

## Chairman's Message

Dear Delegates and Guests,

I welcome you all to the fourth ERA Conference at Hyderabad.

Thank you for sparing your precious time.

I look forward to meaningful deliberations and a lot of inputs from your side too.

We seek your help in building and professionalising this industry so that both partners in the talent acquisition effort, i.e., client and consultant benefit.

M R Shantaram  
Chairman, ERA



## Convenor's Message



Balasubramanian.G  
Convenor Hyderabad Chapter, ERA

As always, ERA - Hyderabad wanting to do something different, embarked upon a novel idea of Power Breakfast sessions as a prelude to the Conference.

With 75 days of strenuous efforts and more than 25 members working towards the success of the conference for the 5th September 2008 coupled with camaraderie and commitment from all the members, I wish the Conference all success.

## Bringing Ethics into Recruitment

**T**he Executive Recruiters Association (ERA) is an industry body with a difference. A pan-India organisation of Recruiters, ERA has nine chapters across the country. ERA began its operations about five years ago and its main aim is to bring in ethics and ethical practices among member firms. It seeks to bring in greater amount of professionalism in the recruitment industry.

Admission to ERA is by invitation only and a member is admitted after a thorough scrutiny following which the firm signs a declaration subscribing to a code of conduct. One of the main points of the code of conduct is that an ERA member will not poach a candidate he or she places. Conflict of interest is also avoided and clients of ERA members are advised about the situation. An ethics chair governs the conduct of ERA members across the country. Any affected party, be it an ERA member or a Client can put forth the issue to the ethics chair about the perceived violations of codes. ERA also conducts a number of Management Development Programmes (MDP) for employees working with ERA affiliated members. A certified Recruiter



A Power Breakfast session in progress

Analyst Programme will be launched soon in association with institutions like SP Jain and Narsee Monjee. This course will serve as a benchmark / standard for recruiters in this country.

ERA has converted a bunch of competitors into collaborators, which eventually benefits the customer. When

clients have to recruit in large numbers, one ERA member will front end with the customer and other members back the member. ERA is also working with other organisations like CII and FICCI. ERA is also working closely with NASSCOM. ERA is infact modeled on the lines of NASSCOM. Recently, ERA was invited to

one of NASSCOM's board meetings in Mumbai where NASSCOM raised a pertinent issue. Getting people is proving to be difficult and retaining them is becoming more so. Can ERA help? A sub-committee is being set up with two members each from ERA and NASSCOM, who will deliberate on what could be done. One of the things that ERA has suggested to NASSCOM is to treat ERA membership as a sort of standard that signifies a given set of deliverables for the client. ERA has offered NASSCOM a co-chair on ERA's ethics committee.

According to service tax records, there are 23,000 recruitment firms in this country. ERA has only 220 members and though miniscule, they account for around 40% of the industry's turnover. To maintain quality parameters we need to ensure that large players join ERA and agree on a code of conduct to build consensus. The recruitment industry is the fastest growing sector in India since the last five years, and is growing at a steady clip.

The MDP aims to get senior people from other industries to speak and also mentor and collaborate to make things easy for the user community.

ERA National conferences at Hyderabad are usually held on the first Friday of September, and the conference on 5th Sept, 2008 is the fourth in the series.

## IT / ITES

The IT/ITES industry is going through something of a turmoil. Buffeted by increasing costs and a recessionary market, the sector is discovering the art of staying alive through trying times. Acquisition, Managing and Retention of talent is becoming a major issue concerning not just the HR function but is impacting across the organisation. Organisations are seeking newer, innovative ways to keep their teams intact by empowering human resources down the line. What are the ways in which companies keep retention levels at acceptable levels? How to go about acquiring talent from a market which is short of people? Is industry's expectation from employees unrealistic? Moreover, is India losing its competitive edge in this sector? Debating this issue in the first of the series of ERA CEOs' Power Breakfasts are leading executives from the IT/ITES sector.

The following participants were present for the first session of Power Breakfast for IT/ITES Sector:

Subir Sarbabidya, Business Head, Satyam BPO

Satyendra Prasad, Director, I Space

Matthew Fairless, COO, India Service Centre, UBS

Hari Lakshmiapati, Head Hyd Centre, Amazon

A Raja Suresh Kumar, Founder & CEO, Synchroserve

Kiran Kalluri, Director - Site Engineering, Dell International Service India Pvt Ltd

Krishna Bodanapu, Vice President - Manufacturing vertical, Infotech Enterprises Ltd

Ajay Shrivastav, Vice President, Wiprotech

The primary concern is finding talent itself and we do not seem to be finding people who are good enough to start working with us. Quite often, we find a candidate, only to realize that the translation of potential into action leaves much to be desired. I agree with the views of Mr. Narayana Murthy who said that less than 50% of our graduates who pass out every year are employable. I have been to colleges and I have faced this peculiar problem. We find youngsters who are able to communicate but are not smart, others who are smart but cannot communicate. Acquisition of talent is a huge challenge for me. The challenge gets all the more tough when we get good people on board and in six months, you have these great salaries coming up and people jump ship for a few thousand rupees. I cannot blame these young men and women. They are smart and they know what is good for them. There is a Ripple effect Acquisition is tough and life is a lot tougher and this makes this industry all the more dynamic. If we can fix getting talent at a more reasonable cost and pace, it will give them that much more time to spend in integrating with the organisation.

Lakshmiopathy Hari (Amazon)

I represent a big company and a small company both a part of the Satyam brand. For us on the acquisition side, employability is still a challenge despite the lakhs of graduates who are churned out by our educational system. We need to take the lead and create a gene pool of talent like the advertising and automobile companies have done in the past. It is an age-old problem and let us not make anything new out of it. We believe it's the talent eco-system that matters and we need to prepare the talent. As in our case, we work with institutions and sponsor many programmes which helps the talent pool to be ready and suitable for the industry. We can look at upgrading 30% of those who cannot make it, to be upgraded with this move. We need to also invest in creating Academies, Business Schools and specialized educational institutions.

On the question of retention, we need to look at how we can convey the positives of a long term career. We have often seen that people who jump positions do not acquire the depth of the role required. You have to go through the ranks, the pain and that surely shows up after a point of time. You can look at the entire issue of getting people to stay as a problem of retention or as a problem of attrition. It's like a glass of water being half full or half empty. We tend to look at the issue as one that concerns retention; value added retention. We have to add value to our employees' career or their CV.

Three important words are core to Satyam's retention policy: Empowerment, Engagement and Enhancement. We have Full Lifecycle Leadership Concept (FLLC), wherein a \$ 2 billion enterprise is divided into 1200 individual business unit. Each business unit is led by a Full Life Cycle Leader, who is the CEO of that unit. He needs to be a person who needs to be of a certain rank or certain designation. The full life cycle leader has the kind of quasi independent responsibility and each of the 1200 persons are CEO of their small units. One way to face challenges is to give these CEOs is to face the challenges is to give them a perspective of the investor, customer and others. That is the empowerment part.

