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Talent Is Not An Online Commodity

INDUSTRY AND HR PULSE DURING COVID -19
PANDEMIC CRISIS AND LOCKDOWN

Survey Between-15th April - 18th May 2020
Report Published on 20th May 2020

SURVEY ON INDUSTRY AND HR PULSE DURING COVID-19 CRISIS

Response By   : CHRO / Business – HR
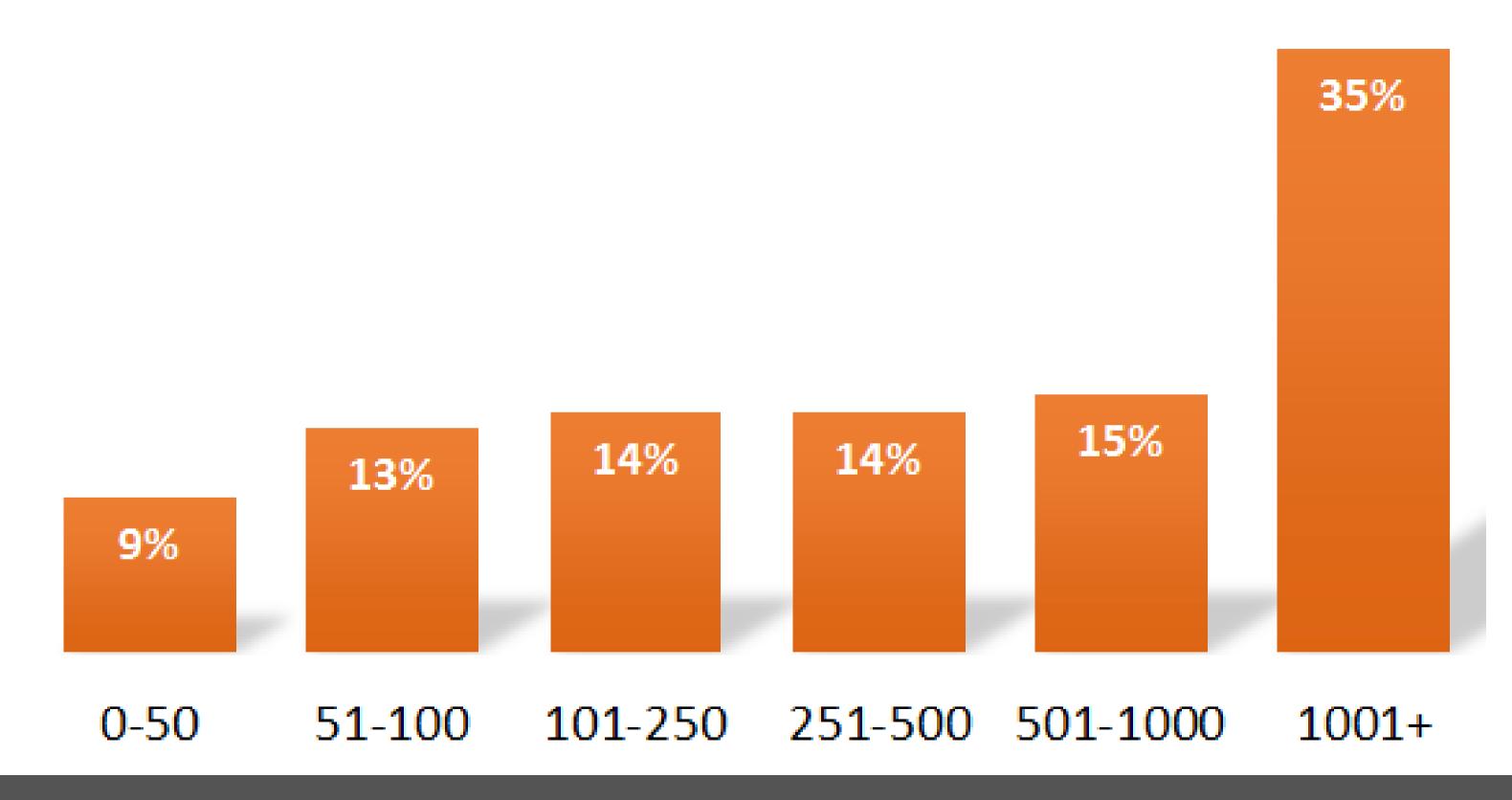
Research Sample Size   : **320 Participants**

