

STUDY THE EFFECTIVENESS AND BEST PRACTICES OF ORGANIZATIONAL BRANDING AND COMMUNICATION

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this case is to understand the existing branding and communication practices with respect to the Human Resources processes of an Indian multinational corporation that provides information technology, consulting and business process services, so as to understand the effectiveness of the said processes and to identify possible problem areas.

Methodology: The method followed is a case based approach. Detailed one on one interviews were taken of senior managerial employees, engineering employees and ex-employees. Transcripts of the interviews were used for further analysis. Data was sourced from the company website, enterprise social networking site used for private and internal communication within the organization and social media platforms.

Findings: Strategies used by the organization to brand and communicate its HR processes to its employees were explored, and its findings could be linked to internal and external branding and communication of HR processes, employee engagement, career progression and employee motivation. This case could be used as an example to teach about the challenges faced by HR in large IT companies.

Originality/Value: The aspect of external branding and communication of the Human Resource processes of an Information Technology company adds to the novelty of the case.

Practical Implication: This case might help the readers get a better understanding of the psyche of an employee and their approach towards the HR processes at an organization.

Key words: Branding, Communication, Employee motivation, Channels of communication

Introduction

On a late afternoon in the summer 2020 at Vista, a leading global Information Technology services company located out of Bangalore, Thomas Nelliath, a management trainee was in conversation with Preethi Sharma, Senior Manager HR, Talent Management. Their conversation centred around the recently launched Annual Performance Appraisal process and the response from employees towards it. Preethi was concerned about how though the completion rate of the Performance Appraisal bordered around satisfactory, it was achieved mostly always through the effort of the HR team to drive the process than the employees' willing timely participation. Preethi raised her concerns about whether their team needed to better manage how they were branding and communicating the process to the employees so as to ensure a better buy – in from the employees. This was in light of the recent revamping that was proposed for their Leadership Qualities Survey that was being shifted from a self-assessment to an all around 360° survey. This was an active try to overcome one of the drawbacks observed during the previous running of the process, which was how do you try to fill the gap between own perception of one's qualities and competencies as opposed to how your superiors, peers, clients, direct reports, etc

Thomas reasoned that the situation cannot be different at any other IT company of their size and wondered how the HR processes of the company affect the employee life cycle – from the time an employee gets confirmed, to their appraisals, promotion, succession planning, these processes possibly held an emotional connection to the employees.

Preethi, following on her trail of thought opinionated that one possible reason for the rather slow completion rate of the Performance Appraisal process was its Quarterly nature as while it was still an Annual process 6 years ago, the HR team did not have to as consciously drive the process to achieve similar completion rates.

This left many a question popping in Thomas's mind as to how many other HR processes may have similar problems with regard to timely and willing participation of employees and what could be done to ensure the same? Now that, he was part of the team driving the HR process at the organization, he wondered what measures could he undertake to ensure timely and effective participation in the processes.

Background

The IT sector in India accounts for 4.36 million employees. The size of the IT sector in India is further expected to grow from its current stand point of US \$ 177 billion to US \$ 350 billion by 2025. The Ministry of Electronics and IT claims for the IT sector in India to have created 8.37 lakh new jobs in the past 5 years. India has become a digital skill hub with over 75% global digital workforce present in India. Employability with technology remains a problem despite the large number of academic institutions in India owing to the minor percentage of candidates who are "employable" as per the company standards. Skilling and reskilling of new employees and existing employees is yet another huge on going challenge most HR teams face as the technology takes quantum leaps and the employee must match his skills to the need of hour or risk being obsolete with the arrival of more skilled competitors.

Though Vista was founded in 1945, it was during the 1970s that it shifted its focus to the IT industry which was still only budding in India. It has had an eventful journey to the position it occupies now as one of the top IT companies in India. A few milestones along the journey are the foray into IT products services in 1982, entering into third party Research and Development and services in 1990, being listed in NYSE in 2000, acquisition of key capabilities through mergers in 2015, and the major revamp it went through in the past few years with regard to how the company culture, its commitment to transformation and evolving expectations of clients. Vista forayed into multiple business domains over these years including Health, Communication, Clean Energy, Consumer products, Banking financial services and Insurance.