Then there is the enhancement part, which is the way we work with people's careers, training and skill enhancement during their tenure with Satyam. We have various levels of training programmes which ensures that our employees marketable.

Subir Sarbabidya (Satyam BPO)

Look at the fact that only 4% of our population is employable, and we realize that we are increasing the cost of hiring for all companies. The costs do not include the cost paid to recruitment consultants, which I admit is miniscule. The tougher part is to put the candidates through two or three months of training because they are not ready to be deployed into production. So, the actual cost of hire comes to about 40,000 to 80,000 rupees for an entry level associate in a typical BPO company, which is a lot. Even if we hire that person, it takes anywhere between 3 to 6 months to be independently productive and start contributing to the organisation. The fact that 35 to 40% leave within the first year adds to the overall cost. This has huge financial impact on one side and on the other; it poses a huge credibility issue with our customers.

Suppose we have a project which is in transition or is being ramped up with 25 associates and suddenly 10 of them leave, we have no valid reason to give to the customers. This is a huge issue in this industry one of credibility and financial viability. The woes are further compounded by the fact that the profitability is coming down and costs are going up. The other issue is that people are moving on to other jobs and people are moving on to other jobs, and entry level salaries are going up. And if you need lateral entries, that is going to cost you more. If you take all these into account, the industry is going to be unattractive pretty soon. Customers may not find India an attractive option, as attrition rates are quite high; though there has been a noticeable decline in the last six months. If these issues are not addressed by this industry or this nation, then the outsourcing industry in India is going to be out of business soon.

Raja Suresh Kumar (Synchroserve)

I am in this industry for the past eight years and head a start up. It is tough to get employees to join when all you have are a few desks and chairs. In the past, if we could get people to walk in, we were good at retaining them. I don't know why it was so, but I guess we did something right. How do we tell an employee that they would benefit if he or she stayed on for a long time with us? This is the single most important issue we face.

Some go shopping. If an employee, who has stayed with us for a year quits to join another company from where he left to join another, in five years he would drawing about 70,000 rupees per month. My loyal staffer who stays with me for the same time moves from 20000 pm with 15% annual hikes to reach around 45 to 50,000 pm. How can I tell a guy who stayed with me that long-term is good? I don't know how to answer this question. We had good retention but I was never able to answer this question. Maybe you at ERA can tell me the answer.

There are a number of issues that I face as a small company and one among them is that the offer to joining ratio is pretty bad. The worst part is that those who are supposed to join us pull out, just a couple of days before they are supposed to join. This upsets all our planning, especially when we have made commitments to our clients on deliverables. There is a reluctance to join small companies, and we often try to sweeten the deal by talking about the advantages of small vs. big. However, big companies have many value additions, especially in infrastructure, facilities and training. They also have a larger canvas to play and as a smaller company, we have difficulty in convincing a good candidate, especially when they are fence sitting.

Satyendra Prasad (Ispace)

The key challenge for us is the level of competence and the level of expectations for a given competence that people really have today. About 45% of our business is handled by our lateral hires who have the required expertise. Today, a lot of people we are hiring are from the manufacturing industry or government related industries like Railways. These people come with unrealistic expectations, just because they are moving out of public sector into private sector. Someone annually drawing Rs.3 to 4 lakhs, expects Rs 30 to 40 lakhs per annum. We are looking for people in other industries outside the IT talent pool. That has created a lot of mismatch in terms of expectations in terms of what people are really looking for.

The IT industry gives people an opportunity to learn some of the softer skills by interacting with customers and stake holders. Many companies have realized this and are seeking to pro-actively create an opportunity. This is starker when we try to deal with someone who has worked with say the Indian Railways or the manufacturing industry. It is very difficult to teach them the commitment to quality or adherence to deadlines. To me it is the issue of the eco-system; the mindset of people at a much younger age, much younger level in the education chain has to change significantly. Only then are we going to get the output we require.

Krishna Bodanapu (Infotech)

One of the key components of retention is communicating the total value of working with the organisation. Setting career paths for a 3, 5 or 6 year timeline is one of the key factors of getting someone to work for a longer period. In reality, it is easier said than done by plotting the growth curve on paper. The biggest challenge is that we do not have people who are capable of mentoring to take those roles. People have grown pretty fast and they themselves haven't seen good or bad managers during their career. This results in a situation where a team lead who manages 15 to 20 people does not have an idea of what specific skill sets are required for someone to take his/her role and how they should be imparted. This is one of the biggest challenges we are facing in terms of developing and retaining people.

Another important challenge is to discover a healthy attrition percentage and I do not think we have been able to put a figure on that. We have to decide which people we grow and what sort we let go, so that our cost structure remains intact. In terms of attracting people, we all have to work together and change the image of the ITES industry. We also have to look at the issue of gender diversity and create conditions for our lady employees so that they have larger roles in the organisation.

Kiran Kalluri (Dell)

I feel most of us here are recruitment companies in the IT / ITES sector. What we are doing is getting talent and make sure that they work. We got to stop worrying and start managing. We need to bring in new people into the organisation train them, retain them and keep them happy. There are two ways to look at it.

We have to harvest our own people. We get freshers from colleges train them for a couple of years and as they keep going up in ranks we keep them updated with training programmes. Typically in two years, there is a shuffle. We will get someone to train our employees education, cross training whatever is required. Recruitment is big business in a huge organisation like WIPRO, and there are a couple of thousand people who are involved in talent acquisition, training and management. Lateral recruitment is an extremely important way to grow. At the same time, we keep losing people from our company as well.

Ajay Shrivastav (WIPRO)

A young person, three months into his or her job, walks in and says, "I have learnt what I need to and can I have another assignment." We need to get the message across that one needs to put in a certain amount of time to reach a specific position, and things do not happen overnight. You can learn a process in a short time, but you can never get the experience to become a manager. I also see a big gap between what I call 'senior-ish management' and a team lead. Not many people are able to push through that gap. Some one recently asked me in a media interview, the secret of my success. My answer to that is simple I have stuck to my job through the good and bad times. Early in my career, I had been tempted with job offers which offered a 100% jump in salary, but I knew that those jobs would not last more than a year. If we are to build a future for this industry, we need to look at a way to build the middle management level.

Matthew Fairless (UBS)

# Services Sector

**T**he Service sector is one of the fastest growing sectors of the Indian economy. As with any other sector, this sector too has been plagued with the issue of people – or rather the lack of it. From telecom to Insurance, from banking to NGOs, various companies are investing huge amounts of time and money to ensure that they get and retain the right kind of talent. ERA gets major players from this sector to talk about the various people issues concerning them.