Participants From   : Manufacturing | Engineering | Service | Trading

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected our families, societies that we live in and our businesses. COVID-19 crisis has left the entire world wounded. The economy is slipping into recession and the business world is facing challenges from all directions. We are facing a truly unprecedented situation. In times of perplexity, it's more important than ever to listen, learn and understand the industry and the businesses pulse.
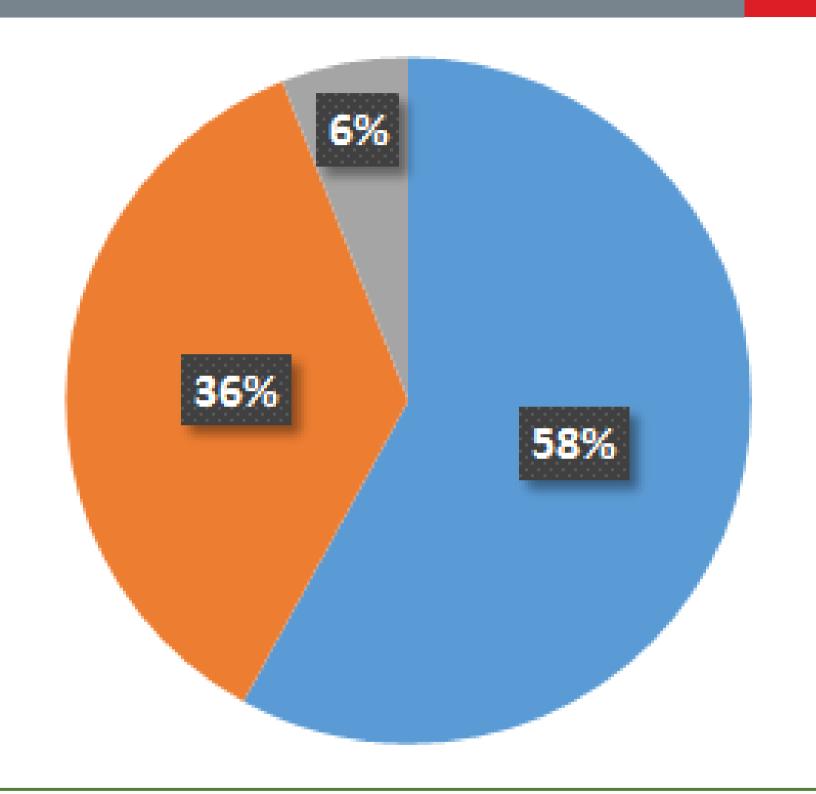
We, at Pioneer Management Consultant Pvt. Ltd, decided to do a survey to find out directly from the source what challenges are being faced by the companies during this pandemic and if and how the organisations are ready to face the challenges thrown at them. Continuous feedback will help the companies to tide over the present situation and evolve faster and stronger once the present COVID-19 crisis ends and the economy is on a recovery path. It can provide in-depth guidance and direction to the strategic decision-making process.

