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Leadership and Ideas for Tomorrow

The Challenges of HR In Changing Times

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Notes from the Editorial Desk

Dear Alumni,

We are delighted to bring you the latest edition of the Alumni Magazine. This issue we are trying something new focusing on a deep dive into a specific topic of interest to collectively grow our understanding of the opportunities and challenges present within it and its impact in different industries.

In this edition, we are exploring the opportunities and challenges presented to HR Departments across the world in the age of AI, Machine Learning, and changing relationships in a post-Covid world. With articles from illustrious alumni, we have curated perspectives across a wide spectrum of profiles and are grateful to each and every one of you who shared your views and wish for your continued assistance and support as we take this initiative forward!

In case, you haven't already updated your Alumni profile or joined our Social Media profiles, we request you do so we can keep you updated on the latest events and initiatives.

We'd love your feedback and happy reading!

Warm regards,
Malahat Awan
Director Alumni Affairs, Corporate Relations & Resource Mobilization
Institute of Business Administration, Karachi

Mohamme...
Alumni Repres...

Malahat Awan

Director Alumni Affairs, Corporate Relations & Resource Mobilization

Burhan Saiyed

Senior Manager

Tel: 111-422-422 | Ext: 1241
Email : burhan@iba.edu.pk
Cell: (+92) 346-052-3201

Ehsan Sheikh

Assistant Manager

Tel: 111-422-422 | Ext: 1205
Email : esheikh@iba.edu.pk
Cell: (+92) 316-029-7417

Owais Lashari

Executive

Tel: 111-422-422 | Ext: 1213
Email: olashari@iba.edu.pk
Cell: (+92) 334-111-9966

Faisal Shaikh

Executive Graphic Designer

Tel: 111-422-422 | Ext: 1212
Email: fshaikh@iba.edu.pk
Cell: (+92) 348-325-7476

Future of Work

by Jamal Nasir, MBA Class of 1990

The future of work is rapidly changing, driven by emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, and robotics. According to a report by the World Economic Forum, 75 million jobs might be displaced by automation in the next few years, while 133 million new jobs may emerge at the same time. The impact of technology on the workforce is both exciting and challenging, requiring organizations to be agile and adaptable in the face of disruption. This will apply to Pakistani organizations as well. In this rapidly evolving landscape, HR has a critical role to play in transforming organizations for the future of work. Here are five key actions I believe HR should take to ensure their organization is future-ready:

Develop a Future-Ready Workforce: HR must identify the skills and capabilities that will be needed in the future and develop strategies to acquire and /or develop those skills. This will involve implementing training programs in data analysis, AI, and robotics. HR should also encourage employees to develop a growth mindset and encourage / reward continuous learning. HR need to look at the following areas to upskill/reskill their existing workforce.

Digital Literacy Training: To ensure employees are digitally literate, consider providing them with training programs that focus on the latest technologies, tools, and digital platforms.
Cybersecurity Training: It's essential to train employees on best practices to avoid potential security threats and breaches.

Data Analysis and Management Training: Since data is becoming an essential asset for businesses, providing employees with training programs that teach them how to analyse and manage data can be very beneficial. Focus also needs to be on training managers on how to use data for decision making.

Leadership Training: To have leaders who can adapt to changes and lead their teams through them, consider offering leadership training programs that focus on developing skills such as effective communication, problem-solving, and decision-making.

Soft Skills Training: To succeed in a changing business landscape, offer personal effectiveness skills training programs that focus on developing skills like adaptability, resilience, and critical thinking.

Embrace Flexible Work Arrangements: The rise of remote / hybrid work is likely to continue, so HR should develop policies that enable hybrid work arrangements while ensuring that employees remain engaged and productive. This may involve requiring managers to assess performance on productivity and output rather than the number of hours on the job.

Foster a Culture of Innovation: Organizations that succeed in the future will be those that are innovative and adaptable. HR should foster a culture of innovation and experimentation, encouraging employees to take risks and experiment with new ideas. HR should also implement agile methodologies to enable the organization to respond quickly to changes in the market.

Redefine Performance Management: Traditional performance management approaches may not be effective in a rapidly changing work environment. HR should consider redefining performance management to focus on outcomes, implement continuous feedback approaches, and use performance metrics that reflect the organization's strategic goals.

Implement Technology Strategically: HR should work with other leaders to identify technologies that can help the organization achieve its strategic goals and implement them in a way that aligns with the organization's culture and values. HR should also provide employees with the necessary training and support to use new technologies effectively.

By taking these steps, HR can help their organization transform for the future of work. The key is to be proactive and embrace change. As and when Pakistan's economy rebounds, oorganizations that adapt to the changing landscape will be well-positioned for success and come out ahead for years to come.

In conclusion, the impact of technology on the future of work is both exciting and challenging and HR has a critical role to play in ensuring that organizations adapt and thrive in this rapidly changing landscape. By developing a future-ready workforce, fostering a culture of innovation, redefining performance management, and implementing technology strategically, HR can drive organizational transformation.

Jamal Nasir is the Chief Human Resources Officer at HBL, Pakistan's largest commercial bank. He has 30 years of professional experience; prior to joining HBL, he was the Senior Executive Vice President & Group Executive HR at United Bank Limited. He has worked with Standard Chartered Bank as Head of HR for Pakistan and Head of HR for South Asia. He later relocated with Standard Chartered Bank to Singapore into the role of Head of HR for South East Asia and then Senior HR Manager for Asia. Prior to working with Standard Chartered Bank, Jamal was also the Country Head Human Resources at ABN AMRO, Pakistan and also has 10 year's work experience at Exxon Chemical / Engro in various HR and Engineering roles.
Find him on LinkedIn at https://www.linkedin.com/in/jamal-nasir-7a1967105/

4 Questions to Establish a Strong Trajectory Early-in-Career

by Nader Nanjiani MBA Class of 1991

Pursuing career goals leading up to graduation - or several years after - are tricky times for 'early-in-career' job seekers due to the immense pressure of landing a role that sets a long term career trajectory. For those fortunate to land a role at graduation, an employer willing to pay good money for your talent is excellent validation. If you only land a single job offer, the next step for you remains straightforward: Accept it. However, if you choose to branch out later from your first employer or if you are a recent graduate in an enviable position to command multiple offers; you may have a choice to make. If you have the potential to attract multiple job offers, matching your aspirations to the opportunity before you make a career choice will make your eventual decision more mindful. To make a sound career choice, you should know what might motivate you each day to go to work other than the pursuit of a paycheck.

