, and other enabling teams, relying on data to shape our decisions. By regularly tracking key HR metrics, we ensure our strategies are effective and can respond to changes. For example, we analyze data from employee surveys to identify areas where we are excelling and areas where we could improve, helping us create a supportive work environment where our associates can succeed. Additionally, we review performance trends to adjust our learning and development programs as needed. This approach ensures that our HR strategies are flexible, responsive, and aligned with the real needs of our workforce and overall business goals.

DRIVING THE BELIEF

I am committed to building a growth mindset across the organization by promoting continuous learning and adaptability. This creates an HR ecosystem where associates feel empowered to share feedback openly, push their boundaries, and develop new skills.





I am an atypical case of moving from Hotel Operations to Human Resources. People operations came to me with ease and naturally, as it amalgamates with my inherent personality. I have over 16 years in hospitality and I'm going strong. I am presently associated with Espire Hospitality Group as Chief Human Resources Officer. The Espire Hospitality portfolio includes Six Senses Fort Barwara, Zana Luxury Resorts, and Country Inn Hotels & Resorts. EHL is a talent-minded organization that knows its people are its greatest lever for business success. Our cognizance of keeping talent at the center of our operations defines a connection with our organization's present and future.

UPSKILLING INITIATIVES FOR A FUTURE-PROOF WORKFORCE

Upskilling is inevitable for a growing organization like ours in present times. A well-trained and evolved workforce is better equipped to handle disruptions and seize new opportunities. Our endeavor is to enhance adaptability and resilience among colleagues across levels; thus, we keep training the team to remain relevant in their current jobs.

INNOVATION AT THE EDGE

Well, innovation is an ever-evolving process, and I believe in keeping our basics intact in the process of reaching for the stars.

Grit - The perseverance and passion to achieve your enduring goals. Never surrender to the various milestones in your life.

Focus on Meritocracy – Choose and get chosen for demonstrated abilities and merit. Exhibit the power to envision and create a future. You will, consequently, create a bias-free work atmosphere.

Ability to Create Women-Empowered Workplaces – Women embracing and growing women is the most pragmatic and sensible approach. Do not perpetuate bias; instead, help break the glass ceiling for other women as well. Women are often considered, especially in the cut-throat business world, as the kinder and gentler gender. I have always had a mind of my own, and being assertive is often taken as being aggressive. Women are theoretically supposed to have an empathetic outlook, whereas I am more direct and rational. For me, it is hard to imagine leading effectively without doing it assertively.

P.S. – We are in the business of emotion and service. We focus on creating flourishing workplaces that are high on EQ rather than tech to create unforgettable guest experiences.

DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

Data analytics has always supported our business in making more informed decisions. Business, people, and processes are all intertwined aspects of every data analysis. Data-based decision-making gives us the capability to generate real-time insights and predictions to optimize our performance. Guest feedback systems, STR analysis, comp-set studies, training needs analysis, and many more comprise our daily hustle.

DRIVING THE BELIEF

Consistency and creativity go hand in hand—being consistent means never having to restart, keeping the mental cobwebs away. In a slow or varied-paced environment, creativity cannot flourish, making it a byproduct of consistency.





As the HR Country Head, I lead the strategic human capital initiatives at Alvarez & Marsal. With over two decades of experience in HR, I have built a career grounded in strategic talent management, organizational transformation, and leadership development. My journey spans leadership roles across global consulting firms, where I've driven material changes in critical functions, built resilient teams, and developed forward-thinking talent solutions. I have also had the experience of advising and implementing people solutions for external clients. I believe in building a culture by design where people feel valued and motivated to contribute to the success of the organization.

UPSKILLING INITIATIVES FOR A FUTURE-PROOF WORKFORCE

In today's rapidly evolving business landscape, continuous upskilling is not just desirable but a business imperative. With the advent of AI and machine learning, employees need to adapt and acquire new skills to stay relevant. According to a 2023 World Economic Forum report, 44% of workers will require new skill sets within the next five years due to advancements in automation and AI. At Alvarez & Marsal, we focus on creating a learning ecosystem that emphasizes continuous development across technical, digital, and leadership competencies. As a leading global consulting firm, our aim is to foster a workforce that is not only capable of adapting to change but also one that thrives in it. We are deeply invested in making Alvarez & Marsal the most exciting place to work by providing our people with cutting-edge learning opportunities to ensure holistic growth. We do not undermine the importance of 'the human element' that is so required in this rapidly changing environment of high expectations and pressure. We invest in learning interventions that shape our leaders behaviorally and make them empathetic people leaders.

INNOVATION AT THE EDGE

The convergence of technology and human capital has transformed HR from a mere support function to a strategic partner in driving innovation. At Alvarez & Marsal, we are leveraging cutting-edge technologies such as predictive analytics and Al-powered talent acquisition tools to enhance decision-making and improve talent management processes. Our focus is on utilizing HR tech innovations to boost employee engagement, streamline workflows, and provide a more personalized employee experience. Additionally, we are investing in digital learning platforms that allow for real-time skills development, catering to the individual needs of our employees. These innovations are not just enhancing operational efficiency but also ensuring we nurture and retain top talent.

DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

The fusion of data, analytics, and Al has become the foundation of modern-day decision-making. At Alvarez & Marsal, we have invested in building data analytics capabilities to spot trends, assess employee engagement, and identify potential skill gaps or vulnerabilities within our workforce. Adopting a data-driven approach has helped us understand our workforce at a more granular level and tailor customized solutions for our employees to ensure inclusive and holistic growth.

Data not only informs our HR practices but also ensures that we maintain a competitive edge in advising our clients. Whether it's diagnosing operational inefficiencies or identifying growth opportunities, data analytics empowers us to provide deeper, more strategic counsel to our clients.

DRIVING THE BELIEF

Driving resilience through diversity and empowering people shapes my leadership philosophy. Diverse teams outperform and bring unparalleled creativity to the table. It's time for individuals to take charge of their careers, while companies empower them with the right platforms and opportunities.





As an HR leader with over 25 years of experience in diverse industries, I specialize in building talent capabilities, driving organizational culture, and implementing leadership interventions for business growth. I am committed to creating positive work environments that foster employee growth, engagement, and performance. One of my core strengths is influencing change by cultivating strong relationships. I have been a change leader across the enterprise, actively participating in transformational initiatives and creating a High Trust – High Performance culture. I believe that HR should be a strategic partner, ensuring that our people strategies align with the company's long-term vision. I am passionate about nurturing young talent and building a culture of continuous learning. I find fulfillment in helping individuals grow within their roles while contributing to the broader success of the organization.

UPSKILLING INITIATIVES FOR A FUTURE-PROOF WORKFORCE

Geopolitical situations and technological advancements directly impact economic trends and the job market. Coupled with increased intelligence and competition from the next generation, as per the Flynn effect, it is imperative to upskill ourselves and our teams to stay competitive. I believe that companies should employ a combination of self-learning tools and instructor-led coaching sessions to train the workforce on various technology and Al-driven tools and behavioral competencies.

Post-training, it is prudent to enable knowledge sustenance, assess training impact and improvements in business deliverables, and assign change management champions as internal mentors. Learning is a continuous process, and organizations should consistently engage in refresher training and networking-driven learning opportunities.

INNOVATION AT THE EDGE

I recommend that we should not only keep up with the change but do everything possible that matters to our people and business. It starts with inclusive ideation, followed by scoping, due diligence, and implementation, all done with Sagility (Seamless Agility).

