



**About 55 per cent employees
rate the quality of HR services in
their organisation as POOR**

TimesJobs Survey

Addressing people related concerns is one of the primary areas where HR lags big time. This needs immediate attention along with improved time management in acting on employee concerns, finds **Apeksha Kaushik**



EMPLOYEES UNHAPPY WITH HR

Time lag in offering solution biggest concern

For an organisation, there is nothing worse than having unhappy employees. There are many factors which trigger this dissatisfaction and chief among them is disconnect with the HR. Usually HR is the first point of contact for any employee when joining an organisation hence any disconnect with HR staff, its policies and rules cause grave disappointment for the employees. Being the human resource function,

this department is expected to have high levels of humility. However, TimesJobs recent study shows that HR practises often put their department in a tight spot because a majority of the professionals surveyed confided to be disappointed with how their HR works and attends to their concerns. While the HR function is undertaking a concentrated effort to improve their practices and procedures, the verdict is that they still have a long way to go.

■ EXCERPTS

Nearly 30 per cent employees of India Inc. rate the interactions with their HR department as good, about 52 per cent rate it satisfactory and remaining 18 per cent rate it poor. When asked if they have good access to HR for advice and

assistance, 40 per cent said yes while 60 per cent said no. While the access to the HR department is not that big issue, the problem lies in resolving the reported matters, as 45 per cent employees said they receive help from HR on

their matters usually in a month. Many employees blame the poor turn around time of HR on the insufficient skills of the concerned professionals. Employees say getting right information from HR is also very difficult.

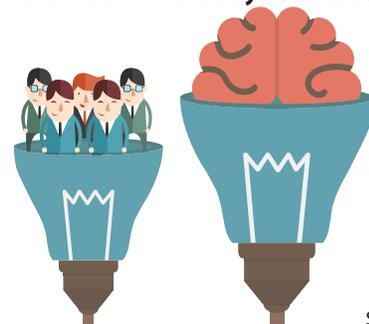
■ When I contact my HR department, I receive help within:

45% A month



■ Turn around time of HR is delayed because of:

45%
Lack of sufficient staff/resources in HR department



55%
Lack of sufficient skill in HR staff

THE PROBLEM AREAS

Nearly 60 per cent employees face problem in identifying and reaching to the right HR person to solve their issues. Another problem is the poor handling of people related matters by HR. About 65 per cent employees feel that their HR function can do better as they haven't always attempted to resolve employees' issues to the best.



■ Do you face problems in finding or obtaining access to right person in HR department to get your problem answered?

40% No



60% Yes

■ How do you rate your HR in handling people related issues?

60% Poor



■ How do you rate your HR in handling process related issues?

55% Good



■ Do you believe HR department made sincere attempts to solve your problems?

35% Yes



65% No

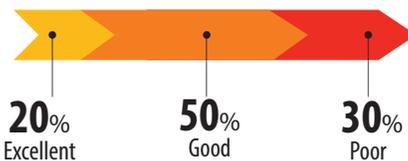
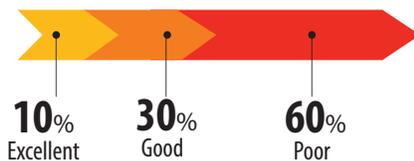


QUALITY OF HR SERVICE

Timeliness is one of the biggest concerns. Clarity of information provided is good, accuracy of HR is average, manner in which the information is provided needs improvement.

TIMELINESS

Information or assistance is provided promptly



ACCURACY

Information or assistance provided is current and correct

CLARITY

Information or assistance is provided in a clear manner, easy to understand



MANNER

Information or assistance is provided in a courteous manner



PERFORMANCE OF HR ON KEY AREAS

HR is highly rated for recruitment and placement, average in training and development areas, poor in managing employees relation.



RECRUITMENT AND PLACEMENT

This is a core function of the Human Resource department. It includes the sourcing, screening, recruiting the right candidate and induction of staff and payroll.

60% Excellent



MANAGEMENT-EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

The services are offered in the area of advice on hours of work and leave, incentive awards, performance appraisals, disciplinary actions, grievances, appeals and counselling.