If you have a strong sense of where you would like to end up in the future, what level of commitment you're willing to invest into your career; what else is more important to you in life other than your career; and what type of employers, domain expertise, roles or sectors attract you; you are more likely to make your career pursuits far more self-assured. If you intend to cultivate more than one offer, your introspection will go a long way in ensuring that you not only make the right choice once the offers present themselves, but that you also continue to build your credentials and network towards your desired career. To have your career keep drifting towards more lucrative offers would be an amazing outcome - but that drift must remain a conscious effort.

So here's a list of four key questions for job-seekers to answer about their career journey. The answers to these questions should preferably be written down or discussed in planning conversations with mentors, faculty members, or trusted advisors. (See the table under each question for a full list of action items). Here's one more reason to answer these questions: Potential employers view introspective candidates as more persuasive and prepared in job interviews.

1. Work-life balance: How does my career rank against other life priorities?

Getting caught up in the belief that career satisfaction equates to happiness can take our eyes away from life's other priorities. Careers come at an opportunity cost. The nature of your career could take time away - at least in the short term - from investing in other life priorities such as starting a family, supporting parents or siblings, participating in community activities, hobbies, starting a business, or personal development through higher studies or research. Professionals are constantly balancing their careers against other life priorities over time. These priorities may or may not be in conflict with each other, but you only have so many hours in a day. At some point you will need to assess which priorities merit greater attention so you can build a better balance towards what makes you happy and satisfied.
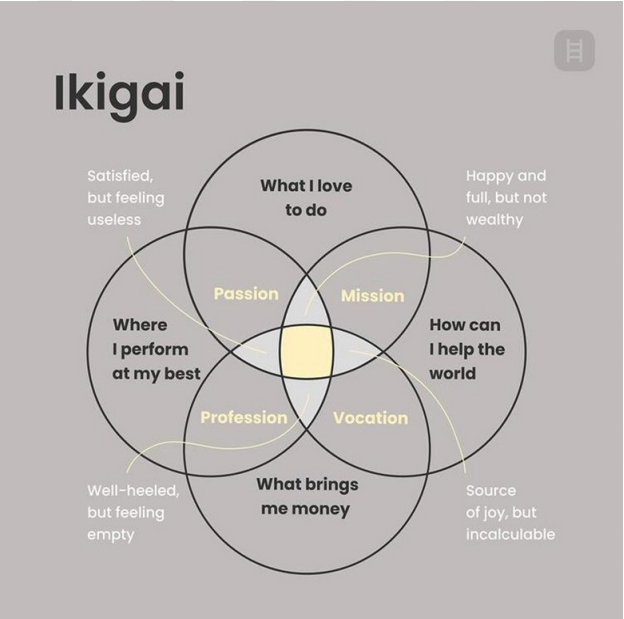
> **Table 1: Answer the following to identify your work-life balance choice**
> ❯ Rank across a. career, b. community, c. family, and d. self development priorities.
> ❯ Self development should cover intellectual, physical, and mental.
> ❯ Where should you be spending more time in the short term of the four.

2. Career choice: Which career track will bring me fulfillment – as a true calling or as a complement?

When you are 75 years old and you look back at your career, what would you regret not doing? If you can think of things you would regret not doing, plan to do those while you still have the time. You can never be sure of not having any regrets, but knowing you tried to minimize those will go a long way in having fewer regrets and greater fulfilment. Many of us professionals treat our careers as a calling. But there are many of us who might look at their careers as complementary to their community work or family commitment or other interests. The same person in a different stage of their lives might view the importance of their career differently. Knowing how you view your career now will allow you to make choices about which roles to select, if offered, and which to not sweat losing. A Japanese concept, Ikigai, describes this as a person's reason for being (see graphic below)

A Japanese term, Ikigai: A person's reason for being

> **Table 2: Answer the following to identify your career choice**
>
> ❯ How does your career fit into that which you would like to accomplish in your life is i central or complementary?
>
> ❯ What would make you happy and satisfied
>
> ❯ What kind of a legacy would you wish to leave
>
> ❯ Do you have the right skills, knowledge, and attributes to accomplish your career goals or calling -
>
> ❯ if not, what are the gaps and how can you fill those.

3. What type of a role should I accept or pursue?

We often make buying decisions based on brands that we know and trust. Careers can get a significant boost from a track record of well-known employers on your resume. But it is important to make sure that your personality, your core strengths, and your aspirations align with the next role you accept. Maybe you are someone who might be happier working for a smaller company. Maybe you are someone who might be more successful as an entrepreneur. Some of us might be very well-suited to academia. Others might be perfect candidates for a career in civil service – or an international assignment.

Some might prefer technology as a domain, while others might have a penchant for consumer goods, or education, or finance. Knowing what type of role, what type of domain, and what type of organization you should be pursuing that aligns with your skills is an important area to consider as you evaluate employment options.

Table 3: Answer the following to identify the best role

❯ Which domain(s) would you wish to pursue.

❯ Do you wish to be in a customer facing or operations role.

❯ Do you wish to pursue roles with greater opportunity to lead or manage others.

❯ Would you prefer a public sector or private sector role.

❯ Would you prefer to work in a research or academia versus a business organization.

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4. What should I do next to land an offer?