Intelligent NLP-based automation functionality in the company's HRMS has been a resounding success, providing on-the-go (mobile app-based) HRMS access to our people. Creative frameworks that help in the development of diverse work groups and holistic wellness offerings are what I sincerely believe in integrating—people experience and well-being, inclusivity, organizational relevance, and operational and commercial viability—to infuse innovation in every people touchpoint.

DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

The best decision-makers are equipped with top information and data! I believe in leveraging people analytics for data-driven decisions that align human capital with business objectives. Tools like dashboards track trends, identify potential shortages, and highlight areas with high turnover rates while facilitating retention moves through engagement. Sentiment analysis tools, such as surveys and feedback forms, allow HR to assess employee morale in real time, addressing dissatisfaction before it escalates. Performance data helps identify top performers and teams needing support, while real-time data on emerging skill sets enables HR to anticipate future needs, ensuring workforce development for evolving industries. Additionally, data helps HR stay ahead of regulatory changes and compliance requirements, allowing for better alignment of the workforce with business goals and faster adaptation to market shifts.

DRIVING THE BELIEF

My leadership philosophy focuses on cultivating a sustainable, high performance culture rooted in trust, equity, and diversity. Diverse teams foster resilience and unlock exceptional creativity. By empowering individuals to take ownership of their careers and ensuring companies provide the right platforms for growth, we create an environment where everyone thrives and contributes to lasting success.





Strategic thinker with business acumen and over 3 decades of experience in HR leadership roles. Proven ability in Pre & Post Merger integrations, collaborate at the board level, partner with C-suite executives, drive workforce transformation with agility, and lead restructuring efforts with an entrepreneurial approach. Expertise in stakeholder management, cost management, and enhancing productivity. Adept at managing complex challenges while building high-performing teams that promote growth and innovation. Passionate about diversity, inclusion, and creating a strong business impact. Global coverage with deep APAC experience, especially in India, China, Japan, Korea, Thailand, Australia, the Philippines, and Bangladesh.

UPSKILLING INITIATIVES FOR A FUTURE-PROOF WORKFORCE

In today's fast-evolving landscape, where a cross-generational workforce and technological advancements drive change, upskilling is not just a choice but a strategic necessity. I call it 'Renew and Refresh.' Upskilling helps employees stay relevant in a rapidly shifting world, as seen in ATC's Functional Excellence Program, which builds cross-functional expertise. It drives innovation, enhancing competitiveness through initiatives like The Leadership MasterClass. Moreover, investing in employee growth fosters engagement and retention. By embracing a 'Culture Add' approach, we bring diverse perspectives that enrich the organization and fuel long-term success.

INNOVATION AT THE EDGE

Innovation is a key driver of success, and staying ahead in today's dynamic business world requires embracing cutting-edge technologies and forward-thinking strategies. At ATC, we focus on three key areas: Digital Transformation, using tools like 'ElevateXperience' to enhance employee engagement and recognition; Data-Driven Decision Making, leveraging analytics to optimize talent strategies and improve retention; and Employee Experience Initiatives, with programs like CAFÉ and BREW that enrich workplace culture and drive engagement. These innovations ensure we remain agile, people-centric, and prepared for the future.

DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

In today's fast-paced environment, data-driven decision-making is crucial for strategic agility. By establishing a robust data infrastructure through HRIS systems, employee surveys, and performance tools, we can harness insights effectively. Leveraging advanced analytics tools helps identify trends and correlations, especially in talent management, that manual analysis might miss. Additionally, real-time dashboards and reporting ensure HR leaders have timely access to key metrics, enabling quick, informed decisions and proactive responses to challenges.

DRIVING THE BELIEF

Aristotle's timeless adage, 'We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit,' resonates deeply with me. By fostering a culture of continuous learning and thereby excellence, we empower our multi-generational workforce to unlock their full potential and drive organizational success.





My career has spanned over three decades, during which I've built a strong reputation in Capability Building and holistic HR Management. I've navigated organizational change, tackled post-de-merger challenges, and led strategic interventions. As the HR Head for various divisions within the L&T group, I've closely collaborated with Business Leaders, making a significant impact on several Business Transformations. Currently, I serve as the Vice President & Group HR Head of L&T Energy Hydrocarbon (LTEH), a key part of the L&T group. LTEH covers the entire hydrocarbon value chain, including oil & gas processing, refining, petrochemicals, renewables, and fertilizers.

UPSKILLING INITIATIVES FOR A FUTURE-PROOF WORKFORCE

When the spinning wheel was invented in the 14th century, it sparked fear across society, with many worrying it would signal the end of livelihoods. A similar unease resurfaced during the Industrial Revolution. Today, we find ourselves at a similar juncture, with Al casting a shadow over the job market. Personally, I believe that upskilling and reskilling will always be crucial. To thrive in this constantly changing world, we must embrace change and adapt our skills to align with shifting market demands, rather than retreating into our comfort zones. My personal mantra is to take on at least one new or challenging task every year, ensuring continuous professional growth.

INNOVATION AT THE EDGE

"Innovation is the ability to see change as an opportunity, not a threat." – Steve Jobs

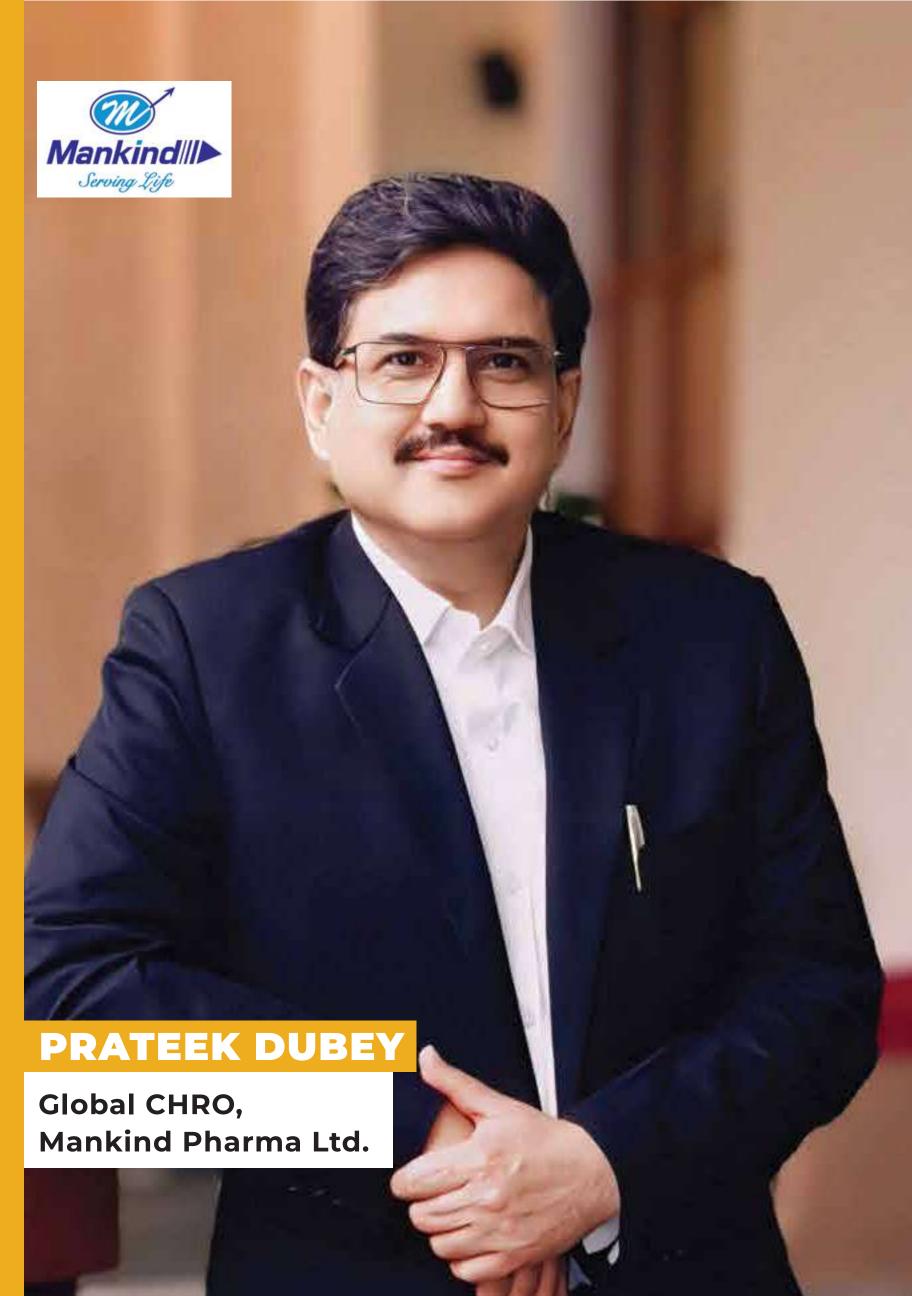
COVID posed many challenges, especially for learning and development at L&T. One key program for Diploma Trainees, which focused on both technical skills and personality development, had to pivot from in-person English coaching to a virtual format. Partnering with an IT provider, we moved the training online, allowing trainees to participate remotely while tracking their progress closely. This shift not only reached over 400 employees across remote sites but also reduced training costs, highlighting the power of technology in transforming education.

DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

Intuition is valuable for guiding decisions, but in today's world, every decision must be backed by data. While intuition sparks direction, data verifies and deepens insights. As businesses increasingly use data to understand customer behavior, streamline operations, and forecast trends, advancements in Al and analytics make data a vital resource. Companies that harness it effectively are better positioned to innovate and stay competitive. In HR, analyzing metrics like performance, engagement, and recruitment efficiency allows leaders to craft more accurate and impactful strategies.

DRIVING THE BELIEF

I believe in the power of reflection – reflection on how the day has gone, how the month has gone, how the quarter and year has gone. Diligent reflection keeps me on focussed on my life goals and milestones achievements.





I bring forth a rich tapestry of experience woven from over 23 years in the realm of human resources, with a particular emphasis on the nurturing of talent. As a leader deeply attuned to the needs of individuals, I passionately champion a holistic approach to growth, harmonizing the aspirations of both people and organizations. My extensive HR acumen, coupled with a fervent dedication to cultivating a people-first culture, shapes my leadership philosophy, striving to create a vibrant, safe, and productive workplace that propels organizational success. My journey has taken me through esteemed institutions such as IDFC First Bank, Hindustan Coca-Cola Beverages, and Suzlon Energy, among others, where I thrived in multicultural landscapes. Notably, my tenure as Head of Employee Relations at IDFC First Bank solidified my commitment to fostering robust human connections and inspiring my teams with boundless enthusiasm.

UPSKILLING INITIATIVES FOR A FUTURE-PROOF WORKFORCE

The initiatives are designed to cultivate a future-ready workforce through strategic leadership development programs, job rotation, and innovation workshops, alongside cross-training and a mentorship initiative that connects senior leaders with high-potential talent. Microlearning modules and digital literacy programs ensure ease with evolving technologies. As a visionary leader, I ardently believe that ongoing upskilling is vital for adaptability and growth. By fostering a culture of continuous learning, we ignite curiosity, nurture innovation, and elevate emotional intelligence, ultimately enhancing our organizational prowess and creating a thriving environment for all.

INNOVATION AT THE EDGE

We cultivate a vibrant culture that champions experimentation, empowering our employees to explore new ideas through timely reward and recognition initiatives. These platforms spark creativity and foster prototyping to refine our processes. Recognizing the importance of continuous learning, we invest in upskilling and reskilling programs that keep our workforce agile amidst the swiftly changing tides of technology and market demands. Moreover, by nurturing cross-functional collaboration among leaders, we dismantle silos and adopt a more comprehensive approach to problem-solving. Our mentorship programs connect emerging talents with seasoned executives, facilitating the transfer of wisdom and innovative ideas, ensuring we remain at the pinnacle of our industry.

DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

As a visionary leader, I embrace the art of data-driven decision-making as a cornerstone of our strategic triumphs. By setting clear objectives and delineating key performance indicators (KPIs) that resonate with our aspirations, I lay the groundwork for success. I invest in cutting-edge analytics tools to bring forth real-time data visualization, fostering a rich culture where data informs every choice. Through vigilant monitoring of KPIs via dynamic dashboards, we uncover trends and seize opportunities, while scenario planning empowers us to evaluate potential impacts before taking action. Feedback loops refine our strategies, and collaboration across departments elevates decision quality. Ultimately, I champion agility, enabling us to adapt our strategies in light of fresh insights, ensuring that data guides our path forward.

DRIVING THE BELIEF

Creating a culture of continuous learning and development is essential in today's rapidly changing workplace. By advocating for personalized development plans, providing access to diverse resources, encouraging feedback, recognizing learning efforts, implementing leadership programs, and measuring effectiveness, we empower employees to grow and succeed.





I'm Praveen, an HR enthusiast with a passion for learning, innovation, and driving meaningful initiatives at Vedanta Group. Over the years, I've had the privilege of shaping global best practices in leadership, talent management, and employee experience. My focus has always been on leveraging digital transformation to streamline HR processes, ensuring we stay ahead in an evolving landscape. With more than two decades of experience across diverse geographies, I've gained valuable insights into creating a strong leadership pipeline and positioning Vedanta as a global employer of choice. I'm also passionate about contributing to thought leadership, frequently sharing my insights in renowned publications and engaging with students and industry experts. Outside of work, I'm deeply committed to social causes, actively involved with NGOs and service groups, with the aim of making a positive impact in communities around.

UPSKILLING INITIATIVES FOR A FUTURE-PROOF WORKFORCE

Upskilling is not just an option; it's a necessity for staying relevant in today's rapidly evolving global landscape. I firmly believe that continuous upskilling is the key to propelling both oneself and the team to the next level of performance and leadership. Growth and innovation are deeply tied to mastering new-age digital technologies and skillsets, ensuring we stay ahead of the curve. By leveraging global benchmarks and aligning with cutting-edge trends, we can foster a culture of excellence. Collaborating with universities for tailored upskilling programs, adopting the latest tools and technologies, and encouraging partnerships with startups are critical strategies. These approaches not only accelerate individual growth but also drive organizational success, creating a workforce ready for the challenges of tomorrow.

INNOVATION AT THE EDGE

Innovation is all about embracing new-age technologies and digital transformation. I believe the only way forward is to fully immerse in these advancements. By leveraging cutting-edge tools, we can unlock new levels of efficiency, creativity, and growth. One of the key strategies I've championed is reverse mentoring—where younger team members help veterans appreciate the power of these new-age tools. This creates a dynamic exchange of ideas, empowering both groups to innovate more effectively. To truly push boundaries, we should draw insights from the best globally, i.e., in the 'Universe,' and apply them locally. This will elevate our local operations and help us stay competitive on the world stage. Innovation thrives when we constantly expand our horizons. At the end of the day, technology is only an enabler. True performance happens on the ground, driven by our people. We maintain a balance between 'high-touch, high-tech' approaches to ensure human connection remains key. Through digital innovation, we are prepared to adapt swiftly to the ever-changing business landscape.

DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

As leaders, we have always relied on a data-driven scorecard approach to make strategic decisions. By focusing on numerical and quantifiable metrics, we ensure that our choices are grounded in fact, not intuition. This approach provides clarity on performance, helps prioritize areas of improvement, and highlights opportunities for growth. However, data is not just about numbers—it's about context. Context allows us to properly interpret data and create a narrative. This is where insights are born. Insights empower us to take action, make bold decisions, and take calculated risks—essential for disruptive growth. Ultimately, action drives results. Whether it's workforce planning, identifying new opportunities, or responding to market changes, data empowers us to make swift, impactful choices that align with our long-term strategy.

DRIVING THE BELIEF

I believe that upholding ethics and governance is paramount to both organizational success and people well-being. Attitude of hard work and nurturing young talent would remain key success factors for any organization.





I am an accomplished People Leader with over 20 years of enriched corporate experience. A deep understanding of talent development across executive leadership levels, coupled with a laser-sharp vision, are some of my defining strengths. As a corporate change-maker, I firmly believe that 'Transformation' is at the core of every organization's growth. During my 8-year stint with Giesecke + Devrient Mobile Security India Pvt Ltd, I have played a pivotal role in establishing corporate strategy, developing and influencing culture within the organization, overseeing corporate governance, and addressing business challenges. My recent expanded role also includes responsibilities as a Board Member for Giesecke + Devrient ePayments Asia Pte Ltd. My top skills and specializations include Strategic Human Resources, People Strategy, Organization Development, Talent Management, Ideation of Employee Engagement & Motivation, HR transformation through change management, and Leadership Transformation. My past roles include leadership positions at Infosys, SunGard, Oracle Financial Services, TCS, and others.

UPSKILLING INITIATIVES FOR A FUTURE-PROOF WORKFORCE

In today's fast-paced world, upskilling is essential due to the rapid digital transformation and the rise of technologies like Al and automation. It's crucial not just for individual growth but for team resilience. As leaders, fostering a culture of continuous learning ensures adaptability in changing times. Upskilling should be strategic, aligned with emerging trends, and focused on both technical and soft skills like critical thinking and emotional intelligence. By designing flexible, accessible programs that align with business goals, we can future-proof our workforce and the organization, making them more adaptable to technological and global competition.

INNOVATION AT THE EDGE

HR leaders are using the latest technologies like AI and machine learning analytics to push the boundaries of traditional workforce management. Innovations in recruitment, employee engagement, and talent management are changing how we find, develop, and retain talent. By combining data-driven insights, HR can deliver personalized employee experiences, optimize workflows, and drive change. Innovation means not just new tools but a culture of agility and experimentation within the team. Innovations in work culture and remote work schedules are becoming the new norm. As leaders, we need to be willing to adapt to this change and encourage teams to experiment with new ideas. Pushing the boundaries involves not just implementing technological solutions but also rethinking talent management and fostering an inclusive culture in an increasingly digital world. Innovation stems from not only investing in equipment but also in a mindset that prioritizes creativity, collaboration, and problem-solving.

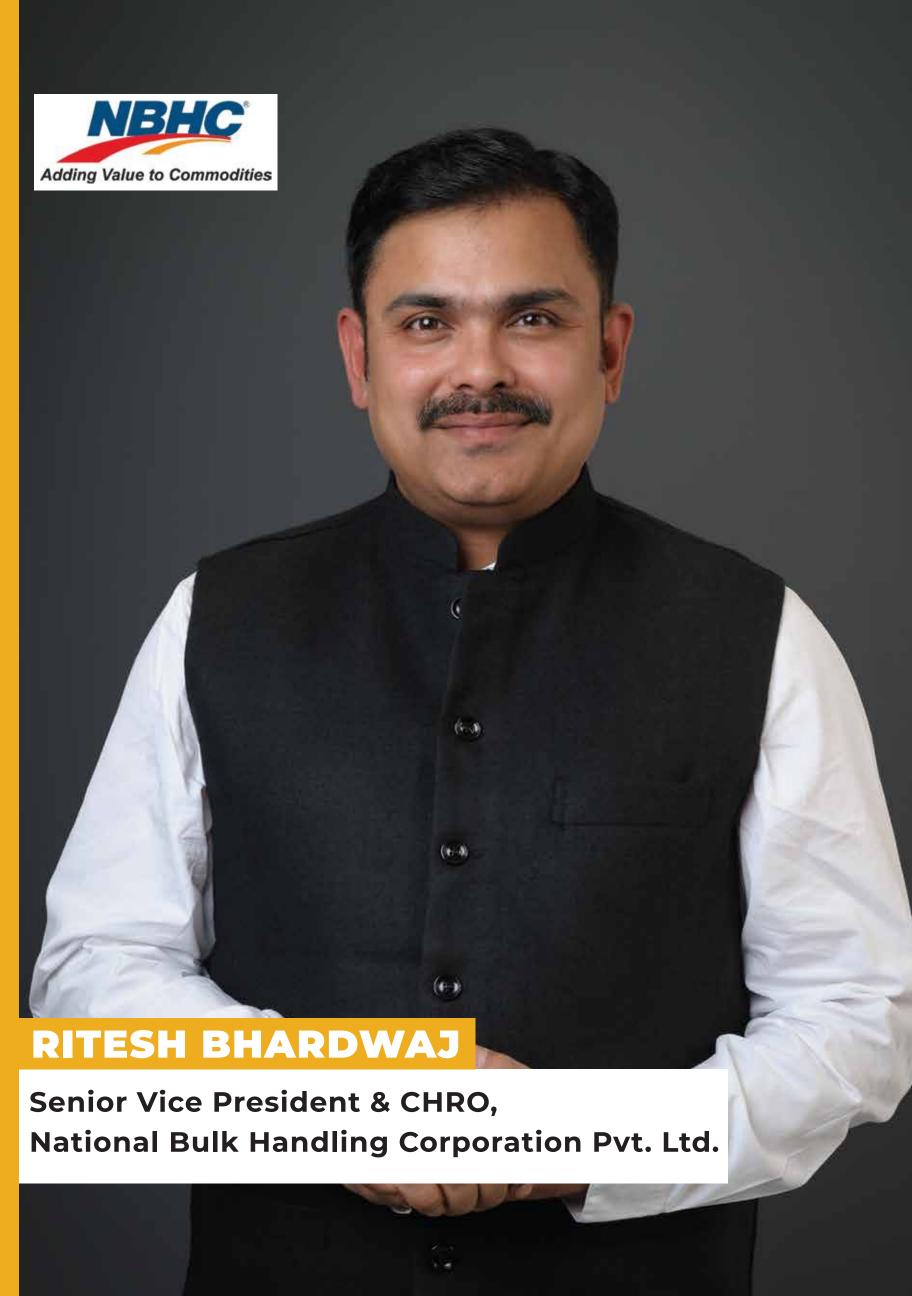
DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

Data is key to making real-time strategic decisions. HR professionals can use data analytics to predict workforce trends, measure employee performance, and optimize recruitment strategies. People analytics can uncover hidden patterns in employee engagement, retention, and productivity, enabling more informed decisions. By using data-driven insights, HR can align workforce strategies with business objectives, ensuring decisions are fact-based rather than intuitive. Real-time data on productivity and employee engagement helps leaders make decisions quickly and accurately, turning data into insights. Data-driven initiatives enable HR to integrate workforce objectives with company goals and serve as a strategic decision-making partner. By using the correct measurements, HR can provide solutions that are predictive rather than reactive, resulting in long-term value and a high-performance culture.