Now, Vista stands as a leading global IT and services company with over 1,70,000 employees serving clients across six continents.

Thomas joined Vista through campus recruitment from a Tier 2 Business school with an MBA in Human Resource Management, less than a month ago and did not possess any work experience prior to that. Like most others in the management trainee group at Vista, he was an Engineer too with a specialization in Mechanical engineering.

Thomas understood that communication and behavioural approach was the key here. He pondered if better communication of the employee benefits of these processes might ensure more willing participation from the employees.

This dilemma had Thomas on a high drive to learn as much about a myriad of things like about the functioning and hierarchy of the company, how the IT industry functions, understanding employee behaviour, getting a feel of the work culture in the organization, building network with peers and superiors, usual employee concerns raised to the HR, etc. But Thomas was equally aware of the depth of the challenge before him as the organization spanned across multiple geographies with a 5-tier band hierarchy (A to E – E being C suite employees).

The hierarchy in Vista was Band 1 (A1, A2, A3), Band 2 (B1, B2, B3), Band 3 (C1, C2), Band 4 (D1, D2) and Band E, which was the top most band.

Thomas gathered that up till band B2 everybody is involved in coding or similar technical work, and it is after band B2 that an employee is expected to choose path, specialization and undergo specific training and

assessments depending on the path they have chosen. Band 3 on were managerial role employees starting from Manager, Senior Manager, General Manager, Vice President, Senior Vice President and then ahead on to the C suite employees in E band.

He was determined to understand the dilemma, and listed out the steps he understood that he must undertake to get to his goal of ensuring timely participation.

Firstly, he must understand the existing branding and communication practices regarding people processes. There are multiple people processes in place in the organization catering to multiple bands and functions across multiple geographies. In order to better understand the branding and communication practices, it was imperative that an in depth understanding of the processes be gained with regard to timeline, benefits, stakeholders, effectiveness in participation, etc,

Following that he must identify the effectiveness of the existing practices to enable timely and effective completion of people processes

It was important to understand how effective these practices were, was there a need to really bring about changes, and if yes, what were the problem points and what was causing them. Percentage of completion rate of process was a key factor here.

And finally, he would have to design a framework that would derive the aforementioned impact. This required zeroing in on essential problem areas and finding solutions that were most feasible to overcome those. The intent behind the framework would be such that there was increased independent participation from employees and on time.

People Processes – Gaining an understanding

The following day, Preethi sought out Thomas to join her and HR business partner Asha Vijay to take up the conversation from before in the light of a seminar the HR team attended with regard to external branding and communication of HR processes. This had Preethi wondering if Vista, while it did praiseworthy work, spoke enough about it on an external platform. Reading together this with her discussion with Thomas the day before, Preethi wagered on the thought that Vista could do with a new arena of external branding and communication of its HR processes while at the same time trying to better understand the existing processes to identify and correct pain points.

She ran her ideas by Thomas who shared with her his thoughts regarding how he could tackle the dilemma of better branding and communication of HR processes to employees to ensure effective participation. Preethi took the initiative and curiosity displayed by Thomas as a positive aspect and was of the opinion that this could be the right opportunity for Thomas to get to learn the ropes regarding the people processes handled by the HR team.

On his way home that day, Thomas tried to wrap his head around the idea of external branding and communication of HR processes as this was not a field of work, he was familiar with. His research proved that this was not something that was very often done and very few organizations branded an activity of its that was not revenue earning. His initial thoughts at having to design a framework for a not very heard of activity centred around the constraints it posed, primarily regarding maintaining the confidentiality of the organization's internal HR processes while being able to still present its worthy aspects to an external audience on a public platform. Upon raising the concern with Preethi via mail, she suggested that Thomas get in touch with Vinay Adiga from the business school campus hiring team's marketing wing who Preethi knew to be a person with a good grip on current social media marketing.