The last 18 months have been taxing for professionals all over the world due to the limitations and risks that social distancing has placed on their careers. The situation has put even greater pressure on job seekers who are trying to break into the professional world. Job seekers have been restricted from connecting with mentors and other professionals to extend their career network. Where in-person alumni or other industry events would otherwise offer great opportunities to connect with industry professionals, nowadays graduates have to resort to cold calls, emails, or LinkedIn messages to form similar connections – methods which tend to be trickier to navigate. Working with trusted advisors through the process is a great way to proceed.

Table 4: Action items for landing an offer

❯ Sending out resumes that get attention

❯ Building a strong linkedin profile

❯ Scheduling or lining up interviews

❯ Receiving a job offer

❯ Succeeding at conversations with recruiters during screeners

❯ Interviewing with hiring managers

❯ Negotiating salary and benefits

Conclusion:

For those with the right types of skill set, the post-pandemic era will present an even broader set of career opportunities in geographies that might extend beyond your current location. Social distancing has presented a silver lining for the highly talented in the form of remote work. Besides remote work, it has also accelerated digital adoption within organizations. The scope for those with specific degrees in technology, business, user experience design, arts, project management, engineering, research, and healthcare related fields has expanded even wider than they might have imagined prior to the pandemic. With greater career choices, better to pursue the ones that make the most sense for you long term. Deliberating on what makes sense for you is a good first place to start. Even if you don't get the answers right - for if we could all predict the future, we wouldn't need to work - the process of asking yourself the pertinent questions and speaking with others on how you view the balance between work and life will guide your decisions.

Nader Nanjiani (MBA '91) is a technology marketing leader with more than 20 years of experience at Fortune 500 companies. Nader lives and works in Dallas, Texas. He currently heads the marketing for government and non-profit segments globally at Amazon Web Services (AWS). Nader completed his graduate studies at Harvard University and Syracuse University.
Find him on LinkedIn at https://www.linkedin.com/in/nadernanjiani/

What Employers Want

by Kashan Hasan, MBA Class of 2000

"What Women Want" was a popular Helen Hunt and Mel Gibson starrer in the year 2000, the same year I graduated and was looking to start my career and figuring out what employers want. So there were two important questions to answer at the time. After more than 20 years, I can safely say I am still trying to answer one of these questions if not both.

Before I get into what I believe are some of the important factors to be aware of I would like to have a few disclaimers in place. Just like in Kung Fu Panda, there is no secret recipe for success here. There is no magic formula. Every situation, organization, interviewer and process is different. What we have here are just learnings I have acquired over the last 2 decades of being part of the recruitment process across many levels of the organization. I have put them here in no particular order, but I hope you find this helpful.

The Right Attitude

This is one of the most crucial elements in the success of any individual. Skill sets can be developed and fine tuned. But its much more important that the person with the right, open mindset, be hired. One who is ready to learn, open to say "I don't know" and comfortable to ask for help.

People Who Have Ambition and Think BIG

I have worked with many people in my career, and if I were to think of attributes of those I have seen succeed, ambition and the ability to think big would rank near the top. For most roles, organizations want people with ambition. Ambition that can be demonstrated in the recruitment process. Ambition means that this individual will work harder because they want to be promoted, take on additional and for their organization. Ambition means this person will be easier to motivate, engage and excite, which in turn mean easier to manage.

The Right Attitude

High SKILL SET Low

X Problem   X Superstar

X Great Management Trainee Hire
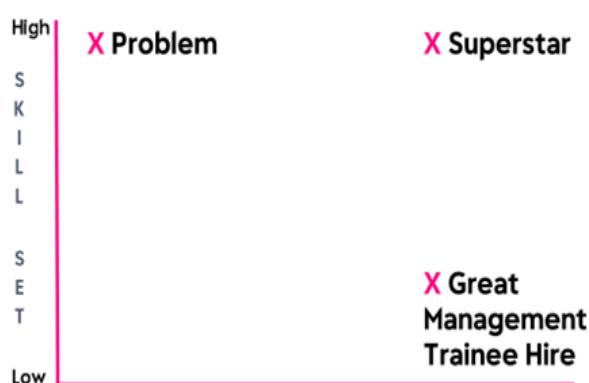
People Who Like Winning Together

Employers are looking for team players. Demonstrated success as a team player is a key element that employers value in their potential new recruits. Organizations understand the importance of people who work well with others and are quick to help others. Such employees also help create a positive environment and drive engagement amongst their team members.

People Who Know Themselves

In my time conducting hundreds of interviews, I am surprised how much people know about business and their roles and responsibilities, and how little they know about themselves. Most of us have never taken out the time to sit and think of who we are, what makes us tick, and what we stand for. My advise to anyone going into a recruitment process is to spend some time thinking about themselves. Its not always easy but well worth it.

People Who Can Be Trusted to Do the Right Thing

Its critical for a successful organization that its people act with responsibility and understand the moral and ethical guidelines that they need to follow. Employers are looking for people who will do what is right under all circumstances. People who are fair, honest and sincere to their work, and those around them, are an asset to any organization.

Kashan Hasan is an IBA alumni, Class of 2000, and over the past 20 years he has worked across functions, categories and geographies including Europe, the Middle East and North and South Africa. Since January 2020, he has been serving as the General Manager for Reckitt Pakistan.
Find him on LinkedIn at https://www.linkedin.com/in/kashan-hasan-5a48b5a/

The Role of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning in Transforming Human Resources

by Mohammad Hussain, MBA Class of 2014

In recent years, the field of Human Resources (HR) has been undergoing rapid transformation through the use of technology. New tools and software have allowed HR professionals to streamline processes, increase efficiency, and enhance the employee experience in ways that were previously unimaginable. One of the most significant technological advancements in HR is a potential integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) into various HR functions.

AI and ML have a wide range of applications in HR, including talent acquisition, employee engagement and retention, learning and development, HR operations, workplace safety, and data-driven decision-making. AI-powered tools have capability to automate aspects of the recruitment process such as resume screening, candidate matching, and interview scheduling, making it more efficient and effective. Machine learning algorithms can learn from past hiring decisions and help predict which candidates are likely to be successful in a role. AI and ML can also help HR professionals identify factors that affect employee engagement and retention by analyzing employee feedback from surveys, performance reviews, and social media. These technologies can predict which employees are likely to leave the company and help HR professionals take proactive steps to address issues and improve employee engagement and retention.