DRIVING THE BELIEF

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The true strength of any organization lies in its people, and when empathy is at the core, it fosters a motivated and innovative workforce, driving collective success.





I have 18+ years of experience in Human Resources and have worked with leading brands in the industry such as Godrej Agrovet Ltd., Dr. Reddy's Laboratories, KOHLER, and PepsiCo. Throughout this learning journey, I have been mentored by some of the finest CHROs, MDs, and CEOs. In my efforts to build a sustainable organization, I focus on fostering and driving an enabling culture, supporting the organization's growth aspirations, and creating best-in-class teams across the industry.

UPSKILLING INITIATIVES FOR A FUTURE-PROOF WORKFORCE

Post COVID-19, both the Indian and Southeast Asian markets have become volatile in terms of talent and operational regulations. The ways of working, the introduction of new labour codes, ESG-SDG goals, higher attrition rates, ring-fencing top talent, increasing diversity at the leadership level, and the use of AI for analytics are all new challenges in front of the HR team. To address these areas, HR professionals need to quickly upskill themselves and plan to upskill the larger workforce within the organization. Learning is now essential for building sustainable organizations. Over the last 36 months, as part of my commitment to continuous learning, I have completed four certification programs and conducted train-the-trainer sessions for my team, leading to the successful implementation of key projects.

INNOVATION AT THE EDGE

There is an opportunity for us to identify recurring activities and implement technology in place for better resource utilization and higher efficiency. Investing in technology and Al-enabled platforms for data analysis (Qlik Sense) helps in hiring the right talent (Zoho), capturing the experiences of new hires for better stability (InFeedo), understanding individual learning needs for higher productivity and upskilling, and conducting predictive analysis to retain top talent. HR has always had tons of data, but now, with technology, data analysis and decision-making have become sharper and more focused.

DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

The real-time example was the usage of a predictive analysis tool in one of the critical year businesses, which helped us to arrest the higher attrition % much in advance. This also helped me in designing the lucrative incentive scheme and retention plan for managers in Sales and Business Development. The result was that we delivered profitability with the lowest ever attrition in the sales force.

DRIVING THE BELIEF

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Continuous Learning and in-depth knowledge is key to success.





As a result-oriented HR leader with extensive expertise in talent management, recruitment, and organizational development, I have played a key role in shaping and implementing both long-term and short-term strategic plans in alignment with organizational goals and market trends. This has resulted in improved operational efficiency, streamlined processes, and enhanced productivity and profitability. Currently serving as Head of Strategic Growth at the Indian Spinal Injuries Centre in Delhi, India, I am responsible for developing comprehensive strategies that align with the organization's vision and objectives. Additionally, implementing key performance indicators (KPIs) to evaluate the success and impact of strategic initiatives has helped in consolidating organizational growth.

UPSKILLING INITIATIVES FOR A FUTURE-PROOF WORKFORCE

Upskilling the team is crucial in today's rapidly changing business landscape. With the rise of AI, automation, and HR tech tools, HR professionals need to be proficient in using these technologies to improve recruitment, employee engagement, and performance management processes. As organizations become more global, HR must manage a diverse workforce with varying needs and expectations, requiring skills in cultural competency and inclusive leadership. HR is no longer just an administrative function; it plays a key role in driving business strategy. Upskilling enables HR professionals to contribute to decision-making and organizational development.

INNOVATION AT THE EDGE

Pushing boundaries through cutting-edge technologies and innovative ideas is vital for meeting workforce demands. HR leaders like me use Al-driven tools to streamline recruitment by screening, assessing, and matching candidates, reducing bias and improving efficiency. Al-powered chatbots handle routine HR queries, onboarding, and employee engagement, enhancing the employee experience. Data analytics predicts turnover, tracks performance, and improves talent management, enabling data-driven workforce planning.

Al and machine learning also provide personalized L&D programs to ensure employees are consistently upskilled. Staying updated on the latest developments is crucial for HR leaders and teams to stay ahead.

DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

By leveraging data-driven insights, I've made strategic, real-time decisions. For example:

- Performance Tracking: Ongoing assessment of productivity helped us identify top performers and address skill gaps.
- Predictive Hiring: Data analysis improved recruitment and retention by identifying candidates likely to thrive.
- Engagement Surveys: Regular surveys helped us enhance the employee experience and reduce turnover.
- Turnover Risk: Analytics flagged turnover risks, allowing us to act on retention strategies.
- · Workforce Analytics: Data helped balance workloads and staffing for better efficiency.
- Market Benchmarking: Compensation analysis ensured competitive pay to retain top talent.

DRIVING THE BELIEF

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Believing in your potential means embracing growth, turning challenges into opportunities, and taking ownership of your journey toward what you can become.





With nearly two and a half decades of experience, I was fortunate to have the opportunity as a professional to handle a complete business unit at a very young age. I joined Macleods Pharmaceuticals 21 years ago, which was a young organization at that time, as a CHRO. In these last two decades, my journey with Macleods Pharmaceuticals has given me numerous opportunities to spearhead multiple change management projects and create new business units and functions. Today, the organization has a global footprint and is one of India's top 10 pharma companies, employing nearly 25,000 human resources.

UPSKILLING INITIATIVES FOR A FUTURE-PROOF WORKFORCE

The pharma industry always emphasizes scientific knowledge that is current and updated. The industry has suffered due to a lack of skilled manpower. Upskilling requires a deep knowledge and understanding of your organization's requirements (both current and future) from the team. Execution should be done in a way that aligns with the organization's goals rather than focusing on individual achievement. We established the Centre of Excellence—a training center for upskilling manpower to meet the pharma industry's skill set. COE focuses not only on imparting core training on skills required to be productive on the shop floor but also on cultural competency, leadership, and decision-making. I believe the upskilling process should be part of our daily lives, but with a target or goal to be achieved.

INNOVATION AT THE EDGE

I have always used IT systems to upgrade HR facilitation for employees. The entire design and execution of the HRMS have been done in-house so that we can provide a digital interface to our employees through our own HRMS. To offer practical training to employees related to the work environment, we have used augmented reality and virtual reality concepts. Even the identification of the right talent is facilitated by gamification and Al-driven assessments. The drive to provide Al-driven HR employee self-services is ongoing. The integration of technology and HR services can work miracles in employee satisfaction.

DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

The pharmaceutical industry is a science-driven industry, and a lot of data analytics are required to make correct and accurate decisions. HR analytics for measuring efficiencies and effectiveness has become a paramount requirement for running the organization productively. Continuous data mining and analytic dashboards for ongoing performance monitoring have been among the key achievements.

DRIVING THE BELIEF

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True leadership in the pharma industry isn't just about creating change; its about being the change agent too. It's about building a culture that aligns skills, innovation, and technology with a shared vision for growth.





I take pride in being a forward-thinking HR professional with diverse experience, from business roles to HR functions, working from the ground up. My focus has always been on creating workplaces where people and businesses thrive. I believe HR's role goes beyond operations—it's about driving change and shaping the future of work through responsiveness, agility, inclusivity, and innovation. Leveraging technology to enhance efficiency and employee experience is key to my approach. HR's future lies in staying ahead of trends and aligning workforce strategies with business goals. As true business partners, HR must continue to innovate, foster growth, and build a future-ready workforce.