The conversation with Vinay yielded Thomas a lot of much needed clarity on the external branding and communication of the organization's HR processes. Vinay raised a few questions that Thomas agreed, when answered would give an idea on how a framework could be designed for the same.

What facet of the processes could be marketed to an external audience without compromising confidentiality?

Is there any “pathbreaking, trail blazing” facet of any of the HR processes that would warrant an external audience’s interest? This was of particular importance as the matter that is put out on an external platform will have to distinguish itself from similar content from other organizations and hence doing its job of branding Vista’s HR processes externally.

Who is the target audience? Are we targeting only senior leadership in the industry or is the content to be of a nature that could be understood by a reader quite minimally oriented towards business management? The content should be “bite sized” and easily consumable irrespective of the audience.

Is Thought leadership something that could be explored? Could a C suite leader pen an article about it on LinkedIn? This had the bonus of being an organic way to go about the process.

Is the target an online platform or an offline platform – ranging from social media to magazines.

Vinay threw light on the type of communication that existed within Vista, namely Mailers sent out via internal communication, the social media enterprise individual to the organization called Yammer and Microsoft Teams. Mails had recently been given a graphic theme taken on an order basis by an external vendor and this seemed to have a positive response from the employees. Yammer, Vinay stated was one of the only means Vista had to collect feedback from the employees as polls were conducted on this platform, discussions on interest groups (like say a group for the athletes within the company, a group for band B1 employees undergoing the Performance Appraisal process ,etc) This was a platform that the internal communication team leveraged a lot to hype employee engagement activities as this also had the advantage of “employee engaging employee” than the HR team driving the process. Vinay also wondered if the team could look into incentivizing the process such that those participating could be likely rewarded in non-monetary terms.

Upon further contemplation, Thomas drew upon a few arenas he should be exploring with respect to external branding of HR process. How do organizations make use of their social media pages to speak about their HR or its processes, if at all they do? How do they keep their employees as well as an external reader hooked on their content and generate further interest for consumption? What magazines catering to Human Resources related content are available, what is its readership segmentation like, what sort of content do they publish and what is a general template one could follow to get their content published in it?

Thomas’s conversation with Vinay brought to a light a task he could not put off anymore, gaining an understanding of Vista’s HR processes to see which ones he should have to focus more upon. And this was also of importance as there was a need to zero in upon content related to the HR processes that could be externally branded. Thomas raised his concern with Asha, who assured him that she will mail him a deck that details the people processes of Vista and also walk him through the processes. She also advised him to reach out to other team members who handled the processes.

After having been filled in on the processes such Talent Review program, Succession planning, Onboarding, Confirmation process, Leadership Development process, Assessment programs as part of Learning and Development process, Performance Appraisal and Leadership Qualities Survey by Asha and the team, Thomas found it wise to zero in on the 2 processes that he understood from the opinions of his Team to hold most problems with regard to timely participation from the employees, namely Performance Appraisal and the Leadership Qualities Survey.

Thomas understood the Performance Appraisal process to be quarterly in nature, that is Quarter 1 appraisal was in the months of April, May, June, Quarter 2 appraisal in the months of July, August, September and similarly till Quarter 4 appraisal which was in the months of January, February and March (which was called the Annual Performance Appraisal). The Annual Performance Appraisal generally pulled in more participation from the employees owing to the very visible and tangent benefit of the Rating of their performance attached to the process. Employees were rated on a scale of 1 to 5 and those with consistent improved performance from

previous rating stood a chance at a pay hike and possible promotion when the chance arose. This, Preethi believed to be a reason as to why the completion rate for Annual Performance Appraisal was at 93 % as opposed to the 88% recorded for the other three Quarterly Performance Appraisal processes. Though the difference that existed between the completion rates of these processes was not very significantly huge, what bothered Preethi was the great effort the HR team has to take to drive the process during the Quarterly processes, but which was not the case for the Annual appraisal where employees displayed more initiative to participate on their own.