Developing employees' skills and knowledge is one of the biggest challenges for HR professionals. AI and ML can help identify skill gaps and recommend personalized learning paths for employees. These technologies can also deliver learning content in a more engaging and interactive way, through virtual reality, gamification, and other innovative approaches. In HR operations, AI and ML are making a significant impact by automating routine tasks such as onboarding, benefits enrollment, and payroll processing, saving time and reducing errors that can occur during manual processes. Chatbots powered by AI can provide 24/7 support to employees, answering their questions about benefits, policies, and procedures. Furthermore, AI and ML can also improve workplace safety by analyzing data from various sources, such as sensors, cameras, and employee feedback. They can predict which employees are at a higher risk of workplace accidents and provide targeted training and support to prevent accidents from occurring.

By analyzing large volumes of workforce data, AI and ML can help HR professionals make more accurate and data-driven decisions. These technologies can help predict future trends and identify areas of risk and opportunity, which can help HR professionals develop more effective strategies for talent management, workforce planning, and employee engagement.

However, the use of AI and ML in HR also comes with potential downsides. One major concern is the potential for bias in algorithms and decision-making processes. HR professionals must ensure that the data being used is representative of diverse groups, and algorithms are designed to avoid perpetuating biases. Additionally, there is a risk that the use of AI and ML in HR may lead to a lack of personal touch and dehumanization of the hiring process. HR professionals must balance the use of technology with maintaining personal connections with candidates and employees.

To sum up, the integration of AI and ML into HR functions is revolutionizing the industry. HR professionals must keep up with these advancements to remain competitive and provide the best possible employee experience. It is crucial to be aware of the potential biases and risks associated with these technologies and use them in a way that maintains a balance between technology and personal connection. Ultimately, by staying up-to-date and leveraging these technologies effectively, HR professionals can drive organizational success and provide a competitive advantage in the ever-evolving business landscape.

As a results-driven HR professional with over 12 years of experience primarily in the energy sector, Hussain is passionate about driving performance, culture, and engagement in his organization. He earned his MBA and BBA from the Institute of Business Administration (IBA) and is a Certified Global Talent Management Leader from Talent Management Institute (TMI), USA. Currently, he is heading the Talent Acquisition & OD section at Cnergyico Pk Limited, a leading energy company in the country. Throughout his career, he's managed a wide range of initiatives related to talent acquisition, performance management, employee engagement, and culture transformation. He is particularly proud of setting up the Human Resources & Administration department from scratch for a start-up firm, where he led the adoption of all people processes, systems, policies, and procedures.
Find him on LinkedIn at https://www.linkedin.com/in/hussainhr/

Growing your company and skills in Uncertain Times

by Abdullah Bin Zia, BBA Class of 2014

Employer-Employee Relationship and Its Impact on Organizational Goals

The relationship between employers and employees is a two-way street. Employers are responsible for creating a positive work environment that encourages productivity and growth, while employees are responsible for meeting their job requirements and helping the organization achieve its goals. A healthy employer-employee relationship fosters collaboration, trust, and mutual respect. When employers and employees work together, they can achieve greater results than they would individually.

One way to strengthen this relationship is through effective communication. Employers should regularly provide feedback, listen to employee concerns, and create an open-door policy that encourages employees to share their ideas and opinions. In turn, employees should be willing to accept feedback, ask questions, and communicate their needs to their employers.
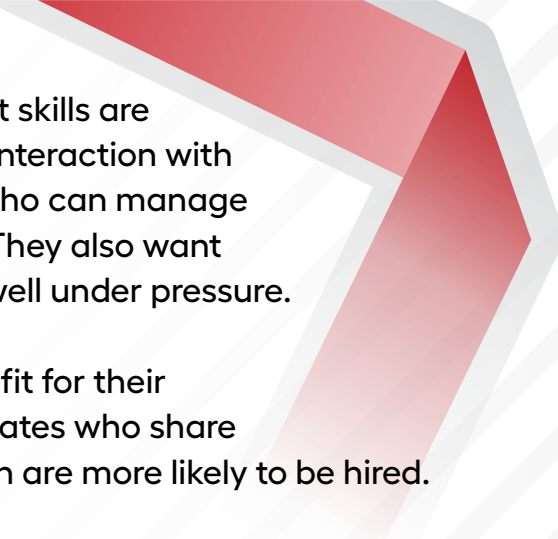
A positive employer-employee relationship can have a significant impact on organizational goals. When employees feel valued, respected, and supported, they are more likely to be engaged in their work and committed to the organization's mission. This can lead to increased productivity, higher job satisfaction, and better retention rates. Additionally, when employees feel comfortable sharing their ideas and opinions, employers can benefit from innovative solutions and fresh perspectives.

What Do Employers Look for in Potential Employees?

Employers seek a range of skills and qualities in potential employees. One of the most important qualities is a positive attitude. Employers want to hire people who are motivated, enthusiastic, and willing to learn. They also look for candidates who have excellent communication skills, the ability to work well in a team, and a strong work ethic.

Technical skills are also essential, especially in fields like IT and engineering. Employers want to hire candidates who have the skills and knowledge necessary to perform the job successfully. In addition, employers may also look for experience, especially in fields like finance and marketing, where practical experience can be invaluable.

However, employers are not just looking for hard skills. Soft skills are equally important, especially in fields that require a lot of interaction with customers or clients. Employers want to hire candidates who can manage their time effectively, solve problems, and think critically. They also want employees who are adaptable, flexible, and able to work well under pressure.

Ultimately, employers look for candidates who are a good fit for their organization's culture and values. This means that candidates who share the same work ethic, values, and goals as the organization are more likely to be hired.

How Can Companies Future Proof Themselves?