The following participants were present for the Power Breakfast session held on August 7, 2008 for Services Sector:

Arun Das, COO - APTN & KL, Bharti Airtel  
 Venkat Changavalli, CEO, EMRI  
 Vikas Shah, MD, WaterHealth India Pvt Ltd  
 Radhakrishna C, Director, India Insure  
 R K T Krishnan, CEO, I-Care Health Management Services Pvt Ltd  
 Verghese K Jacob, Chief Integrator, Byrraju Foundation

**T**he Telecom sector was a closed industry until the early 90s. Telecom was never sold as a service until then and when it happened, we needed people to run these services. The required skill sets changed. The total talent availability was not much and one had to take people from the other industries.

At Bharti we lay a lot of stress on talent acquisition and management. We have to live with the fact that long tenures are going to be rare and one has to learn the art of managing with the talent one has, for the period that they are in the organisation. Telecom is booming and people are moving not just from other industries but also within functions.

No company can say that they have no problem in getting people. Today's young generation have to be attracted through different channels. The older generation's approach to a career was more regimented. Attrition in my company is in the range of 18 to 20%, which is still lesser than the IT ITES industry.

Talent management is another issue. We take raw talent, train them and they leave you and after six months. We need to look at paths in which we can mould a person's career. We at Bharti take a long time before we recruit a person and try to understand whether the person will stay or leave halfway through the project. We also have a succession plan in place, right from assistant manager upwards and this is the KRA of every business leader.

Sunil Mittal, the Chairman of Bharti believes that the person who leaves the organisation is the biggest brand ambassador of the company and if this person can contribute something to the society, we have done our job.

Arun Das (Bharti Airtel)

**A**s far as talent acquisition is concerned, people who believe in a brand get attracted to it, automatically. Everyone makes the same kind of offers, so the question is how do you make yourself different in a cluttered environment. Everybody is seeking to acquire talent.

You take the framework of what you are presenting to the world and present it to your potential employees and say this is what you stand for. So you are either in or out. I like to quote a few words from the book 'Built to Last' by Jim Collins. "Great Companies have a cult like culture" you either fit in or fit out. It is the epitome of what you stand for. Lip service will not work anymore for organisations. This is something that has worked well for me. Having acquired talent, you assume people have bought into your brand.

I have a 2x2 matrix that I use. The first quadrant is the employees who are loyal and competent, the second, the not loyal but competent. The third is of employees who are Loyal but not so competent and fourth, those who are not competent and not loyal. Take the very loyal and very competent they are your stars. They are your future leaders and you have to look at them from the perspective of growing them into roles, and take the organisation onto new heights.

Then there are the not so loyal but competent- they are mercenaries. The idea is to extract the best out of them. The Loyal but no so competent are the pillars of the organisation. We need to look at these people and try to groom them in such a manner that they continue to perform at high or average levels. They are very critical. Then there are the set of people who are neither loyal, nor competent and they unfortunately got into the company by some quirk of fate. They are deadwood and need to be ejected and how you do it depends on you. You will never have an organisation which is full of stars and talent will be distributed in the way my 2x2 matrix does.

Vikas Shah (WaterHealth India Pvt Ltd)

**I**run a domestic BPO where everything is about cost control, with 40% attrition at lower levels. Out of the 30 companies in the TPA industry that were given licence, only 4 or 5 started operations. The truth is that it is a people intensive business.

As a start up, we began with a white board and we started laying out ground rules for recruitment. This way we are avoiding problems which many other companies are facing today. This also means in terms of talent acquisition, we have to be different and look at pressure points of recruitment. I think we need to work with ERA and look at ways to assess people; be it with regard to attitude assessment or competence models, so that we get the right kind of people.

R K T Krishnan (I-Care Health Management Services Pvt Ltd)

**I**n my industry, an Insurance broker works for a client and is not an agent of the insurance company. Worldwide, brokers work for corporates and commercial entities while an agent works for the individuals. A typical employee of my organisation needs to be a combination of a consultant and a hard-selling salesperson. He is appealing to the CFO to protect the balance sheet and at the same time is hard selling. There is an element of advise, knowledge and push. This is where we as one of the pioneers, having entered this industry about nine years ago faced a problem of getting the right kind of people. We never found the quality of people we were looking for. The available talent for those skill set we were looking for in the insurance sector were in their mid 50s, mostly working in the PSUs.

To an extent, when we went ahead and started recruiting, we were 'hiring for knowledge and praying for attitude'. We changed the rules of the game and realised that we had to build the entire thing in-house. I doubt among Indian brokers if anyone would have invested as much in knowledge as we have. At first sight, it looks like a losing game, as you are training people for other companies. Now in the long run we have worked it all out. Today, in a three to six month period, new employees are able to imbibe all they need to.

When we began, we had to start everything from scratch as we realised that business growth is not enough. We had to start the plumbing of the company and devote resources for non-commercial benefit, which is painful for a start up. We needed every earning hand to be at work and that is crucial for a start up.

Radhakrishna C (India Insure)

**B**yrraju Foundation is a six-year-old organisation that is committed to rural transformation. Our model is based on building sustainable rural communities. This model can be replicated by anyone who wishes to adopt the practices that we have. When Mr. Ramalinga Raju started this foundation, our challenge was to attract the right kind of people on board who had a passion for doing this on a day in day out basis. The challenge was how you go away from the traditional paradigm of attracting people only for money and growth or the status that you offer.

How do you bring in people who have the best of the best from diverse sectors? Today we have 1400 people working with us and over 15000 volunteers. We have recruited heavily in the past five or six years from four or five diverse sectors. Attracting people from the corporate sector is still a big challenge, because people have to walk away from many material benefits before they decide that this is a cause they would like to get into. That is a tough call and we make sure that unless the person's heart is in place and committed to the cause, it would be wrong to get him into the foundation.

The second place from where we attract lot of people is from the social sector itself and that is not difficult. The social sector has been growing at the rate of 30 to 35% in the last ten years and for many professionals have joined the sector, it is no longer about money.

The third sector we take people from is academics. They have the knowledge, but they do not see avenues in implementing or practicing some of the knowledge and making a difference to the society. The fourth sector is the government sector.

The fifth sector is the domain experts from verticals like healthcare, water and BPO among others. We run 40 different services and so the scope is quite exhaustive. We have a number of CEOs from the corporate world and from institutions like IIT, IRMA and others working with us. In the initial days, we found it tough to get people and we had to sell our brand and the cause to appeal to the person. In the last two years, the brand has built itself and we have got many people who are willing to sacrifice everything else and come on board.

The second challenge we face is the diverse cultures in the organisation and when they start working they all come into the same melting point.