UPSKILLING INITIATIVES FOR A FUTURE-PROOF WORKFORCE

Staying updated with industry trends and emerging technologies is a personal priority for me. I firmly believe that learning is a continuous journey, vital for both individual and organizational growth. To that end, we focus on targeted, role-specific learning programs and dynamic leadership development workshops. These efforts ensure that we remain agile, competitive, and well-prepared for the future. Our commitment to upskilling is reflected in our extensive training programs, including cutting-edge technology workshops for our tech team, managerial effectiveness programs, especially in the backdrop of a growing multi-generational workforce, and comprehensive behavioral skills development programs.

INNOVATION AT THE EDGE

My goal has always been to leverage technology to enhance employee experience and talent engagement. Recently, onboarding one of the most widely used and acclaimed HRMS tools to automate our entire employee life cycle from hire to retire has been a key step in this direction. We've also made all of our peripheral HR tools, such as the Reward Redemption Platform, Digital Helpdesk, Learning Management System, and EAP Partner, available within the same app by using a jacket and SSO approach. This integration has significantly boosted employee experience and the inclusion of our regional teams. These innovations help us stay ahead in a fast-evolving market while ensuring a world-class experience for our people.

DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

- Real-Time Dashboards: Using real-time dashboards to track HR metrics, we identified an information gap, leading to immediate actions like town halls and CXO meetings.
- Trend Forecasting: Analyzing attrition trends helped refine retention strategies and adjust recruitment plans to ensure talent readiness.
- Data-Driven Talent Management: Performance metrics identified high-potential employees, guiding development and succession planning.
- Feedback Loops: Employee feedback from touchpoints like surveys and check-ins led to improved learning interventions, tailored programs, and enhanced EAP services.
- Agility in Decision-Making: Data insights allowed us to quickly adjust workforce planning, increasing FOS hiring for a new pilot targeting MSMEs in Tier 2 cities."

DRIVING THE BELIEF

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Embracing a first-principles approach and continuous learning keeps us focused, agile, and always ready to innovate at PolicyBazaar.com.





With more than two decades of rich expertise in people management and executive leadership, I have thrived in creating favorable opportunities for employees and delivering successful business outcomes. A strong believer in an empathetic, people-first approach, my expertise lies in designing, transforming, and revamping the HR cycle. I have successfully driven transformations across various industries, including hospitality, manufacturing, FMCG, consulting, and financial services by implementing effective change management strategies. In my role at Infra.Market, I have played a crucial part in the company's expansion from B2B to B2C, positioning us as India's leading construction materials company. I am also a strong advocate for diversity and inclusion in the workplace, along with CSR initiatives that give back to society. My focus remains on integrating people strategies with business goals to attract and retain top talent, empowering them to contribute meaningfully. As a business enabler, I align HR initiatives with organizational objectives, driving exceptional value and fostering sustainable growth.

UPSKILLING INITIATIVES FOR A FUTURE-PROOF WORKFORCE

In today's fast-paced environment, I believe upskilling is essential for staying ahead and driving sustainable success. Whether through a CSR initiative like IM Nirmaan, which focuses on empowering individuals through skill development, or enhancing the capabilities of teams, I have always placed a strong emphasis on continuous learning and growth. For me, the key to building a resilient and future-proof organization lies in investing in people—our people. By ensuring that my team is equipped with the skills to meet both current and future challenges, I foster an adaptable workforce that is not only prepared to thrive in today's environment but also well-positioned to navigate the uncertainties of tomorrow.

INNOVATION AT THE EDGE

The integration of digital solutions in HR enhances operational efficiency while transforming the employee experience. We have established strategic partnerships and are also internally developing innovative processes to elevate the employee experience across all areas, from payroll to learning and development. For instance, we are creating a comprehensive Learning Management System (LMS) and a dedicated sales foundation program, each aimed at driving business growth with a focus on continuous feedback and performance-driven approach. I believe the convergence of technology and human resources is vital for streamlining operations and enhancing the employee experience, fostering an agile, inclusive workplace that empowers employees and drives organizational success.

DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

An organization must consistently leverage data insights, including dashboards and objective metrics, to support strategic decision-making and drive success. I encourage teams to track employee feedback through surveys to ensure that decisions are based on real-time insights and address workforce needs. Additionally, HR Hackathons help identify trends, spot areas for improvement, and measure the impact of initiatives. Regular surveys provide valuable feedback on the work environment and employee satisfaction, enabling us to make informed decisions that enhance engagement, optimize HR practices, and align strategies with evolving needs. This commitment to data-driven decision-making enhances our strategic agility and ensures our actions are impactful and aligned with our goals.

DRIVING THE BELIEF

The true strength of any organization lies in its people, and when empathy is at the core, it fosters a motivated and innovative workforce, driving collective success.



Vice President & Head - People, Learning & Culture, HCL Healthcare



Sudeep, an accomplished HR professional, currently heads HR, Training, and Administration at HCL Healthcare. With nearly two decades of experience, he is celebrated for his results-driven, visionary approach to talent management in sectors like Pharmaceutical Research, Agriculture, Life Insurance, and Healthcare. Sudeep has a proven track record in cultivating high-performing teams at organizations like JK, Piramal Healthcare, Max Healthcare, and HCL Healthcare. His leadership has helped HCL Healthcare earn Great Place to Work Certification for four consecutive years (2021-2025) and rank among the Top 15 employers in Healthcare, Pharmaceutical, and Biotechnology by GPTW twice. His accolades include Best Recruitment Company in Healthcare (2017 by CMO Asia), Best Hospital to Work For (2016 by AHPI), Best Unit HR Head (2017), Best Employee Engagement Framework (2016 for Max Healthcare), and the COO Award (2010 for Max New York Life Insurance).

UPSKILLING INITIATIVES FOR A FUTURE-PROOF WORKFORCE

Although we have transcended the COVID-19 era, its enduring impact serves as a poignant reminder of the invaluable lessons it imparted. In 2020, numerous corporate entities meticulously crafted ambitious long-term plans. However, the onset of the pandemic precipitated an unprecedented upheaval, compelling companies striving for market leadership to swiftly recalibrate their strategies and fiercely battle for survival. This tumultuous period underscored the pervasive nature of uncertainty, emphasizing the indispensable qualities of adaptability and agility as paramount for future success.

Embracing upskilling emerges as the linchpin for ensuring the nimbleness of both you and your team in navigating these intricate transitions while maintaining relevance. I believe continuous upskilling equips the team with a potent competitive edge, enabling them to consistently perform at an exceptional level.