0-50	51-100	101-250	251-500	501-1000	1001+
9%	13%	14%	14%	15%	35%

320 Participants

Pie chart segments: 58%, 36%, 6%

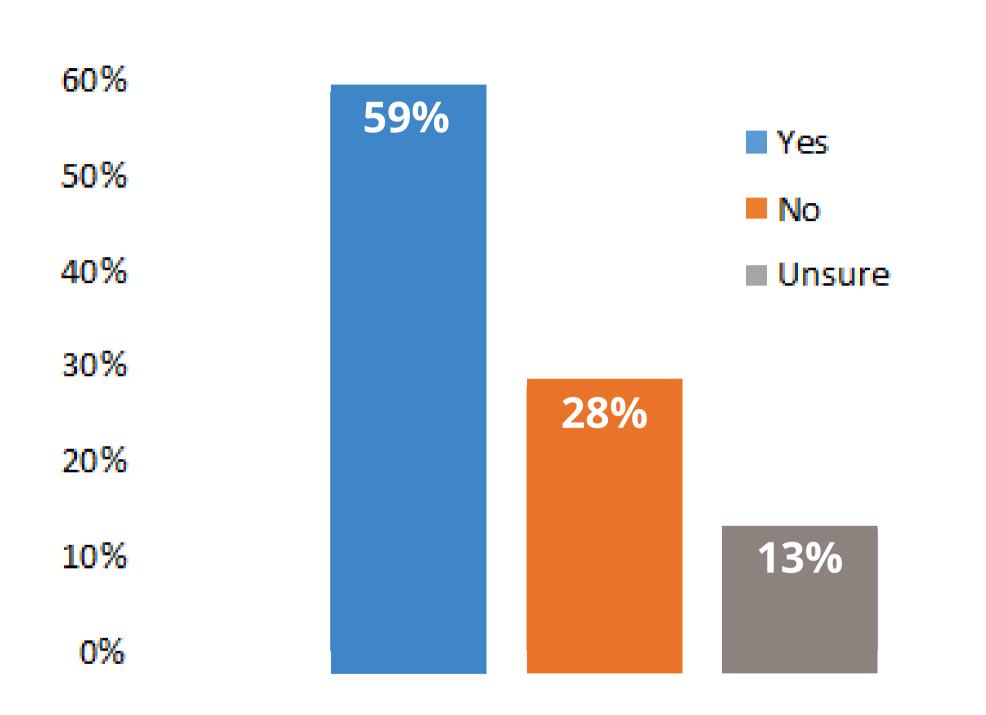Legend: ■ Manufacturing & Engineering ■ Service Industry ■ Trading

In 2006, Surat faced one of the most devastating floods. It led to 120 deaths, locked up thousands of people in their houses without food and electricity and closed down businesses and schools for weeks. Surat is no stranger to floods but 2006 was especially destructive; but largely preventable, if only they had the right tools and were well prepared.

But thanks to various new initiatives, and new dam protocols, even the torrential rains did not bring Surat to its knees after the 2006 crisis. The crisis management initiative and the coordination between various agencies helped Surat move forward and be much more than the city that was flooded.
The crisis taught the Surat government importance of being prepared for any disaster; the industries need to take a page out of Surat's disaster management book. Industries need to accept that the world as they knew it has stopped existing; and if they don't prepare for managing this crisis and make plans to move ahead then they'll become obsolete.

Learning from the past and preparing for the future with Effective Crisis Managment Team

3. DOES YOUR ORGANISATION HAVE A CRISIS MANAGEMENT TEAM TO MANAGE IMPACT OF COVID-19 CRISIS ?

SURVEY FINDINGS

This survey goes to show the unpreparedness and ignorance in the industry to manage COVID-19 Crisis .
As seen in the graph
59% - claimed YES *that their organisations have a CMT*
28% *-* ***claimed NO****, that they do not have a CMT in their organisation*
13% - claimed they were UNSURE *that if their organisation had CMT in place*

Organisations with experienced crisis management teams are urgently adding capacity and adapting to distribute working models. And those who haven't built crisis response teams before are grappling with how to rapidly train employees and get access to the right tools.