Verghese K Jacob (Byrraju Foundation)

**I** look for human performance when I recruit people. I look for individual competence, emotional competence to work in teams and see how to retain them. When Mr Ramalinga Raju asked me to run EMRI, he told me to run as a non-profit organisation like you run an organisation. He told me "I require you to vision it, strategise it, provide leadership and do whatever you have done in your corporate life." That was enough for me to take up the assignment. When we started developing the brand EMRI, I started to look for people who were empathetic, modest, reliable and inquisitive.

My customer is not a typical customer. My customer is a patient who is forced to get into my ambulance and still has to talk good about me. My employees have to serve a customer who is not willing to buy my product and yet to talk good about us to others. That is the challenge.

When we started EMRI, we took people who did not know anything about medicine so that they would look at things from a different perspective. I take people from every sector, but I see that people from the corporate sector have a higher chance to succeed. If I neglect my customer, he or she will not go to the competition. He or she will simply die. Therefore, the onus is on me and my team to see that this does not happen.

I induct most of the people who join EMRI, right down to the last person. I address all employees every month and motivate them through personal meetings. Today we have 7000 employees and 70 leaders who run the show. The only way to retain people is to add value by improving his competence and take to a higher level than what he came with.

Venkat Changavalli (EMRI)

# Pharma, Biotech Sector

The following participants were present for the Power Breakfast session held on August 9, 2008 for Pharma, Biotech Sector :

R. Venkat, President - Operations, Nicholas Piramal  
 G. Niranjan Reddy, VP HR, GVK Bio Sciences  
 Rajiv Varma, President, Inogen Laboratories  
 Venkataraman Sundaram, VP-Ops, Asian Clinical  
 D Sucheth Rao, COO, Neuland Laboratories  
 Vangipuram Balaji, CEO, Avon Organics  
 M. Lachi Reddy, GM - HR, Indian Immunologicals  
 Dr. G.S.Reddy, Chief General Manager, Indian Immunologicals Ltd  
 P.Gopal Krishnan, Head - Biotech Park, Shapoorji Pallonji Biotech Park Pvt Ltd

**H**R is becoming increasingly customer focused; be it recruiting, training or retention - and all the plans are dovetailed to it. The way the industry is growing, people are finding it increasingly difficult to get the right talent and even to retain them.

Once you get a person and train them for six months there is a shift in process and in some cases people move on to another job. Of course, the HR team tries its best to prevent attrition through a better induction programme and a better change programme.

What is worrying me of late is the trend among those at the team leader level. These people with higher technical talent are leaving either for higher remuneration or for research work in countries like Singapore, Japan or Korea.

R. Venkat (Nicholas Piramal)

**W**e look at Talent acquisition at two levels. At the junior level, we recruit a large number of trainees who are senior chemists at the executive levels. When you recruit in big numbers, quality of people suffers. We notice that students who score 80% and above often go on to do engineering, the rest of them opt for science. We always have a crunch on quality of people, especially at the entry levels. So we are setting up own training lab, the way IT companies do. We are training people, the way we want. There is a huge gap between what is taught in colleges and what the industry wants.

On the other hand, we find difficult to hold on to Ph D candidates whom we recruit. Since the number of candidates with PhD qualifications is miniscule, the task is all the more difficult. Most of the PhDs from our country prefer to do post docs in US, Europe, Japan or Korea. We look at these people when they want to come back to India and here the brand image of the organisation is an important hook.

These people have never worked in organisations and are now making a switch to the services industry. They have been scientists, academicians all their life and suddenly they are asked to handle a team, be answerable to the management, the clients and their own team members.

Retention is a challenge though in our case the lateral shift is from one scientific organisation to another. Organisations need to make career path models and ensure that an employee should add value to himself.

G. Niranjan Reddy (GVK Bio Sciences)

**W**e go by the premise that good people are sought after, but it's the work environment that matters. You can attract good people to a good environment and that is more important than the pay package and location. It is also important how an organisation identifies and provides inputs to develop the potential of the individual.

A lot of recruitment happens through referrals, and I do believe that HR consultants play an important role. Everybody in the organisation is an HR person.

Retention is a big challenge and we need to look at ways to make this happen. Take the case of a principal scientist, who hits a dead-end in his career after becoming the head of R&D. One way to get them to stay is to get them involved in the business and provide the right kind of inputs. We can also have them share more responsibility by getting more involved in the business.

Rajiv Varma (Inogen Laboratories)

**W**hen it comes to working on cutting edge technologies, there is a dearth of new ideas. This is reflected in the vanishing pipelines of all major Pharma companies. A big Pharma company in the US now turns around and looks at smaller Pharma companies for its next pipeline. I had recruited from top-notch companies for a start-up that I had incubated. They joined me, not for the money (I could have never matched their earlier salaries), but for the idea and the freedom to work. The question that an employee would love to ask is How much do I own the company? The employee should know that he or she is wanted; that the company will do anything to keep them happy and allow them to follow their dreams.

There is a paradigm shift and we have to groom our employees to become entrepreneurs. He/She also has to become a HR manager, a Finance manager, understand the strategy of the business and understand why we are recruiting someone. We should be willing to go where talent exists and not the other way around. A big company cannot do this, a small company can. This is the way business will be done in the days to come.

P.Gopal Krishnan (Shapoorji Pallonji Biotech Park Pvt Ltd)

**I**f you are talking about the pharmaceutical clinical research industry, the talent pool is small. Everyone is a HR manager and is expected to manage people. That is the norm today.

It is all about mentoring and creating managers down the line. The bigger question is, are we honest at the management level. What we get is a bunch of people, not mentored people.

We have people who fudge resumes, employment details or the true reasons for quitting their previous jobs. We need to follow certain ethics when it comes to recruiting people, and ensure that the entire management team has the buy in. Companies want to retain their top talent and get the best people from other companies.

Why don't we instead mentor a talented person within the organisation and create talent within. We need commitment and time from the senior management to mentor and train good people, so that we do not lose them. We should accept the fact that people will make mistakes and most people at the top have made many a mistake on their way up. This fact should be conveyed to every employee at the time of induction.

Venkataraman Sundaram (Asian Clinical)

**I**t is a fact that getting talent and retaining is tough and we have to accept that. What is important is to create an environment so that people would like to work with us. Companies do not become successful because of a one superstar. Rather, we need ordinary people who can do extra-ordinary things. When you create a lousy environment, this cannot happen and even extra-ordinary people will leave the company. Job searches have now become more focused and business heads need to sit with consultants and talk to them about the entire gamut of business. Before speaking to a consultant, companies need to be clear on what they want.

D Sucheth Rao (Neuland Laboratories)

**D**uring a takeover scenario, people are demoralized and do not know how things are going to pan out. This is where management commitment is crucial. During the last six months, except for the operator level I have been involved in every recruitment right from screening resumes, talking to the consultants, speaking to the candidates among others. This commitment is required not just when you are going through a bad patch, but should be a continuous one.