INNOVATION AT THE EDGE

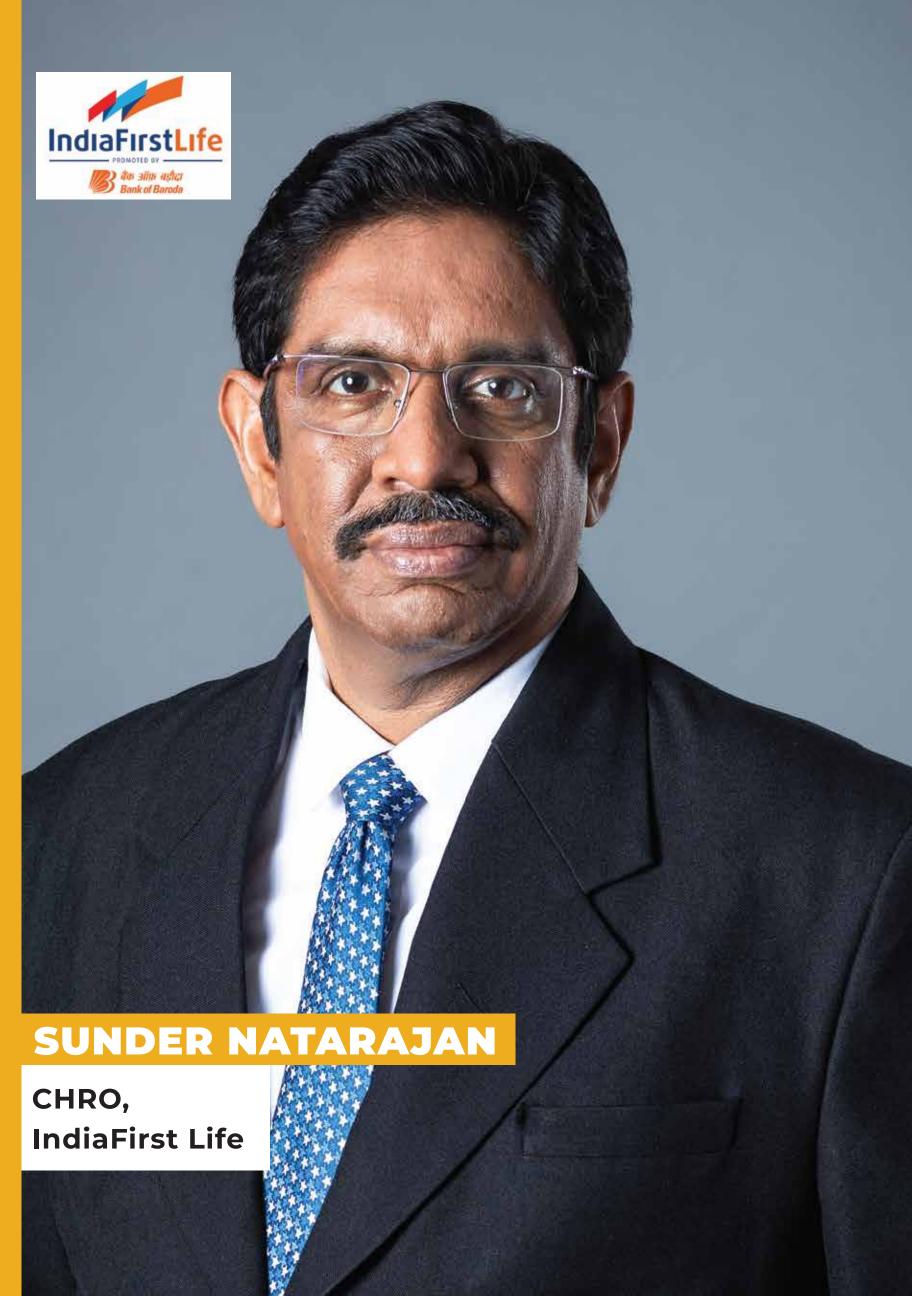
I believe that technological intervention requires caution against herd mentality. With the changing landscape, stakeholders must re-evaluate our processes. Not all processes need digitization, and technology doesn't have to replace manual work entirely. Digital transformation in HR should align with business objectives. In HR transformation, understanding human capabilities within the organization is crucial for adapting to new operations. A gradual business transformation is acceptable if objectives are met, with ethical focus on the speed and extent of change. Through proper intervention and active engagement from problem identification to implementation, organizations can achieve significant results.

DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

Working in the field of Human Resources presents a unique opportunity to address complex human issues within an organization. Each of these challenges necessitates a customized approach and heavily relies on intuitive judgment. However, the integration of these intuitive insights with comprehensive data analysis results in more practical and well-informed decisions. Leveraging analytics to identify trends and patterns is paramount for making strategic and impactful decisions. Continuously monitoring dashboards, observing patterns, deriving trends, and gaining a profound understanding of the underlying problems ensures alignment with the dynamic needs of the business.

DRIVING THE BELIEF

Discipline and integrity are my core values. Discipline drives personal and professional growth, while integrity provides freedom by ensuring I'm on the right path. Maintaining a healthy work-life balance is equally important, as success is best celebrated with the support of loved ones.





From navigating the complexities of the BFSI sector to shaping the future of insurance, my journey spans nearly three decades of strategic leadership and innovation. Throughout my career, I have thrived on tackling complex challenges, driving growth, and mentoring future leaders to shape the industry's future. My professional journey has allowed me to work across diverse functions—Human Capital, Administration, Procurement, Governance, Strategy, Sales, and Operations. I value my contributions to promoting risk education in the country, which is crucial for the industry's advancement. Currently, as the Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO) at IndiaFirst Life, I lead with a blend of strategic insight and operational focus. My commitment to nurturing talent and fostering innovation continues to be a driving force in my leadership approach as I work to build a stronger, more resilient organization.

UPSKILLING INITIATIVES FOR A FUTURE-PROOF WORKFORCE

Well begun is half done, but only half. A sharp goal ensures completion, while a robust strategy and the right skills lead to execution. In a fast-changing environment, both strategy and skillsets need constant tweaking. As a believer in the 70-20-10 rule, I focus on 70% on-the-job training, 20% social learning, and 10% formal training. At IndiaFirst Life, the second line of leadership undergoes a year-long cross-functional project, monitored by leadership and supplemented by skill-gap interventions, all triggered by the "Career Kundali." Succession plans, guided by the board, groom future leaders. Personally, I've upskilled myself using the 70-20-10 rule, volunteering for cross-functional projects (70%), learning from peers (20%), and engaging in formal education through the Institute of Risk Management and ISB (10%).

INNOVATION AT THE EDGE

"Fail fast & Learn fast" is a term we often use in the company, reflecting our ethos. A cross-functional leadership group monitors all technology and integration initiatives, approving them based on cost-benefit analysis and future potential. Failures, like using bots for interviews, have taught us valuable lessons, while successes, such as Al-empowered employee engagement, have led to increased investment in these initiatives. If analytics can be applied at each stage of the customer life cycle, it can similarly be applied across the employee life cycle. Using preferred personas for hiring and an attrition prediction model to drive differentiated employee engagement are examples of our cutting-edge work relevant to the times.

DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

In a business that is largely people-driven, metrics are crucial for making smart decisions. Setting SMARTER goals is the first step. Once the organization's goals, followed by those of the function and the individuals within it, are established, the strategy and tools needed to achieve these goals are driven by an effective Management Information System. This system tracks various metrics such as the number of people on board versus the plan, wage costs versus the plan, attrition versus estimates, training versus the plan, operating expenses versus the plan, and productivity versus the plan. These metrics enable informed decision-making. Some of these metrics are available in real-time, while others have a lag, depending on the capability to invest in real-time tools. By leveraging these metrics, we ensure that our decisions are data-driven, timely, and aligned with our strategic goals, ultimately fostering a culture of continuous improvement and excellence.

DRIVING THE BELIEF

'Be Prepared' is my personal credo. It means being ready for today, tomorrow, and the future in an ever-changing world, while fostering a diverse, inclusive, and tech-driven environment. At IndiaFirst Life, this also involves cultivating a happy, passionate, and connected culture to drive our collective success—something I hold as both a professional principle and personal mission.