The pace of technological change is increasing, and companies need to be proactive in preparing for the future. Here are some ways companies can future-proof themselves:

Invest in training: Companies need to invest in their employees by providing ongoing training and professional development opportunities. This can help employees stay up to date with the latest technologies and trends, and ensure that they have the skills they need to succeed in the future.
Embrace new technologies: Companies should embrace new technologies that can help them improve their operations, reduce costs, and increase efficiency. This might include technologies like artificial intelligence, machine learning, and automation.

Be agile: Companies should be prepared to pivot and adapt to changing market conditions. They should be open to experimenting with new products, services, and business models, and be willing to change direction quickly if necessary.

Collaborate with others: Companies should collaborate with other organizations to share knowledge, resources, and expertise. This can help them stay ahead of the curve and identify new opportunities.

What Are the Skills Required in the Future Workforce?

As we move into the future, the skills required in the workforce are changing. Here are some of the key skills that will be in demand:

Digital literacy: Digital literacy will be essential in the future workforce. This includes skills like coding, data analysis, and social media management. Employees who can navigate the digital landscape and leverage technology to their advantage will be highly valued.
Critical thinking: Critical thinking and problem-solving skills will be essential in the future. Employees who can analyze complex problems, evaluate different solutions, and make informed decisions will be highly sought after.

Collaboration: Collaboration skills will be increasingly important in the future workforce. As companies become more global and virtual, employees will need to be able to work effectively with people from diverse backgrounds and across different time zones.

Creativity: Creativity will be highly valued in the future workforce. With the rise of automation and artificial intelligence, employees who can think outside the box, generate new ideas, and innovate will be highly sought after.

Adaptability: Adaptability will be crucial in the future workforce. With rapid technological change and disruption, employees who can adapt to new technologies and ways of working will be highly valued.

What Sort of Jobs Will Become Redundant in the Future?

As technology continues to advance, some jobs may become redundant in the future. Here are some examples:

Manual labor jobs: Many manual labor jobs, such as factory work and assembly line jobs, are already being replaced by automation. In the future, this trend is likely to continue, with more jobs in the manufacturing sector being replaced by robots.

Routine jobs: Routine jobs, such as data entry and administrative tasks, are also at risk of becoming redundant in the future. As artificial intelligence and machine learning improve, these tasks can be automated, freeing up time for employees to focus on higher-level tasks.

Low-skilled jobs: Low-skilled jobs, such as cashiers and fast-food workers, are also at risk of becoming redundant in the future. As self-service kiosks and online ordering become more prevalent, the need for human workers in these roles may decrease.
Collaboration: Collaboration skills will be increasingly important in the future workforce. As companies become more global and virtual, employees will need to be able to work effectively with people from diverse backgrounds and across different time zones.

However, it's worth noting that while some jobs may become redundant, new jobs will also be created. As technology advances, new roles will emerge, and employees who have the skills to adapt and embrace these changes will be best positioned to succeed.

Abdullah is a proud alumnus of IBA, having graduated from the BBA program in the batch of 2014. Since then, he has gained valuable experience in the field of supply chain management, having worked with one of Pakistan's largest medical supply chain companies. He is a firm believer in the transformative power of technology, having also worked as a trainee consultant with SAP. In recent years, he has had the privilege of leading the product function at innovative startups such as Airlift and Dastgyr, where he has honed his skills as a leader and innovator. He is excited to share his experiences with the IBA community and inspire the next generation of business leaders.
Find him on LinkedIn at https://www.linkedin.com/in/abdullahbinzia/

What should the Employer bring to the table?

by Nadir Feroz, MBA Class of 2001

A relationship can only be fathomed to exist, if there are indeed at least two parties involved. Whether it starts off from or culminates into a love-love, love-hate or hate-hate one is one part fate to every nine parts intent. And herein enters the employer with the on-boarding, job-profiling, vision and organizational development playbook besides all else.

The employer, to put his money where his supposed intent is, also needs to bring on board a good HCMS - Human Capital Management Software. And by HCMS by no means is only an Attendance and Payroll solution being referred to. Which too though a host of local - read as Seth-run organisations - still lack. That, even after COVID has spun us around many times over, hence necessitating it, is rather unfortunate. And this approach is a big part of the problem.

Cloud-based HCM & ERP solutions, localised, have been in place since 2007. Yet the adoption rates are dismal. A lack of structured working and conformance to accepted standards eventually leads to near misses in daily working as the data often is not reliable. Which gets compounded as the learning curve for even the seasoned professional is reintroduced. And the worst part is that the baseline data to develop KPIs initially and their monitoring right through to fruition becomes suspect, if not impossible. While the employer rightfully demands the relevant degree(s) from the applicants and may reject them for a lack thereof; the employee has no such leverage in being selective and settling for only such an organization that has the best systems and procedures in place. A high attrition rate is the natural consequence. And this trend has picked up of late and will only get more pronounced.

Organizations need to revisit their systems - manual and computerized both - and see how they can bring in automation so as to increase speed, reproducibility, faster adoption by the new joiners and also attract the new cohort on its way. The Gen Zs and Gen Alphas will be more easily put off by broken and outdated processes. In order to stay relevant, the employer will have to bring across the board automation to the table.

Nadir is the Co-Founder & Chief ExecuTRAX at EfroTech. He is from the first BBA-MIS batch at IBA and as a strong proponent of "Proudly Made in Pakistan" has overseen over 1,250 software implementations of TimeTrax HCM/ERP application across Pakistan and 35 countries across the globe.
Find him on Linked in at https://www.LinkedIn.com/in/NadirKhanFeroz/

Power of sincerity and clarity in building stronger relationships

by Syed Hassaan Ali, BS Economics Class of 2019

In my view sincerity and clarity are the two most essential aspects of having a strong, positive and effective relationship. Sincerity leads to the desire of clear communication that leads to clarity in the roles and responsibilities. This results in accomplishments and positively affects the relationship.

Right now, I am just in the beginning of my career as a researcher in economics and in this short period of time I have had the experience of working with multiple people in different research projects and each time I ponder, I find that the presence of required level of sincerity and clarity resulted in the completion of projects not only well within time frame given but also produced a high quality work that impressed my colleagues and subject experts were happy to see that as well.