Today, the HR manager is also the salesperson of the organisation for he goes out selling the concept of the organisation to the prospective employee. Sometimes in his or her enthusiasm to fill in a particular position within the given deadline, they overdo it. That lacuna comes to the fore when the candidate joins the organisation and finds things amiss. He is not able to manage his peers, has reporting problems, and other issues and we tell the HR that we made the wrong hire. However, does one step back and ask this question what did you promise this person when he was being hired? This is where management commitment is essential.

Today at every level in the organisation, we need people with a HR bent of mind. It is not just the job of HR to recognize what is happening, HR is only a facilitator. When you make a good hire, it is the organisation's brand image that gets the credit. When you do a bad hire the HR person gets the rap. You get a mixed bag.

The organisation, the culture, the context, the involvement of the top management across the functions you need to package it all really well before, it is presented to the candidate or HR consultant. Consultants should not be hired for short-term projects; they should be hired for longer periods. They then start as partners and go on to be the company's brand ambassadors.

Vangipuram Balaji (Avon Organics)

**W**e have not faced any major disadvantage in being perceived as a public sector organisation. Our pay scales are flexible; so is the working culture. We get a lot of our people from abroad after they have completed their post docs in the US and other western countries. We have had a bigger attrition on the marketing side. We have people who have worked with us for over three decades and that serves as an inspiration for others.

M. Lachi Reddy (Indian Immunologicals Ltd)

**W**e recruit a large number of candidates from Central Universities and even IITs. These young men and women stay with us only for a short while after they complete their training. They use the learning experience with us as a launching pad for bigger things in life. We have also found a mismatch between what is taught in college and what we require. In a way, we are a great training ground and have helped this industry by creating a talent pool. We have in some cases lost an entire team to another company.

Dr.G.S.Reddy (Indian Immunologicals Ltd)

# Infrastructure

The following participants were present for the Power Breakfast session held on August 12, 2008 for Infrastructure Sector :

S.Ramachandran, Dir-BD & Corp Strategy, IVRCL Infrastructures & Projects  
 Pavan Kumar M, President - Franchising, Maytas Properties  
 Gone Shrawan Kumar, COO (Real Estate), Indu Projects  
 Abhijit Roy, Director & COO, Totem Infrastructure  
 Raveen K Reddy, Chief Strategy Officer, Lepakshi Knowledge Hub  
 V Srinivas Reddy, Head HR, Maytas Infra Ltd  
 V. Seshagiri Rao, CMD, Fortune Infra

**E**very person has a unique talent and organisations should identify that and nurture that. We cannot afford to have square pegs in round holes. Consultants should play a major role in identifying that for the company. I am also of the opinion that talent management is crucial for companies to arrest attrition. Attention has to be paid on exit Interviews. Exit Interviews need to be conducted by third parties to identify organisational weaknesses and improve retention levels. We need to widen our talent pool through outreach programmes in colleges and arranging internships. We also need to create social infrastructure in the rural areas. Recruiting from rural areas will work wonders when it comes to retention.

Raveen K Reddy (Lepakshi Knowledge Hub)

**I** consider infrastructure as a new industry even though it has been around for a while. The real growth is in the last two/three years. To start with, I feel we are not farming enough. It is not that civil engineers are not available; it is just that they join the IT companies. I think our industry is in the position that the IT industry was, about 15 years ago.

Today we are doing the same thing; saying let us get this person on board without checking out his or her compatibility, credentials, attitude and other factors. There are instances when candidates come to the interview with competing offers from other infrastructure companies.

As organisations we are letting our guard down. Most of the attrition has been from the people whom we have hired in the last six months especially at the site level. We often neglect the engineer who is working with us for four years and do not hesitate to pay huge salaries to new comers.

We need to ensure that a two-year tenure is a minimum for a candidate looking to move. We also need to tell consultants not to send in resumes of candidates who have not put in at least two years in the earlier company. We are also not going to engineering colleges and want experienced people with 15 to 20 years into the job.

Abhijit Roy ( Totem Infrastructure)

**W**e need to reward people with short term schemes and incentives to be linked to projects. The three top most hiring issues according to me includes shortage of quality talent (mainly in middle and top management), Retention of trained staff and integrity issues. We usually see retention issues when the project moves from the incubation period to the delivery phase. Consultants also need to ensure that they take a detailed look at the resumes of those who worked on site and see if these people have actually stayed around to complete the project.

Gone Shrawan Kumar (Indu Projects)

**I**t is important to build on the brand equity of a company to attract talent We have understand our education system and the changing priorities of individuals because of expectations from the family.

Money seems to be the only motivator for change. We need to understand that building lasting relationships are more important. I feel common sense is more important than qualifications. There are alternatives for every person who leaves the organisation and nobody is indispensable. Consultants need to get into the details of the job and understand the fine nuances of the requirement.

V Srinivas Reddy (Maytas Infra Ltd)

**Y**ou have to look at the lifecycle of a young man or woman and see the window of opportunity wherein they can maximize their potential. We as recruiters and managers have to look at what we can offer as a company in terms of environment.

There are opportunities. We however do not have enough time and resources to ramp up. We need to quickly move ahead. Low entry barriers means that another 10 to 15000 companies can enter the field.

What devolved organisations like ours should do is see how well we are governed. People do not leave a job just for money, though they sometimes do. We have to look at what kind of opportunities we have given them. Have we given them a project which will make a mark and outlive their own tenure in the organisations? Are they creating some centres of excellence? Are we committed to quality, good governance? What kind of cause are we working for? What are our values? This will attract talent in the long run.

Everybody wants to be a part of a success story and make a difference. Therefore, the onus is on us to create a situation that enables this, so that talent can flourish. The construction industry is one industry that can take India to a global level.

When a person who has been placed leaves the organisation, the consultant should also feel the same sense of loss of opportunity and time.

Pavan Kumar (Maytas Properties)

**I** have to admit that there is a shortage of good quality management people and this talent crunch is not unique to the infrastructure industry alone. What we all need to do is to come up with certain points that we in the industry can agree upon. First, we need to put a stop to cannibalizing. It will be good if the different players in the industry can get together and come up with certain basic norms of hiring.

Another problem that troubles us is the question of ethics. Any amount of rewards & recognition will not help, as we need to change our outlook first.

Third, we need to encourage best practices in people management by doing something on the lines of an employee survey, so that we know the main points that we need to concentrate on. In a few years, most of the infrastructure companies are going to be billion dollar enterprises and we need to have some kind of benchmarks. We need to have healthy competition that will rank companies in terms of best practices in human resource management. This data could be used when we speak to the investor community, for example.

V Srinivas Reddy (Maytas Infra Ltd)

**I** think in the recent past the image of a Civil Engineer has changed, and many youngsters are taking civil engineering as their first option in college admissions. I get a feeling from the market that things are changing. There is awareness and about infrastructure and the way it has grown. The old way of working has changed. There is a lot of ownership today and where there is ownership there is delivery.