With over two decades of experience in HR, I have had the privilege of leading HR operations across large Indian corporates, multinational companies, manufacturing organizations, Oil & Gas retail products, and International Property Consulting firms. My expertise spans Business Partnerships, Talent Management, Capability Building, Employee Engagement, Employer Branding, and HR Transformation. I have successfully navigated complex areas such as Mergers & Acquisitions, Integration Due Diligence, and Culture Expansion, while strongly advocating for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DE&I), and Corporate Social Responsibility. I am passionate about aligning HR practices with a company's Vision, Mission, Culture, and Values, with a focus on HR Operations, pay-for-performance models, retention strategies, and ensuring compliance with legal and regulatory standards. In collaboration with leadership teams, I have managed the full spectrum of HR functions on both a Pan-India and global scale, consistently driving business success through strategic HR initiatives.

UPSKILLING INITIATIVES FOR A FUTURE-PROOF WORKFORCE

Our HR role is to lead business partnerships with each business. For the future HR role, we should adopt a growth mindset, creating a culture of continuous learning and development that aligns with both the aspirations of employees and the strategic direction of the business. Embracing new learning opportunities, fostering internal career growth, prioritizing employee well-being, and ensuring recognition are essential for the future workforce.

INNOVATION AT THE EDGE

Company leaders can encourage creativity and innovation within their team or organization by introducing a platform for discussion. The conversation between employee and manager needs to improve. During that conversation, the leader should provide opportunities for learning and offer rewards for success. Leadership must have a positive growth mindset while engaging in growth conversations with their employees.

DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

In our HR profession, we engage in employer branding to enhance retention and promote successful career growth for employees. Similarly, when making any high-level strategic decision, it should align with our company's mission, vision, and values. Before making informed decisions, it is essential to understand your company's vision for the future. Create your goals in line with the organization's designed KPIs, and additionally, consider how you will design or contribute to your own goals. By using the right KPIs and tools, companies can overcome biases and make managerial decisions that align with their strategies.

DRIVING THE BELIEF

As an HR professional for 24 years, I thrive on helping people unlock their potential by hiring the right talent and guiding them to success, while engaging deeply to solve future challenges.





Yuvaraj leads human resources function as the Group Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO) at MakeMyTrip Group, he is responsible for people strategies for MakeMyTrip and its group companies. Yuvaraj has led HR for the organization during critical phases including various Mergers & Acquisition acquisitions, COVID 19 and international expansions. He also spearheads MakeMyTrip Foundation, social arm of MakeMyTrip, which has successfully led and executed high impact social projects across India. Before embarking on his corporate career in 1997, Yuvaraj has a distinction of serving with Indian Armed forces for six years as a Commissioned Officer. Yuvaraj's professional journey is further enriched by his stints with Organizations like Asian Paints, The Oberoi group of hotels and PepsiCo. He has been recognized by various awards including LinkedIn Power Profiles 2016, Margdarshak Award in 2022 by FOSTIIMA Business School, 100 Most Talented Global HR Leaders and named among the 50 Influential & Dynamic HR Leaders by Economic Times HR World in 2021. He has also been part of various HR committees of CII and FICCI besides being The President of the National HRD Network's Delhi NCR chapter during 2021-23.

UPSKILLING INITIATIVES FOR A FUTURE-PROOF WORKFORCE

Upskilling is crucial in today's rapidly evolving landscape. As technology advances, industries shift, and new challenges arise, continuous learning and adaptation are essential to staying relevant and competitive.

INNOVATION AT THE EDGE

At MakeMyTrip, creativity and innovation are at the heart of everything we do, driving both our technological advancements and company culture. For employees, we have led the way with industry-first innovations like Al-powered chatbots to gauge engagement and GenAl for talent acquisition. For customers, Al and ML have helped us offer personalized services such as Flight Fare Lock, Trip Guarantee, and Hotel Ranking. Our GenAl-driven features, like Hotel Review Summarization and multilingual chatbot bookings, add even more value. Internally, GenAl boosts productivity, with Co-pilot streamlining efficiency across teams. We also encourage innovation through awards like the 'Impact Innovator,' inspiring groundbreaking ideas. Every step of the employee journey, from hire to retire, is automated for a seamless experience. With OneLogin integration, employees can easily access tools and resources, enhancing efficiency and simplifying their daily tasks. Continuous training and knowledge-sharing also foster a culture of collaboration and learning.

DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

At MakeMyTrip, HR plays a pivotal role in aligning with various Lines of Business (LOBs) to meet strategic business goals such as GMV, revenue, volume, and EBITDA. By rigorously tracking people's costs and headcount metrics against business performance, our quarterly dashboards provide visibility on how people's investments align with business growth. This data-driven approach has fostered accountability among leaders, resulting in a 30% revenue increase in FY 23-24 while limiting people cost growth to just 12%, even with a 13% rise in headcount.

A couple of areas where we have leveraged real-time insights in decision-making are talent acquisition and employee engagement.

DRIVING THE BELIEF

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Every human being has potential and aspirations; it is crucial for organizations and leaders to harness this potential and help individuals achieve their aspirations. This mantra fosters empathy and compassion within the organization, resulting in great places to work and an engaged workforce.

Glossary

Anirban Banerjee, CHRO, Avendus

Arun Dinakar Rao, Chief People Officer, Birlasoft

Ayush Gupta, Director (HR), GAIL (India) Ltd.

Dakshdeep Singh, Senior Vice President (Product and Digital HR Transformation), PeopleStrong

Deepak Sharma, Head - HR & Admin, Adani Power Limited - Kawai

Indrajeet Sengupta, Senior Vice President Human Resources, Mahindra & Mahindra Automotive

Joy Banerjee, CHRO, IL&FS

Kavita Kurup, Global Head of Human Resources & Corporate Communication, UST

Leena Wakankar, Head - Human Resources, Infrastructure & CSR, ASK Group

M Lakshmanan, CHRO, L&T Technology Services

Mamata Vegunta, Executive Director, Head of HR, DBS Tech India

Megha Jigalur, HR Manager - India SEA & MEA, MillerKnoll

Neha Rana Dutta, CHRO, Espire Hospitality Group

Nimisha Rana Pathak, CHRO India, Alvarez & Marsal

Pallavi Dhawan Gupte, Senior Director Human Resources, Dun & Bradstreet India

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Poonam Chandok, Vice President & Head - HR, L&T Energy (Hydrocarbon)

Prateek Dubey, Global CHRO, Mankind Pharma Ltd.

Praveen Purohit, Vice President & Deputy Group CHRO, Vedanta Resources Ltd.

Ranjini Chakraborty, Director HR, Giesecke + Devrient Mobile Security India Pvt. Ltd.

Ritesh Bhardwaj, Senior Vice President & CHRO, National Bulk Handling Corporation Pvt. Ltd.

Ritu Kalra, Head Strategic Growth, Indian Spinal Injuries Centre

Saidutta Nanda, President & Global HR Head, Macleods Pharmaceuticals Ltd.

Shambhavi Solanki, Group Head - Human Resources, Policybazaar.com

Sheetal Bhanot Shetty, CHRO, Infra.Market

Sudeep Sharma, Vice President & Head - People, Learning & Culture, HCL Healthcare

Sunder Natarajan, CHRO, IndiaFirst Life

Suresh S.Shinde, Head HR India, DFS & OPW, Tokheim India Pvt. Ltd. (A part of Dover fueling Solutions)

Yuvaraj Srivastava, Group CHRO, MakeMyTrip

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