On the other hand, if sincerity and clarity were not present then, it led to not only bad relations but also the work never accomplished. It further had a negative consequence on my psyche because it demotivated me, when I see that even after hard work, the fruits of it cannot be of required benefits.

Therefore, clarity and sincerity, if both present, produces meaningful feedback by the employer for the employee that guides the employee to be better and best in the work. Hence clarity and sincerity in communication between employee and employer is essential for good relations and good relations are key to successful organizations.

Syed Hassan graduated from IBA in 2019 with a BS in Economics. Currently, he is working at Meezan Bank Head Office in their Shari'a Compliance Department. He is also currently pursuing his MPhil in Economics (at the research stage) from PIDE Islamabad. He holds 3 years of certificate in Islamic Studies as well.
Find him on LinkedIn at https://www.linkedin.com/in/syed-hassaan-ali-5b103b67

What do employers look for in potential employees?

by Faiza Karim, MBA Class of 2011

Human Resource Management is becoming increasingly strategic aligning talent acquisition with business direction to onboard individuals with dynamic skills. Work environments are becoming increasingly automated as digital tools and skills have transformed our ways of working. Innovation is the key to sustenance. Employers look for agile employees with data-driven mindsets and critical thinking skills. They look for individuals, who are capable of learning new skills and adapting to ever changing demands. Another important characteristic is the ability to work independently and make decisions. Business acumen and analytical skills to transform data into meaningful information is highly critical in making thoughtful decisions.

While having the right education and technical skills is important to perform any job, human factors and cultural fit are equally significant to constitute a team, which can work in harmony and create a conducive work environment. Employers not only look for a resume but the personality behind that document to determine if it would be a good fit for the organization. Employees, who are empathetic & collaborative generally produce greater results than others. They have the capability to connect and work in teams. Employers wish to hire individuals, who are courteous and respectful in their behavior towards each other, irrespective of status within the organization.

The above can well be narrated by 'The Henry Ford Hiring Test'. The story starts with two candidates applying for a position at Ford Motor Company. Both candidates were from the same university with the same engineering qualifications and GPA.

Henry Ford invited both the candidates to a restaurant for dinner. At the end of dinner, he selected one candidate and informed the other candidate that they will not be proceeding with him. The candidate, who wasn't hired, gathered the courage and asked.
"Mr. Ford, tonight we sat at dinner and we did not speak about engineering or the motor industry. We did not talk about the company or anything to do with work. We only spoke about general stuff. How is it you selected my friend and not me?"
Henry Ford responded.

"It's simple. There are two main reasons I selected him and not you.
Number one, when he received his steak, he tried it first, then added salt.
You added salt and then tried it. I like people who try things first before making changes, not people who make changes and then test them out."

Henry Ford then continued to explain his decision.

"Not only that, the second reason is far more important. He was courteous and treated the staff in the restaurant with respect. He said please and thank you. The restaurant staff seemed invisible to you, and you only treated me with respect when you addressed me. For those two reasons, I am hiring him and not you."

Treating people with respect is important, regardless of their position and stature. Successful organizations have respect as a salient feature of their values and a respectful culture is achieved by having courteous employees, who are compassionate towards others. Employers, therefore, look for employees who can embrace these values and lead business direction to achieve success.

Faiza graduated from IBA in 2011 earning an MBA with specialization in Finance. Since then, she has been active in the Corporate sector for more than 11 years and has primary expertise in the area of Corporate Strategy, Business Planning & Analysis, Financial Management, Management & Corporate Reporting, Business Performance Management and Organizational Development. During this time, She had the opportunity to work with various renowned organizations including Pakistan Petroleum Limited, AbuDawood Pakistan, Engro and Sanofi. Currently, She is associated with Sanofi Pakistan as Senior Manager Strategic Planning & Corporate Projects. Apart from that, she is also active as an independent consultant and trainer.

Find her on Linked in at: https://www.linkedin.com/in/faiza-karim-4664a215/

The relationship between an employer and an employee

by Ibraheem Khalid, BBA Class of 2018

The relationship between an employer and an employee is a crucial factor in the growth and success of any organization. A positive and healthy relationship between the two is critical in promoting employee engagement, productivity, and satisfaction, all of which can lead to increased organizational growth.

Employers who prioritize building strong relationships with their employees create an environment that fosters trust, open communication, and mutual respect. This helps to build a strong sense of belonging and ownership, leading to employees who are more committed to their jobs and are more likely to go the extra mile to ensure the success of the organization.

A positive employer-employee relationship also leads to a more collaborative and innovative workforce. When employees feel valued and respected, they are more likely to share their ideas and opinions, leading to increased creativity and problem-solving abilities. This, in turn, can lead to improved processes, products, and services, resulting in a competitive advantage for the organization.

On the other hand, when the employer-employee relationship is strained or lacking, it can have a negative impact on the organization. This can result in high turnover rates, low employee morale, and decreased productivity. When employees feel disengaged and undervalued, they are less likely to put forth their best effort, leading to a decrease in the quality of work and overall organizational performance.

In conclusion, the relationship between an employer and an employee is vital to the growth and success of any organization. Employers who prioritize building a positive and healthy relationship with their employees will reap the benefits of a more engaged, productive, and satisfied workforce. By creating a culture of trust, open communication, and mutual respect, organizations can promote innovation, collaboration, and ultimately, drive sustainable growth.

Muhammad Ibraheem Khalid, alumnus of BBA 2018, currently working as Business Development Executive , (Japan Region) at Cirrus International (Pvt) Limited
Find him on LinkedIn at https://www.linkedin.com/in/ibraheemkhalid/

Future of Working Environment

by Syed Arhum Ahmed, BBA Class of 2020

The objective of every business is to create maximum value in today's world with talented, versatile employees who have the capability to think out of the box. One the biggest skills in today's working environment is technology. There has been a drastic change in the process of hiring and working post covid time and the biggest contributor of this change is Technology. It has created a new era of advancement in almost every field including but not limited to banking, consultancy, engineering, media, advertising and so on. The work from home setup has provided companies and employees with the flexibility to work as per own convenience and ease and thus enabled to deliver best results.