Today, we are taking of deliverables and people who can make things happen. Who is the person we are looking for? What are his attributes? What is his or her background? How stable was their career? If we don't do our homework right, we are just wasting our time and that of the consultants. At IVRCL, we first try and find candidates from within, because we feel that those in the company understand the culture and ethos better. The way we treat them, delegate authority, give them ESOPs and look after their families that helps in bringing a sense of ownership. And that way we are seeking to create leaders from within.

But the group from which we can work from is relatively small compared to the way the industry is growing. Today we have 120 people driving a billion dollar company, but ideally, I would like that number to go upto 160 to 170 people, and in the next few year we could go upto maybe 240 to 280 people.

Where do we get those people? Sometimes we have to bring them from outside, by paying huge amounts of money.

I feel an external agency should try and understand the organisation, its culture, requirements, the industry and then present candidates. Otherwise, it is a futile exercise where a lot of time and money is wasted.

S.Ramachandran (IVRCL Infrastructures & Projects)

# Manufacturing / Engineering

The following participants were present for the Power Breakfast session held on August 13, 2008 for Infrastructure Sector:

Nrupender Rao, Executive Vice Chairman, Pennar Industries  
 R Ravi, Global Director - Biz Process, Tecumseh Products Company  
 Rajeev R Kunati, M.D., Salzgitter Hydraulics  
 Saswata Ray, Business Unit Head, ALPLA India  
 B.A.Kumar, CEO & Director, ICOMM Tele  
 M.V.S. Satyanarayana, Head HR & Admin - India, ALPLA India  
 B.C. Rao, VP - SMC Supply, Sandvik Asia Ltd



**A**cquiring good people and retaining them has always been an important issue. I recall in 1997, almost 30 years ago when we required people from steel industry when Nagarjuna Steel was set up.

I told the management of Nagarjuna that getting good people was crucial to the success of the company and I used to travel to Chennai and Rourkela to try to get people to join us. There was resistance, as we were an unknown company then. We had to understand their requirement and then facilitate that. Thirty years later, the same issues still exist in a range of sectors.

Therefore, if you want to get people to move, you have to show them a good reason for that. Today there are plenty of opportunities even for a fresh graduate engineer, who is considered good at logical thinking. Any industry including the IT sector will value such a person and pay him the right kind of remuneration. Today, HR professionals are looking at the same skill sets across sectors, and people have choices. What we undergoing now, the US had undergone twenty years ago. How you add to skills, upgrade them and help people acquire them is another issue. Our response has to be different, as things are going to be more and more difficult.

Attrition in a way is good and we cannot stop it. It also means more opportunities are being created for those within the company to grow. We have also lost a number of our people to competitors in the recent days, and it is good that people are getting more and more opportunities because of the economic growth.

The biggest job of the CEO is to acquire people and retain them. These are the changing paradigms.

Nrupender Rao (Pennar Industries)

**P**eople seem to be leaving for small increases and don't think too hard before they do. We have been adopting more productive procedures, tried to increase revenues with lesser workforce. We have introduced performance-based criteria for rewards, have quarterly reviews and anything from 0 to 50 % increase is given out. We encourage people to take risks and condone when they make mistakes. I still have not been able to find people at senior levels, as the salary they are asking is something we cannot afford to pay. Poaching has become a big issue for my company. We need to have some kind of rules between manufacturers so that we can come out with an anti-poaching pact. I do not look at resumes of people who have worked for less than two years.

Rajeev Kunati (Salzgitter Hydraulics)

**T**here is a huge growth in Indian industry and there are plenty of job opportunities in our country today. Take the way Tata treats its employees. There are plenty of lessons in that. 'Human Response Management' should be the right way to look at issues.

The worker of today is a stake holder, customer and he has got a mind of his own which thinks. We need to bring the employee to the level that he/she is capable of. Poaching is very common in industries like Steel as the talent pool exists in pockets. While staff levels have gone down, salary levels have gone up. Today, an employee can make or break a company with his skills.

We got to de-link crucial teams into separate companies in order not to upset the salary balance in the company. I also feel that consultants should visit companies often, to understand them well.

Arun Kumar B (ICOMM Tele)

**W**e work with a lot of HR consultants and I have had a good amount of interaction with them. I am of the view that consultants need to do a lot more background work on their client companies and add value to their services. One has to also talk with the families of the candidates as they play an important part in the decision making process. A lot of work has to be done, especially by smaller consultants who often just send in 20 resumes when we indicate that we are looking for a specific kind of person. They need to screen the resumes and decide what is best for the client.

Manufacturing has changed and we are no longer rigid. We are open to all best practices including good working environment, travel assignments abroad and flexi hour options too. That has helped in retention. We recruit freshers at two levels - one for shop floor and the other for design functions. For the shop floor we go to the 2nd or 3rd level colleges. For top design functions we look at the real cream and we take care of them well. We keep them engaged and do a lot of hand-holding during the first six to eight months when they are looking for their comfort zones.

My advice to clients is to be open while engaging a recruitment agency's services. Consultants could also share their best experiences with companies on hiring and retention aspects. I would also advise the manufacturing industry to change with the changing times in order to make work environment more congenial to hire and retain talent.

B C Rao (Sandvik Asia)

**O**ur first challenge was to bring in the multinational culture into the work place and it took some time to make this happen. We try to hire freshers as well as experienced people from the industry, but both have failed. Recently at a seminar CEOs were asked what they were doing to tackle the problem of attrition - they said 'Praying'.

Managers spend very less time understanding what type of people they want, and they all want ready-made people. It's tough but it is possible to get people with good attitude. Every company has stars and we need to retain them. Quite often people move out within no time. Mismatch of people skills was another issue and we solved that by de-skilling many jobs.

Salary is a major reason for attrition and we have to look at ways we can increase the salary of our managers by increasing their scope of work. Industries will have to brand themselves. You cannot hide negatives about our companies and there is no way you can hide the facts.

Recruiters need to treat each industry separately and should specialize.

Ravi Raghavan (Tecumseh)



Deliberations during the Power Breakfast on August 13, 2008

**I**ndia is growing at a fast pace and many multi-national companies are setting up their units here. My grouse with multi-national companies is that when they come to India, they just take the easy route and just pick up trained manpower and top executives from companies like ours.

Today, many youngsters dislike working on the shop floor and getting their hands dirty. They would rather work in an air-conditioned environment. Engineers are also moving towards emerging sectors like retail.

We are a European company, and we find stark differences between European and Indian work culture, but ethics is lacking. Time Management is not followed and even flexi time is misused. Discipline is lacking and it takes a lot of time to inculcate that. People also look for material benefits apart from monetary benefits.