65% Poor



TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Service areas include career development counselling, training opportunities and information about training courses, correspondence training and career program training plans.

45% Good



COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

Salary, pay adjustments, retirement savings, health insurance, injury claims, maintaining employee records, orientation for new employees and other related services.

40% Good

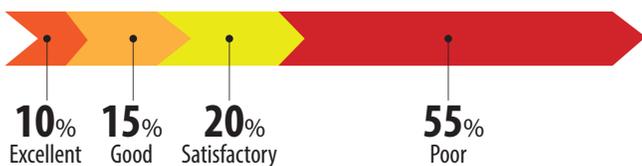


THE CONCLUSION

Overall, the quality of HR services in organisations has been rated as poor by 55 per cent employees. Key reasons include, employees are not promptly informed about important changes in rules or policies, dissatisfaction with the rewards and recognition policy followed by the HR. Only a minute share of employees say they get the necessary training to do their job effectively and just about 40 per cent would recommend their company to others on basis of current HR policies, while alarming 60 per cent will not recommend it at all.



The overall quality of service from HR department?



Are you promptly informed about important changes in HR rules or policies?



Are you satisfied with the rewards and recognition policy of your HR?



Basis the current policies and effectiveness of HR department, would you recommend others to join your company?



Do you get the necessary training to do your job effectively?



Guest Column

How should HR deal with workplace issues of employees?

Arpana S Mehra

This question can be answered best by a three word key - 'ADU' (Assertively, Diligently and Unabashedly). ADU sounds like 'I do' and hence the bottom line is 'yes, we have to action'. These can be understood best as:

No organisation is immune to it

No matter how big or small your organisation is, it is inevitable not to have work related issues. At best, you can handle it in a jiffy with a prompt solution. At worst, it can be an alarm to an overwhelming situation and can become a risk to the stability of your work environment.

Do you know me, asks the problem

This consumes a disproportionate amount of HR and management's time and attention. On investigation, one would be intrigued by symptoms. My experience says be flexible with your approach and be receptive about the problem. There is always a face-off between the real problem and divulging symptoms. Look for the broader picture to arrive at the root cause of the problem. If not, I am afraid you would find the same issues pop-up through multiple channels.

Let people tell their story

When people are deeply upset about something, they need to get their story out. This is a basic principle of HR intervention and should be remembered well. Is it a great help for conflict management? Yes. Allowing people to speak their mind can increase the level of conflict with which you must deal. That's alright. You have to get through a conflict phase to find the solution.

In every conflict ask yourself, "What is really keeping this person from agreeing to a solution?"

Reality check of the risk

Alienating an issue should not have



any legal consequences. Consult your Compliance and Governance team if not sure. Your best bet is to tackle the problems head-on without worrying about the repercussion, if any. Issues relating to ethics should be dealt with extreme caution. As an intervention, you need to bring people back to reality by wrenching their attention away from the grain of sand and have them focus on the whole beach. Doing so may help arrive at the resolution quickly.

Be proactive and always document

One of the best ways to neutralise a problem is to take an objective look at your organisation's employee handbook of policies and practices and review it continuously. Amend any policies that are outdated, unfair, one-sided or open the door to litigation (if possible). The accuracy of your documentation can be the best bet in times of crisis and can also be a good case study for future.

Learning for the Human Resources

Get your HR teams to be always ready.

Periodic trainings help them to stay up to date on dealing with conflicts better. Learning also helps them quote and practice HR policies and procedures.

The clock is always ticking

Time management is extremely crucial for all HR professionals. A time lag in redressal can aggravate the situation. The first step for developing time management skills is to understand what circumstances are beyond our control and what are in our control. For example, circumstances beyond our control could be phone calls, employee problems and work accidents, computer or equipment problems, unproductive meetings, absent co-workers and change in priorities.