Thomas noticed that how the process is launched and driven remains the same for both Quarterly as well as Annual processes. It is via internal communication mailers sent to the employees that they are sensitized regarding the launch of the process and its timeline. Reminder mails to remind employees to fill up their appraisal forms, if they have not, are sent in a sequence up till the day the window for the same is shut and then those remain to fill their forms are not afforded a chance to do the same. Thomas sought out a meeting with Radha Pathak, HR Assistant Manager who is in charge of Performance Appraisal to gain her on ground knowledge regarding the ins and outs of how the process runs and where they face kinks in the process.

Radha was of the opinion that the philosophy behind the Performance Management system of Vista was to bring in a culture of fairness, meritocracy, transparency, etc. The team intends to place much emphasis on development culture. She stated that in the past, while the Performance Appraisal process was annual, not much emphasis was placed on the development of an individual. The Performance Management system was designed such that to place importance on adding value to an employee and to transform them into high performers. Here from rose the requirement for continuous approach in the conversation with the employee, Radha added. She also stated that there was a question of how continuous they wanted the process to be before settling on making it a quarterly process. She is of the opinion that the quarterly performance appraisal process has brought method to madness with regard to the performance management system. Since performance management as such was a merit-based approach, the rating system was continued onto the quarterly appraisal process.

Here, Thomas wondered how transparent the merit or rating system was or what the employees thought of the same, as there were an odd lakh and half people engaged in these processes every quarter. As to who made the final decision with respect to the probable pay hike an employee it rests entirely with the Compensation and Benefit team, but Radha believed the process to be fairly transparent and thought the employees to be reasonably satisfied with the same. But she also stated that lots of other organizations have done away with the rating system. Radha went on to add that Band C and above, the manager decides how much the employee should get in terms of their name of few employees whom he could reach out to from Preethi. He put his thoughts and variable pay, which is a 20 % linked to the employee's performance. As an example, she quoted that if an employee's salary was Rs 1000, Rs 750 would be a fixed salary he/she will receive every month without fail but the remaining Rs 250 depends on his/her performance. You may receive more than Rs 250 too, depending on your performance. Another factor she quoted here was that the variable pay of the employee also depends on the organization's performance in addition to employee's own. And this is apart from the annual hike the employee may receive with respect to their annual performance.

In addition to all these factors, what was important for an employee's performance appraisal process ,in Radha's opinion, was their rapport with their manager as upon completion of one's appraisal form, a discussion is mandated between the employee and the manager which sees them discussing the employee's past performance, high and low points with respect to their performance, goal sheet for the upcoming quarter and any other grievance or feedback the employee might possibly have. This one on one session was of huge importance as the manager is the most reached out to point of contact, for guidance or query addressal for most employees when it comes to their performance, processes, possible promotion, etc. So, it was always encouraged for employees to maintain a healthy relationship with their managers so as to make their career progression at Vista a smoother experience. This a point at which Thomas wondered if the ineffective participation from the employees had a link to the initiative or rather lack thereof displayed by their Team lead or manager.

At the end of the session, Radha suggested that Thomas set an appointment with Mrs Priya Baxi , Manager, Talent Management, HR, as it was she who handled the Leaders Qualities Survey which was as per common consensus another process that had difficulty drawing in participation from the employees on its own.

Thomas had an enriching conversation with Priya who took him through the Survey and its intricacies. To begin with, the Survey catered only to band C and above, that is those in managerial roles or in leadership roles. The survey was to determine a few competencies in these leaders that the organization cherished and set value by. These competencies were namely, nurturing people, client centricity, strategic thinking, passion for result, and building trust. These were judged on the basis of 8 questions for each competency and hence 40 questions in all.