In Hyderabad, getting candidates is not the problem, but getting the right candidate is. There is invariably a mismatch between the actual person and the bio data. Recruiters should check the family background thoroughly.

Saswata Ray (Alpla India Pvt. Ltd.)

# HR Heads

The following participants were present for the Power Breakfast session held on August 14, 2008 for Infrastructure Sector:

Lekha Sishta, VP-HR & Talent Management, Sum Total Systems India  
 Vikram V. Kallianpur, Director - HR, Virtusa  
 Col. M.Rajgopal (Retd.), Chief of HRD, Care Hospital  
 Arun D Rao, VP - HR, AppLabs  
 Mohit Kumar, GM - HR, Idea Cellular  
 ASK Reddy, Chief Human Resource Officer, GMR Hyd International Airport Ltd  
 Vijay Nakka, Sr VP-Provider Services & HR, Apollo Health Street  
 Mohan R Sharma, Sr VP - HR, Matrix Laboratories Ltd  
 K Siva Rama Krishna Prasad, VP & Head - HR, Sai Advantium Pharma Ltd  
 Subbaraman Iyer, COO, Idea Cellular

**T**he basic problem is that everyone is in a hurry. Today, in the IT industry you negotiate every hour. Nobody is at Peace. In the past, we had the luxury of investing in people and waiting for the fruits. I think today there is a hurry to make good. Due to the demand/supply mismatch, everyone is using shortcuts without worrying about the cascade effect.

When you are holding back your investments in grooming talent and you want to use shortcuts then you want more and more lateral hires of which there is a finite population. We then get into a demand and supply issue and you will pay a variable cost that is going to have a cascading impact on the organisation. This spiral will get deeper and more vicious. That is when retention issues crop up.

Arun D Rao (AppLabs)

**T**he concept of HR in hospitals is relatively new and Corporate HR is even more new. Many doctors see themselves as revenue makers and therefore difficult to handle. They are not adept to working in teams and the concept of having support staff is something they have not got used to.

Healthcare sector traditionally pays less and we cannot suddenly increase HR costs.

There is also a complete mismatch between demand and supply. A larger workforce at entry level is available but middle level consultants are just not available. I have problems with getting people in departments like billing. Most personnel in hospitals are good at training among themselves in the guru-shishya parampara and managerial training is new.

The health sector is today one of the most rapidly growing sectors simply because there is huge mismatch between the population that can afford good health care and availability of good hospitals. In view of the same hospitals are mushrooming all over creating intense stress on the demand and supply position. It is an opportunity for organisations such as ERA.

Col. M.Rajgopal (Retd.) (Care Hospital)

**G**od and HR are remembered only when required and not otherwise. Quite often, when there is demand the business units manage to pull in a person from some other project to fill a position urgently. A synergy in an organisation is reflected in the way we approach a consultant with a position that as to be closed. Last minute calls for action stretches the relationship between a consultant and the HR team. We also have to realise that it takes time to get people and there is no magic solution.

If you have a plan in place for moving your people up and training them then you don't have last minute problems. We also pick up the talent from colleges and train them so our dependence on laterals reduces.

People can be kept ready and so we don't need to react. We can pro-act. HR needs to be a part of the team meetings so that they can be kept in the loop especially when client meetings are on. We need to come up with a plan for a collaborative retention. Can we in some way reach out to each other? Can we talk about Talent sharing between organisations?

Vikram V. Kallianpur (Virtusa)

**I** think there is an element of truth in the fact that in the old days HR Managers had contempt for HR consultants. That has changed and today HR and line managers interact actively with HR Consultants. In my current company, in order to fill a senior level person, we meet up with the respective department head to do draw up a detailed profile of the job and person required. Organisations have different ways of communicating their requirements.

We need to focus more on hiring the skill rather than the person, but in some companies, there is hardly any contact with the line managers. There is no focus and it is mass recruiting. The investment in the recruitment process varies from company to company. Some companies go down to the last detail. There is a 360 degree view taken and psychometric methods are used to select the candidate.

K Siva Rama Krishna Prasad (Sai Advantium Pharma Ltd)

**W**hat generally happens is that the HR consultant might go to a portal and pick up the resumes of people, which my HR could have also done. I see no value addition in that. HR stems from HR and we need new blood from areas like marketing to work in HR. In our organisation more than 37% of my new recruits are from internal referrals and that means HR needs to look at the branding within the company so that people feel proud of belonging to the organisation.

We as HR professionals need to evolve a code of conduct and stem the rot. We have to stop the rolling stones especially in the IT sector. We need to pay for the skills at the right value. Sometimes, senior professionals after taking up an offer do not show up.

We also go to make sure that the line managers meet the HR consultants so that they get to know the details and nuances of the skill sets required.

Lekha Sishta, Sum Total

**W**e can't do away with market economics. What we can have is a strong value proposition. Talent and capital will flow to where it is best utilized. HR consultants and organisations like ERA need to help in talent pool creation for industry so that there is less dependence on mutual poaching. Speed is a reality, and we have to live with it. How do we scale up? We need to have a collaborative effort and that is the key to creating a pool of talent. Consultants have to be domain experts and need to have closer interaction with organizations to understand the specific skill sets, values, speed of the organization and short & long term objectives. We need to have a value addition and proving the same through metrics. We need to be evolving continuously as a center of excellence and be able to take the larger chunk of this strategic process.

Consultants have to be domain experts. They need to maintain closer interaction with organizations to understand the specific skill sets, values, speed of the organization and the short & long-term objectives. They need to constantly value add and provide proof of the same through better response time, accuracy, cost, offer v/s acceptance rates and so on. They should also positively impact candidate experience with the organisation by a thorough briefing of the organization, handholding, informing him/her of the selection process, helping in understanding the offer and the complete value proposition, sustaining interest levels after the offer is made etc. Clients will also benefit from feedback on good practices from within the country and outside, and improve

Mohit Kumar (Idea Cellular)

**W**e have to start planning for the long term. Organisations need to share value, create exit barriers and reduce attrition, while living with the realities of today. There will be churn. We need grapple with it and take it on.

All of us are in a tearing hurry and we often pick up a person from the same sector. We need to instead look across sectors for people and they will be more stable. These people will also bring in fresh perspective instead of churning out the same old ideas.

Subbaraman Iyer (Idea Cellular)

**U**sually fitment issues crop up because of cultural issues. Therefore, consultants need to get a good understanding about the client company's values & beliefs. Era member consultants should be partners for the long run. They should help clients by not pulling out people. They should reach out to employees who have worked in the client company in the past, as companies are ready to re hire these days.

ERA member consultants should develop databases of candidates beyond what is on the job sites and help in identifying 'the not so active' job seekers. Clients will benefit if consultants add some value, conduct psychometric tests and by personal meetings with the top management.

As a rule, consultants should insist on detailed specs and understand the job description fully before carrying out the search.