The rise of technology and pace of advancement has redefined the working environment while supporting the work life balance at the same time. The world is no more 9 to 5 and has moved to task-centric approach rather than time-centric. This has become one of the best ways to attract the best pool who prefers to carry out their responsibilities independently. Employees who are tech skilled, always perform better and meet the organizational goals timely and effectively. Now employees with traditional certifications/degrees are found in abundance, but the only distinguishing factor is now being tech-skilled. Employees having lack of tech knowledge will face hindrance in the future working environment. Tech-courses should now be added in every degree/certification, no matter what the core domain is. The advancement of technology is undoubtedly bringing a huge revolution in the world and those who don't move in parallel to this tech wind will be out the league.

Syed Arhum Ahmed, alumnus of BBA 2020, currently working as Sales Coverage Support Analyst, Corporate Banking at Deutsche Bank Karachi.
Find him on LinkedIn at https://www.linkedin.com/in/ibraheemkhalid/

Employer- Employee relationship and its impact on organizational goal

by Muhammad Uzair Yousuf, BBA Class of 2021

You have made it to the leading FMCG that we used dream about while studying. But, are you happy? Is your relationship with you employer stable? Does it take interest in your development? These questions are more important than just the mere status symbol of being employed at an MNC.

The relationship between an employer and employee is crucial for the success of an organization. It is a two-way street that requires commitment, mutual respect, and effective communication. The impact of a positive employer-employee relationship can be seen in various aspects of the organization's success.
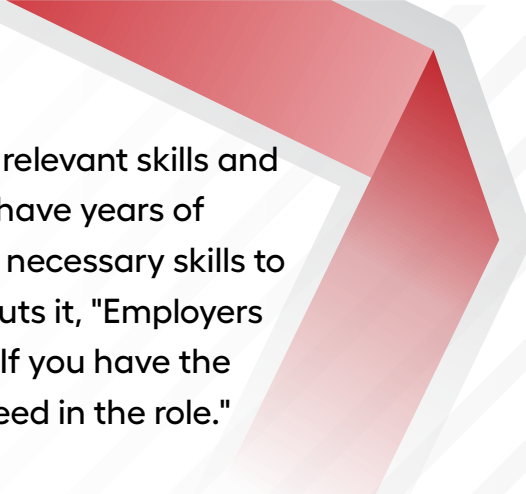
One of the primary impacts of a healthy employer-employee relationship is an increase in employee engagement. When employees feel valued and appreciated, they are more likely to be invested in their work and motivated to achieve the organization's goals. As Richard Branson, founder of Virgin Group, said, "Clients do not come first. Employees come first. If you take care of your employees, they will take care of the clients."

Another significant impact is a reduction in turnover rates. Employees who have a positive relationship with their employer are less likely to leave the organization. This, in turn, saves the organization time and resources in hiring and training new employees. According to Gallup, a global analytics firm, organizations with engaged employees have 59% lower turnover rates.

In conclusion, a strong employer-employee relationship is essential for the success of an organization. It promotes employee engagement, which leads to improved performance and reduced turnover rates. As Jim Collins, a management consultant and author, said, "Great vision without great people is irrelevant." Therefore, organizations must invest in building and maintaining a positive relationship with their employees to achieve their organizational goals.

What do employers look for in potential employees?

I am an IBA Grad and it's enough for me to cash in a job! Well, I am sorry but job market has evolved way beyond this misnomer. It is itself a very scientific approach to understand what employers look for in potential employees. It's not just about having the right qualifications, but also having the right attitude and mindset that aligns with the company's values and culture.

First and foremost, employers look for candidates who have relevant skills and experience. This doesn't necessarily mean that you need to have years of experience in a particular field, but rather that you have the necessary skills to excel in the role. As HR expert and author, Suzanne Lucas, puts it, "Employers want to know that you can do the job you're being hired for. If you have the necessary skills and experience, you'll be more likely to succeed in the role."

Secondly, employers look for candidates who are a good cultural fit for the company. This means that you share the same values and work ethic as the company and its employees. As HR consultant, Diane Arthur, explains, "Employers want to know that you'll fit in with the team and be able to work collaboratively with others. It's not just about having the right skills, but also about having the right attitude and approach to work."

In addition to skills and cultural fit, employers also look for candidates who are passionate about their work and have a desire to learn and grow. Liz Ryan, points out, "Employers want to know that you're not just looking for a job, but that you're truly interested in the work and the company. They also want to see that you're eager to learn and grow in your role."

In conclusion, when it comes to what employers look for in potential employees, it's a combination of skills, cultural fit, and passion for the work. By showcasing your relevant skills and experience, demonstrating your alignment with the company's values and culture, and expressing your enthusiasm for the role, you'll increase your chances of landing the job.

How can companies future proof themselves?
As companies continue to navigate through an ever-changing business landscape, it's essential to future-proof themselves to remain competitive and relevant. Here are some ways that companies can future-proof themselves:

Embrace Technology: Technology is rapidly advancing, and companies need to be at the forefront of these advancements to stay ahead of the competition. Whether it's adopting new software, automating processes or investing in artificial intelligence, embracing technology can help companies streamline their operations, improve productivity and enhance customer experiences. As Linda Boff, CMO of General Electric says, "The future is digital. It's not an option; it's a necessity."

Focus on Employee Development: The workforce is a critical asset for any company. Investing in employee development is crucial to future-proofing a company. This includes offering training and development programs, promoting a culture of continuous learning, and providing opportunities for career growth. As Jeff Weiner, CEO of LinkedIn says, "The only way to stay ahead of the curve is to continue to invest in your employees' growth and development. The companies that do that well are the ones that will thrive in the future."