The reason the organization was on the lookout for competencies and not skills per se was that competencies were deep rooted in a person's nature and could not be obtained overnight unlike with skills that could be gained so. For example, one's skill to negotiate with people, decision making, etc. And what was new about the process as part of the recent revamp the process went through was the introduction of the 360° feedback to the survey. It was such that if you were a C1 role employee, you would nominate your manager, employees who report to you, your internal customer if you have any, external customer if you are in a client centric role, and your peers who are defined as any other employee who reports to your manager. Out of these many respondents, your manager and the employees who report to you are mandated to provide your feedback as they are people with whom you engage with on a daily basis and would see you in all sorts of processes, in delivering, in thought process, in meetings, etc. To Thomas's query of what if you were not friendly enough with your manager to opt him to fill your feedback form, Priya responded that the system automatically maps the respondents and you need not opt out your manager. The feedback is provided anonymously and a respondent always has the option of opting out from providing feedback to someone and this is also done confidentially and is not conveyed to the employee involved.

And what made the survey fully 360° was the inclusion of a self-evaluation which in Priya's viewpoint tried to help in bridging the gap between one's perception about oneself and how others perceive the same individual and this she believed is exactly where the essence and merit of the survey lay with respect to helping an employee develop oneself. Self-evaluation was not mandatory before the revamp the process went through.

Priya added that the core intent behind the Survey is as a development tool and the step ahead once the survey report was generated was to create an action plan for the employee to help them develop the competencies the organization values and cut loose of habits that is standing against them achieving the same. The report includes not only the employee's scores on various competencies but also the average score of the others.

After Thomas had had conversations with a few others too, he wondered if he could bucket his approach of trying to find out where lay the problem with respect to lesser enthusiasm in participating in process by employees into 3 ,namely process approach (where the problem lay possibly with the approach being not as user friendly as it could be and hence an employee wanting to put it off further, in which case changes could be brought about to the process forms that needed to be filled by reducing the content ,using easily understood language, or making it more engaging to fill. And another possibility was the lack of knowledge of the employee with respect to the benefits they stand to gain in participating in these processes, if here lay the problem, means had to be found out to better sensitize employees regarding process benefits to their own career progression), communication approach (this had to do with how the process was being communicated to the employee, could the mailers that were already being done by external vendors who add a graphic theme to it be improved upon, could the process launch be declared on any other platform than through mailers?) and finally the behavioural approach (this dealt with how the employee looked upon the process, even with total knowledge of the process if the person was not willing to participate on time, Thomas wondered if that had to do with the employee's mindset toward the process, may be it lay in a thought that this does not deserve my attention now and can be done later when the HR team sends across reminder mails, or that the employee is unable to prioritize this task over his/her other duties or it clashes with month closure tasks, etc.).

Thomas, was now curious to understand the employee perspective regarding these processes and wanted to see if there existed a gap in communication between the managers and the employees themselves in terms of these processes. He decided to roll out a survey to better understand the employee psyche. He thought it better to incorporate a few ex-employees into his survey as well to see if the perspective changed once they left the organization and collected doubts in order and zeroed in upon a few problem areas he wanted the employees' take on.

Important areas of focus in these interviews were to find the following:

Employees' understanding regarding the intended benefits of these processes – was there any misinformation? Was there a need to better communicate the benefits, both long term and short term, in terms of monetary benefit and non-monetary benefit to the employee

Promptness in their participation – how quick were the employees in responding to the mailers – did they finish it in the first 3 days after process launch or the last 2 days before process window was collapsed

Their behavioural approach towards the process – did they upon seeing the mailer have a thought in their minds regarding their past quarter's performance or a prospective pay hike or promotion – were they able to prioritize the process or was it lost in the bigger picture of their daily tasks

Employees' feedback on the effectiveness of the communication modes and channels currently used to drive the processes- were they in the habit of using the Yammer platform to raise their grievances or feedback regarding the process

Their problem areas with respect to the processes from their experience – from their personal experience of the processes where was it that they met with a glitch that they felt could be improved to provide a better employee experience or raise interest in the process

Employee suggestions to overcome these difficulties – what was it that they thought could be a means to overcome whatever they saw as problem areas – did they ever raise these ideas by their team leads or managers – what was their response like

Practices that they appreciated and made their participation easier with respect to the processes – anything that the HR team does or was part of the process that made it easier for them or more interesting – their own personal experience or their peers

Their understanding with their team lead or manager and his/her involvement in the employee's timely participation – how was their rapport with their team lead and how did it affect their participation in the process – what is their team lead's attitude towards the process

Involvement of employee's peers in participation – do you have peers who do timely participation – do they speak about it in your conversations – does that encourage you to participate as well

How and when were they sensitized regarding the launch and timeline of a process – via mails? Through activity on yammer threads?