Mohan Sharma (Matrix Laboratories)

**W**ere not preparing our young people to get into the job market. Why don't we train the graduates, educate them on what we are doing; not just in healthcare but in other industries as well? I talk to young men and women when they join and I tell them that this is a long-term commitment. These are young people who are not mature and they stay with their partners and have no responsibility. How do we handle that part? What are the things we need to build around? How do we do that?

What do we need, to take care of issues like poaching? Do we agree among ourselves? It is high time we start doing something. We know what needs to be done.

Vijay Nakka (Apollo Healthstreet)

**T**he main challenge today, is the speed of recruitment. We need consultants who can do 'end to end' recruiting. When we have such huge requirements it is necessary for Consultants to work closely with us and therefore we get consultants to work with the company's HODs.

Recruiting HODs is a big issue as we hire a lot of expats who bring in the necessary expertise. They also bring in more people. For operations, we have taken people from the hotel background. Aspirations and expectations are very high and salaries are going up. The gap increases in case of lateral hires, which leads to frustration among existing staff.

The main issue today is the aspirations of youngsters. Their expectations are continuously changing and this poses a problem.

The concept of forming a consortium of HR Managers is good, as it will in sharing of useful information among members.

ASK Reddy (GMR Hyderabad International Airport Ltd.)

## Consultant'-speak

We met up with the CEOs/ Heads of various member firms of the Hyderabad chapter of ERA and asked them to spell out their views on questions related to the best recruitment practices followed in their Firms and by their clients. We also asked them how ERA could add value to the recruitment industry. Read on for their replies:

Name two of the best practices followed by your company  
We record every transaction with the Client or Candidate so that it would be useful as needed.

One thing that ERA can do to value add to the recruitment practice/industry.

As a team of Recruitment Professionals under one umbrella, we can add a lot of value in terms of fulfilling the client requirements, adopting best practices etc.

Naidu Darapaneni, Founder & C.E.O - Versant Technologies



Two Best Practices we follow:

1. A. Treating this business as not a 100 Meter dash but as a long Marathon!!

B. Establishing long-term relationship with both clients and candidates through personal rapport

2. A. Respect for the candidate and his time

B. Extremely organized with reference to the recruitment process.

What ERA can offer:

Bring "respectability" to the industry by continuous improvements in the way consultancy firms work and by constantly "raising the bar" for the fraternity.

Arunn Bhagavathula, Manhunt Consultants



Name two of the best practices followed by your company

Never do we provide any placement assistance to any candidate placed by us  
Send Quality Audit reports on our performance every month and implement the suggestions given by the client

Name two of the best practices followed by any of your clients

Transparency in Credits transfer to deserving recruitment firm

M.V.D.S. Murty, Sampoorna Computer People

Name two of the best practices followed by your company

Helping small clients with the complete process including final technical assessment for hiring

Name two of the best practices followed by any of your clients

Exclusive mandate for hiring

One thing that ERA can do to value add to the recruitment practice/industry

Professional bodies mandate certification before practitioners can work in the industry. CA, MBBS, Lawyers, etc. ERA can work towards mandatory RECRUITER CERTIFICATION for any ERA member hiring a recruiter. This will automatically improve the professionalism in the country and provide comfort to companies that professionals are at work in ERA and not anyone who simply has a telephone connection.

Sriram Rajaram, Principal Consultant, Merquri Work and Play



Two Best Practices we follow:

1. Moving up the value chain, cutting across levels- entry level to CXOs through a structured process like a RPO to executive search. Using information technology as an enabler.

2. Using in-house designed recruitment ERP that enables scalability and reliability on a transparent platform.

On ERA:

a) A platform to constructively collaborate in providing productive and cost effective solutions.

b) An opportunity to bring like-minded recruiters to enrich oneself through knowledge and experience sharing and building comradeship

T Sreedhar, Managing Director, TMI Network

Two Best Practices we follow:

A) Referral Policy Attracting talent to any organization is a key task, especially when the talent in question is in short supply. At Pursuit, we reward candidates who refer their colleagues/friends for any opportunity available with any of our clients.

B) Feedback At Pursuit, as we acknowledge & thank a candidate who forwards his resume to us, we also ensure that we send a regret note along with the reasons to candidates, should they not be shortlisted by the client after being interviewed.

What ERA can offer:

Social networking is fast catching up as a tool to find talent & is increasingly being used. ERA should think of working on a internet tool or organize knowledge initiatives once in a quarter by inviting professionals who could attract both the clients as well as the recruiting fraternity. We could this way brand ourselves as well as have a large network.

P Venkatasubramanian, Pursuit



Name two of the best practices followed by your company

No Poaching from clients

Complete resume validation

Name two of the best practices followed by any of your clients

Resume tracking system and resume feedback systems at Convergys. You will practically know what happened to each of the resume submitted

What ERA can do? Come up with industry-best practises

Ananth, Kautilya Management Consultants



1. Name two of the best practices followed by your company

-Using web 2.0 tools to reach out and stay in touch with 'passive' jobseekers

-Using a collaborative recruiter network to add better value to both clients & candidates-by expanding their bandwidth of options

2. Name two of the best practices followed by any of your clients

-Training our recruiters at their office to have a first hand impression of the hiring practices at the client site.

-Sharing their manpower plans for the next quarter-to help us identify the best talent for them

3. One thing that ERA can do to value add to the recruitment practice/industry

Recruiter training and certification

Achyut Menon, Options Executive Search Pvt. Ltd

1. Name two of the best practices followed by your company -

\* Validation \* 100% background check

2. Name two of the best practices followed by any of your clients

\* Minimum cross engagements \* Prompt payment

3. On ERA:

\* Enhancing professional SOPs

Lakshmi.K,

Managing Director, Digvijaya Management Consultants Pvt.Ltd.



1. Best practices followed by our company

We encourage and empower our Recruiters to think and act as consultants at all times. Tremendous faith is reposed on Associates working in the organisation.

2. On ERA :

ERA, through guest lectures, events and certification courses can encourage people old and young, look at recruitment consulting as a career 'choice'. ERA members, by walking the talk should be able to attract other recruitment consultants into the fold, as an ERA mark would mean 'quality & ethics-conscious' consultant.

Parvathy Krishnan, CEO, Cucumber Consultants

Best practices followed by our company:

1) Our exclusive focus area: "technology & product engineering solutions".

2) Constant grooming of our recruiters in the domain areas, headhunting, and other soft skills

What ERA can do?

Active collaboration among members, active identification of each of the member firms for their growth/focus areas to pave the way for better collaboration

Ravi Janardhan, KAIZEN Search Consultants Pvt Ltd



1. Name two of the best practices followed by your company

1. Award and Reward programs for Performers consistently on a monthly basis

2. Quarterly appraisals

G.Balasubramanian, CEO, Paradigm Consulting

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