

# Learning Organisations

**Rajendra Ghag** outlines the advantages of a structured learning roadmap for an employee

People are the most important and the largest investment of an organisation. Retaining this valuable asset, especially in the current dynamic environment, is a huge challenge. Talent retention is one of the most important measures to achieve this.

You got to have everything going right under the 'people' umbrella if you want to focus on talent retention. This means you have to have your roadmap, talent acquisition, on-boarding, development opportunities and even respectable exit strategies in place, the latter if an employee decides to move on before retirement.

The journey of any new employee begins with on-boarding and quickly getting settled in the organisation. This however, is just the beginning of a new recruit's career development journey. You got to keep him engaged and motivated enough to perform well throughout his/her tenure.

In addition to culture, process and environmental inputs, a structured learning roadmap plays an important role here. In fact, during campus placements these days, the young future leaders keep asking about the learning opportunities and an organisation's strategy around. They are ready to compromise on compensation a bit if an organization is ready to provide relevant learning and growth opportunities.

What then is structures learning? It is a series of on-going training events mapped to an employee's career level and spanning his/ her lifecycle. It is a kind of a curriculum approach that enables on-going learning. This approach has

an advantage that all its inputs are not given in one instance. Not only does this avoid cognitive overload for the learner, but also ensures that only relevant career input for a particular level is provided. A structured road map thus gives an individual learning inputs when he needs it the most.

This approach is useful for both functional and behavioural learning. In the fast changing environment, particularly in service sector, even if a recruit is experienced, there is a huge need for function/domain specific learning as the products and services keep changing due to either macroeconomic or regulatory compulsions. Also, processes and systems are different in each organisation, and hence, without such domain specific structured learning, talent will be ineffective.

For behavioural learning at the higher level, most organisations take the diagnostic approach that is linked to their strategic intent and difficult areas of business. They first find out the important leadership competencies and map them to their current leadership behaviours/competencies through talent processes like potential reviews, succession planning etc.

Once, they understand the requirement, they plan a structured learning roadmap.

—The author is senior executive vice president & chief human resource officer, HDFC Life

One of the biggest advantages of a structured learning roadmap is that it helps to build a foundation for an integrated curriculum across the levels and functions, and allows for the measurement of performance improvement as a consequence of the training

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