Did they have queries while going through the process, if yes, how did they solve them – was their go to person their team lead or was there a situation where they reached out to their HR SPOC (single point of contact)

Did they provide feedback if they had any regarding the process? Was it taken into account – where did they provide it?

What processes did they feel had the most concerns with regard to employee participation?

These interviews, Thomas hoped would offer a fuller understanding regarding the problems at hand and means of trying to address them within Vista.

Meanwhile, it was also of importance to research means of externally branding and communicating about these HR processes and Thomas began exploring the various platforms available to assess the current situation regarding the same.

Magazines – like SHRM, Forbes, People Matters, Fortune, etc to understand the theme, scope, tone, etc of the articles they published

Webpages of companies like Cisco and Deloitte who were quite vocal about their HR processes – to understand how they framed their content for an external consumer

Advertisements – to understand how HR and or HR processes were portrayed in them and to understand if there existed any scope for HR branding through mediums like airport advertisements

Social media – Including LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Facebook – very extensive research was done to understand current trends in these platforms, what content had viewership, how was the combination of these platforms leveraged to increase viewership, what platform was ideal for light and complex content, how did viewers respond to content regarding HR processes, what was the involvement of senior leadership in branding a company or its initiatives?

Findings yielded

These were the concerns raised as part of the survey:

Performance Appraisal:

Problem lay with approach to process, than with concerned party's knowledge regarding process – tendency to forget the intention behind the process the quarterly appraisal system was such that it mostly always collided with employees' month closure tasks and they may be unable to prioritize process participation amongst other impending tasks.

Much emphasis on the initiative displayed by team lead – this became a huge concern for those who did not have a smooth relationship with their Team lead or for those cases where the Team lead themselves did not display much initiative regarding driving the process or guiding their team in participating

Requirement for motivation to participate – how can we incentivize the process such that employees are curious regarding the process and wanting to participate – how can we engage employees in a manner that it makes them want to participate

Leaders' Qualities Survey:

Lack of clarity regarding how the report helps in personal development - owing to the recent re vamp in the process and introduction of new features there existed confusion regarding how action plans for their personal development can be framed and put into action

While appreciation existed for the program – concerns existed regarding survey report being used as an evaluation tool and not a development tool – this stemmed from people's concern that when they received their reports and it showed that they lacked a certain competency that is valued by Vista leadership, it would stand in their way as and when a better role was available .

Failure of 360° feedback system due to lack of participation – concern existed regarding how the gap between own perception and others' perception of the employee would be effectively filled if feedback from all concerned parties was not received – and hence failing the very idea of 360-degree feedback.

Recommendations

Thomas was surprised to see a few concerns raised during his survey that had not been raised elsewhere before and hence had not fallen across in the radar of the HR team. Preethi was interested to see Thomas's findings and engaging the team in brainstorming to come up with recommendations too as it meant there was finally action happening on the ground with regard to improving the participation of the employees in the processes.

Recommendations were arrived upon keeping in mind their impact, ease in implementation, stakeholders involved, success factor, etc.

Performance Appraisal:

Intrinsic motivation: Reminds employee of intention behind the process – keeps alive in employees' minds' benefits of the process and hence driving own initiative in wanting to participate in the process

Customize employee's individual iVista page to have Goal Sheet brought out on the home page – most employees visit their iVista pages once a week or once in two weeks, so this initiative helps in keeping the thought of own career goals alive in the mind of the employee even while the Appraisal process is over. Also, have employee select keywords from the quarterly goal sheet to be displayed on the home page on their panel

Extrinsic motivation: to build positive peer pressure amongst team –

Process ambassadors – in every team an employee who is prompt in participating in the process is selected by HR BP to drive the process within their team, employee engaging employee to ensure timely participation, than the onus being entirely on HR to ensure process completion on time

Gamification and Reward –

First 1000 respondents awarded say 50 points each, next 1000 awarded 40 each, likewise till 10 points – Team with the highest aggregate score – rewarded with a paid course from Coursera, Udemy, etc. This builds a team spirit and friendly competitiveness amongst the employees and weekly updates from HR on Yammer declaring top performing team keeps the competitive spirit alive.