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Vice President -
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TimesJobs Events



Learning & Employee Development Dialogue 2016, Bengaluru

India Inc. bets big on L&D measures, devising new programmes for millennials

TimesJobs Bureau

TECHNOLOGY has redefined the Learning & Development (L&D) aspect at India Inc. but how are the companies faring in real terms? TimesJobs got the L&D flagbearers from India's leading companies for a boardroom discussion on these aspects. Excerpts:

■ **Neelam Ahluwalia**, *GM-Learning & Development, BigBasket*

L&D plays a big role in the e-commerce industry specifically because we deal with a diverse set of customers. Also, the employee base is huge. We use many methods for employee learning like, class room teaching, mobile, app or internet-based platforms.

■ **Kevin Freitas**, *HR Leader, InMobi China, Japan, Asia-Pacific and India*

Two interesting trends have come up: first, the exposure and options available for learning are huge ranging from mobile to app-based models. The second is that companies are now bullish about providing learning opportunities to employees and also strategically calculating the results alongside.

■ **Vinita Shrivastava**, *Senior Director-HR, Harman India*

We approach our business segment asking, "What problems can we solve for you" and design the L&D programmes

accordingly. We believe in experiential learning. Also we review how the learning has impacted the employees' work life and the gaps remaining.

■ **Nagarjun Kandukuru**, *VP – Global South Strategy, ThoughtWorks*

We consider three aspects: first - how to make learning an ongoing process. Second - how to make one group of employees learn from another. For example, experienced professionals have enough knowledge and new, tech-savvy entrants have their own set of expertise. The challenge is to make all groups learn from each other. Third - how to ensure that learning happens across all regions and geographies uniformly.

■ **Priyanka Krishan**, *L&D Head, Kronos Incorporate*

We have many demographics coming to our workplace and hence learning methods have to be developed accordingly. For the campus hire or millennials the traditional methods won't work. Also, there needs to be a constant review of how well the learning methods are coming into play.

■ **Dr. Amrita Saxena**, *Global Head of Learning and Organisational Development, [24]7 Innovation Labs*

The present workforce is redefining learning. They are technical, intellectually driven, passionate and multi-dimentional.

For them the conventional, structured programmes don't work. Learning has now become adaptive and dynamic.

■ **Jayanth Selvappullai**, *Vice President, Human Resources, Brillio*

Learning is effective when it is aligned to the business. Also, learning has to be functionally aligned with respect to the work that the person is doing or aspires to do. The effectiveness of learning also has to be measured to make these programmes comprehensive.

■ **Praveen Kamath**, *General Manager, Human Resources and Head of Strategic Initiatives, Wipro Limited*

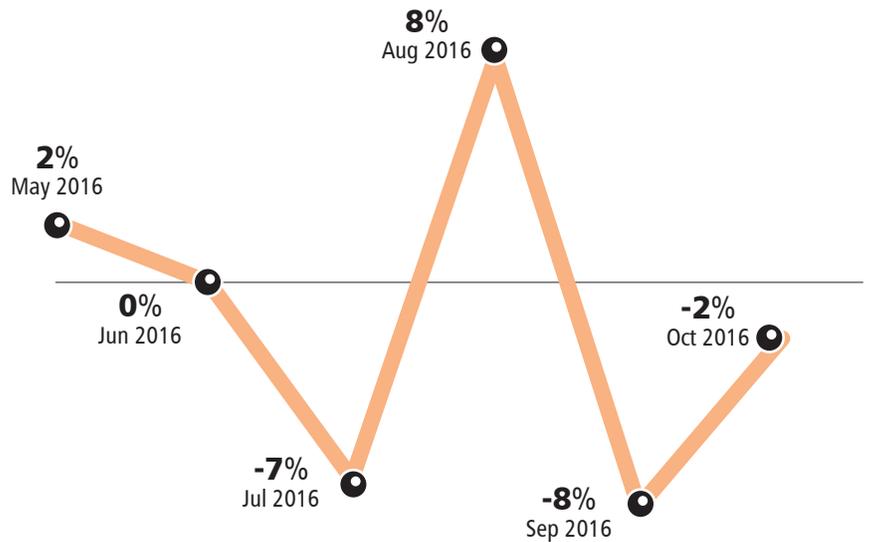
The biggest question for me is, "How do you scale learning?" Most of us talk about new-age learning but those methods are also consistently degrading. Learning through multi-media, mobile and everything is alright but there are still questions about the scope of learning.