Stay Agile: Companies need to be nimble and adaptable to change quickly. An agile mindset allows companies to pivot, when necessary, respond to market trends and emerging technologies, and stay ahead of the curve. As Larry Page, co-founder of Google, says, "It's important not to get too comfortable with what you're currently doing and be willing to change and adapt quickly. The world is changing fast, and if you're not staying ahead, you're falling behind."

However, failing to take these steps to future-proof a company can lead to detrimental consequences. Companies that do not embrace technological advancements risk becoming obsolete, losing market share, and falling behind competitors. Neglecting employee development can lead to a lack of motivation, disengagement, and high turnover rates. Furthermore, companies that are not agile risk being unable to respond quickly to market changes, leading to missed opportunities and diminished competitiveness. Thus, it is essential for companies to take proactive steps to future-proof themselves and stay ahead in today's fast-paced business world.

Muhammad Uzair Yousuf, alumnus of BBA 2021, currently working as Talent Acquisition Analyst and HRBP at Lucky Motor Corporation (KIA, Peugeot, & Samsung).
https://www.linkedin.com/in/muhammaduzairyousuf/

Importance of Employee-Employer Relationships and its impact on Organizational Growth

by Zohaib Faizi, MBA Class of 2016

The relationship between employees and employers is a crucial aspect that determines the success and growth of an organization. In this article, we will examine the impact of employee – employer relationships on organizational growth and the factors that contribute to building strong and healthy relationships.

Positive Impact of Employee-Employer Relationships

A positive relationship between employees and employers can result in increased job satisfaction, lower turnover rates, improved morale, and enhanced productivity. When employees feel valued and respected, they are more likely to be motivated and engaged in their work, leading to higher levels of performance.

Building Strong Relationships

The key to building strong employee-employer relationships is trust, mutual respect, open communication, and shared goals. Employers must provide clear expectations and support for their employees, while employees must take responsibility for their work and demonstrate their commitment to the organization.

Effective Communication

Regular feedback and opportunities for employees to voice their concerns and ideas are critical for building effective communication. Employers must be open and transparent in their communication, and employees must feel comfortable expressing their thoughts and opinions.

Take away:

The employee-employer relationship is a vital component of organizational growth. By fostering positive relationships, organizations can increase job satisfaction, reduce turnover, and improve productivity. Investing in these relationships should be a top priority for any organization looking to achieve sustained success and growth.

Zohaib graduated with an MBA from IBA in 2016, and has been working as a Fundraising and Resource Mobilization specialist for the past 10+ years. He has worked with several large organizations that include Indus Hospital & Health Network, IBA itself and is currently working at a leadership position, as a Regional Head, in Shaukat Khanum Cancer Trust.
Find him on LinkedIn at https://www.linkedin.com/in/zohaib-faizi-a90456b3/

Employer-Employee Relationship and it's impact on organizational growth.

by Abdul Moeed Khan, MBA Class of 2010

The employer-employee dynamic is a complex and multi-faceted one, with far-reaching implications for the growth and success of an organization. In a world where competition for talent is increasingly fierce, it is more important than ever for employers to foster a positive and supportive relationship with their employees.

One of the key elements of a successful employer-employee relationship is effective communication. Communication is not just about exchanging information; it is about building trust and understanding. When communication is open, transparent, and two-way, it helps to create a sense of psychological safety and foster a culture of collaboration. When employees feel heard and valued, they are more likely to feel motivated and engaged in their work, leading to higher levels of job satisfaction, performance, and productivity.

Trust is another essential component of a positive employer-employee relationship. Trust is built when an employer demonstrates integrity, fairness, and consistency in their interactions with employees. When employees trust their employer, they are more likely to feel confident and secure in their work, which can result in increased motivation and engagement. Moreover, trust can help to reduce stress and anxiety, leading to improved mental and physical well-being.

In conclusion, the employer-employee relationship is a critical factor that has far-reaching implications for the growth and success of an organization. A positive relationship, characterized by effective communication, trust, and mutual respect, can create a culture of collaboration, foster motivation and engagement, and lead to improved performance and overall success. By embracing this dynamic and valuing the importance of the employer-employee relationship, organizations can create a more equitable and sustainable future, where everyone can thrive.

Abdul Moeed Khan is a cellular network optimization specialist with over 16 years of experience working with diverse wireless network operators in Pakistan and global equipment manufacturers

Employee–Employer Relationship and its impact on Organizational growth

by Rameez Abdul Qader , MBA Class of 2020

The relationship between an employee and an employer plays a crucial role in the development of an organization. A positive and productive relationship leads to increased job satisfaction, better job performance, and higher employee engagement, which in turn contributes to the success of the organization. On the other hand, a negative relationship between an employee and an employer can result in low morale, decreased job satisfaction, and high turnover rates, which can negatively impact the organization's performance and growth.

Effective communication is key to building and maintaining a positive employee-employer relationship. Open and transparent communication promotes trust and understanding between both parties, which can lead to better collaboration and problem-solving. Additionally, it is important for employers to provide clear expectations and guidelines for their employees and to provide regular feedback on their performance. This helps employees to understand their role and responsibilities within the organization and feel valued and supported in their work.

Employers should also be proactive in creating a positive work environment for their employees. This includes providing opportunities for professional development, promoting a healthy work-life balance, and recognizing and rewarding employees for their contributions to the organization. This can increase employee engagement and motivation, which can lead to improved job performance and greater overall success for the organization.

In conclusion, the employee-employer relationship is a critical factor in the development and success of an organization. A positive relationship can lead to increased employee satisfaction, better job performance, and a more engaged workforce. Employers can foster a positive relationship through effective communication, providing clear expectations, promoting a positive work environment, and recognizing and rewarding employees.

Rameez has been engaged in the Banking Sector since 2008 and currently serves as the Area Operations Manager (Sindh & Balochistan Region) in The Bank of Khyber. Previously he has worked with Bank Al Habib Limited for 7 Years.
Find him on LinkedIn at
https://www.linkedin.com/in/rameez-abdul-qader-regional-operations-manager-93662431/

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