Defaulters – sending the number of defaults, after the final reminder as internal communication mail across respective verticals to sensitize employees regarding their participation or lack of it as it may be.

External Branding and Communication:

Articles in online HR magazines like SHRM, People Matters, Fortune, regarding how and why Vista shifted from Annual Performance Appraisal to Quarterly and how it is enabling better employee performance. Guidelines regarding how to pitch to magazines, the person who should ideally be pitching, the tone, theme, word count, scope, research etc regarding the article have been listed as part of pointers gathered.

Leaders' Qualities Survey:

External Branding and Communication: Thought Leadership – equally interesting to employees and others. Using an article on LinkedIn, or a video on other social media platform to have a senior leader speak about how the survey report is means for personal progression – breaks myths about it being used as an evaluation tool

How have they consciously broken/nurtured a habit that has made them a Vista Leader (5 competencies) – helps others imbibe practices that make them better leaders. This would be of great impact to Vista's own employees to see a leader who has been an active participant in the survey for years speak about their experience regarding how they have gotten themselves Vista Leader material

Thomas also wondered what the market for HR cartoons based on everyday problems related to the processes would be like, if that might add a lighter touch to the re work they were targeting. He also pondered about the relevance of reaching out to others in the sector to see how and if these problems were addressed in other organizations of their size and stature.

Teaching Note

Synopsis

While Vista has never really been the topmost paymaster in the Information Technology sector, it has always been one of the top IT companies in the country and its employees always carried the stamp of being very experienced and employable. This largely had to do with the intensive career development processes that the employees went through at Vista with regard to learning and development processes, and their performance appraisals where managers have traditionally always encouraged the growth prospect of an employee. In the industry, Vista was known to invest heavily in employees' career progression.

This is precisely why the need arose for externally branding for the organization's HR processes as well as trying to address and bridge the gap between the employees' and the HR team in the process communication and participation.

Learning Objectives

Through this case study the students may be exposed to the following learning objectives in the background of an age-old IT company with a lakh and half employees.

1. To understand the HR processes that generally take place in an organization
2. To understand the gap that may exist in the successful completion of these HR processes and how those could be bridged through communication
3. To understand how career development of employees happen
4. To understand how HR processes can be externally branded
5. To understand how employees can be engaged and motivated to avoid employee fatigue

Target Audience and Suggested Courses

This case can be used to teach concepts of employee communication, external and internal branding of HR processes, employee motivation, competency survey, etc to students who are in their 1st year of MBA in Human Resource Management and or Marketing.

Case Questions

1. How do you address the problem of employees not participating willingly and effectively in HR processes on their own?
2. What type of HR process content can be externally branded and on what platforms?
3. How can employee motivation be maintained for employees that have been part of the organization for long?
4. How do you leverage the role of the team lead in helping increase timely participation in processes?
5. What is a good means of collecting feedback from employees?

Teaching and Board Plans

The case on Vista is designed for a 90 minutes session. Students are advised to thoroughly read the case prior to the session and to have own short notes on their understanding of the case. The teacher must encourage students

to brainstorm in groups, aided by a discussion on the outline questions. Students could be assigned particular problems to address and their views could be discussed in the class.

The following is how the teacher could drive and engage the students during the session:

- Discussion on IT sector and a general understanding of the employee experience of a techie (5 – 10 mins)
- Gaining an understanding on the people processes of Vista (10 – 15 mins)
- Discussion on possible problem areas (10 – 15 mins)
- Discussion on possible recommendations and its implementation (15 – 20 mins)

Discussion on methods and platforms for external branding of HR processes (15 – 20 mins)

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