■ **Gaurav Saini**, *Director, People Practice & Head L&D/Wellness Engagements, Happiest Minds*

This is a golden era for L&D but one question remains, "With so much learning, why does the confusion related to emerging skills, new mannerisms or other aspects still prevail?" One reason could be that while we want talented people in our workforce but we have not been able to channelise them well.

RecruiteX Monthly Trend

Content, editorial professionals were in demand even in a dull hiring phase



| | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| TOP HIRING SECTORS | | 19% Accounting, tax | 3% Logistics, warehousing | 1% BPO/ITeS | |
| IN-DEMAND PROFILES | | 13% Content/editors/journalists | 8% Accounting, finance | 6% Logistics/supply chain management | |
| TOP HIRING LOCATIONS | | 14% Bengaluru | 5% Pune | 1% Hyderabad | |
| EXPERIENCE-WISE BREAK-UP | 3% 10-20 years | -2% <2 years | -4% 2-5 years | -4% 5-10 years | -8% >20 years |

RecruiteX data for October 2016 trends based on month-over-month analysis

Interview

Manuel D'Souza,

Corporate Vice President, Chief Human Resources Officer, Intelenet Global Services

'Work related concerns easier to handle than people related issues'

How often do you get complaints about people and processes at the workplace?

A workplace is a combination of people coming from different backgrounds, personalities, perceptions and beliefs etc. and these differences are a potential source for various issues. Intelenet being a service organisation, we tend to focus a lot on work processes and employee policies to make work as seamless as possible. Majority of our work is integrated with technology solutions making it very convenient for employees to service customers without getting hassled. That said, people related issues arise in every organisation and have the potential to spoil the work environment. Some common people related workplace issues are interpersonal conflict, performance issues, internal/team communication problems, gossip, discrimination etc.

Do you have a formal system/plan/policy to manage these issues?

In order to tackle work and people related grievances, we follow a proactive approach. At Intelenet, we have initiated a 'monthly pulse survey' to receive employee feedback and check the employee engagement levels. This survey is followed with monthly focus group sessions to understand the pain areas of employees with low satisfaction scores. Post the sessions, the pulse (result) is shared with business unit heads for constructive action planning to be actioned within set timelines. Additionally, we also do an annual employee satisfaction survey globally to certify employee satisfaction.

For employees who would like to anonymously raise an issue, we have the 'Whistleblow' system. Through this system the employees can highlight any



concerns affecting their work areas. The issues raised are brought straight to the notice of senior management and the CEO. Intelenet has disciplinary action policy to manage such issues. We also ensure that the employees' issues are handled sensitively to restore the values of the organisation.

What is more difficult to handle – people or work related matters?

Based on experience, I can say that it is easier to tackle work related issues than those related to people. Work problems can be discussed and solved where as people related issues tend to get more complicated since human feelings play a major role in it. Although, every organisation tries to treat employees fairly and has policies in place, there is still a huge possibility of conflicts happening at work. In many situations, people related issues become so grave that employees start experiencing dissatisfaction with jobs.

What challenges do you face in responding to employee concerns/problems?

The most common challenge that we face is 'trust'. Although, employees come frequently to the company's HR department for any policy / leave / remuneration related problems but they tend to avoid discussing people related challenges that often. Employees often perceive that the company's management has a say in people issues and that they can control the situation in their favour. It also depends a lot on the challenge at hand. For example, an employee facing harassment / discrimination might feel embarrassed to discuss it openly with the HR thinking that there will not be any solution to his problem.

Another challenge is that employees expect immediate outcome. However, they need to understand that the HR can only propose a solution after assessing the situation properly.

What are the five best ways to approach people related matters at hand?

Listen – When employees are upset or irked with something, they want to get their story out.

Assess – It is very important to understand the entire situation before coming to any conclusion.

Take pointer - Make a note of all the challenges and try to address them one-by-one in a discussion.

Discuss - As a mediator, you can get the problem on the table and let them discuss it openly.

Conclude the consequences - In every conflict ask yourself, "What is the true motivating factor here"? Check if any further action needs to be taken.

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