CMT remains responsible for keeping the organisation running with Business Continuity Plan and prevent its downfall in times of crisis. The CMT provides support through management of crisis-level issues, helping to maintain the employees' wellbeing, managing additional risks, exposures and stakeholder interests in response to an event or disaster requiring the activation of the CMT. Today businesses need a robust effective crisis management team. Putting together a team responsible for formulating the organisation's COVID-19 response will be critical to the long-term survival of most organisations.
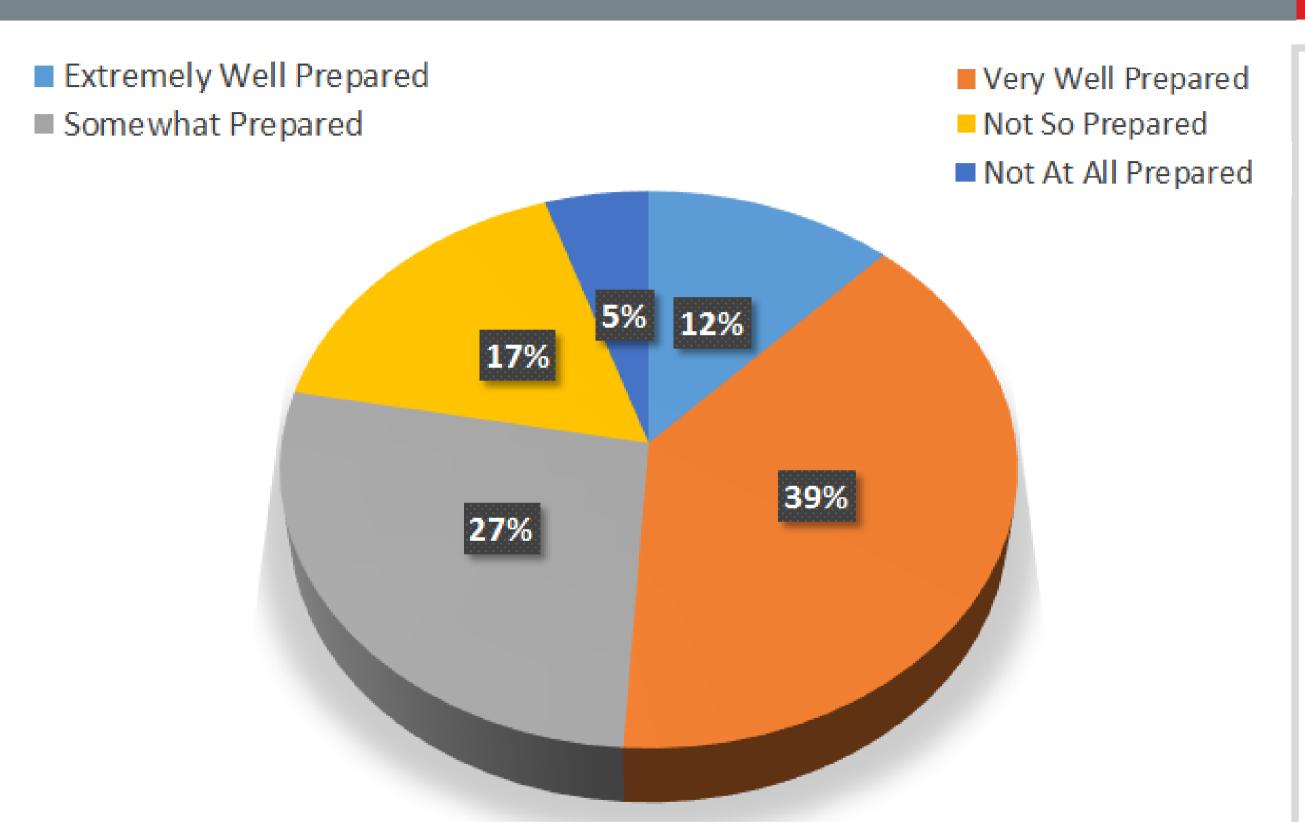
The world needs to learn from Japan's comprehensive approaches to crisis management. Japan's experiences over the years has led to the preparedness of national and local govts., private sector, academia and various other organisations towards addressing the crises and disasters and ensuring sustainable development of the industries.

The organisations prepared for this pandemic will undoubtedly come out of it as the **CHAMPIONS** of tomorrow and may become **MARKET LEADERS** in their respective sectors.

**Today we don't just need a CRISIS MANAGEMENT TEAM
but we need STRONG and EFFECTIVE CRISIS MANAGEMENT TEAM**

4. RATE THE PREPAREDNESS OF THE ORGANISATIONS' CRISIS MANAGEMENT TEAM TO DEAL WITH THE COVID-19 CRISIS.

SURVEY FINDINGS

■ Extremely Well Prepared
■ Somewhat Prepared
■ Very Well Prepared
■ Not So Prepared
■ Not At All Prepared

Pie chart values:
- 12%
- 39%
- 27%
- 17%
- 5%

Out of the **320** participants:

- *12% could claim to have an **Extremely well prepared** CMT to tackle this COVID-19 crisis situation.*
- *39% claimed that they are **Very Well prepared** to deal with this crisis*
- *27% they were **Somewhat** prepared & are trying their best to keep their company up-to-date with the changing scenarios.*
- *22% (5% + 17%) said that they're **Not So Prepared to Not Prepared At All** and their business is struggling to survive.*
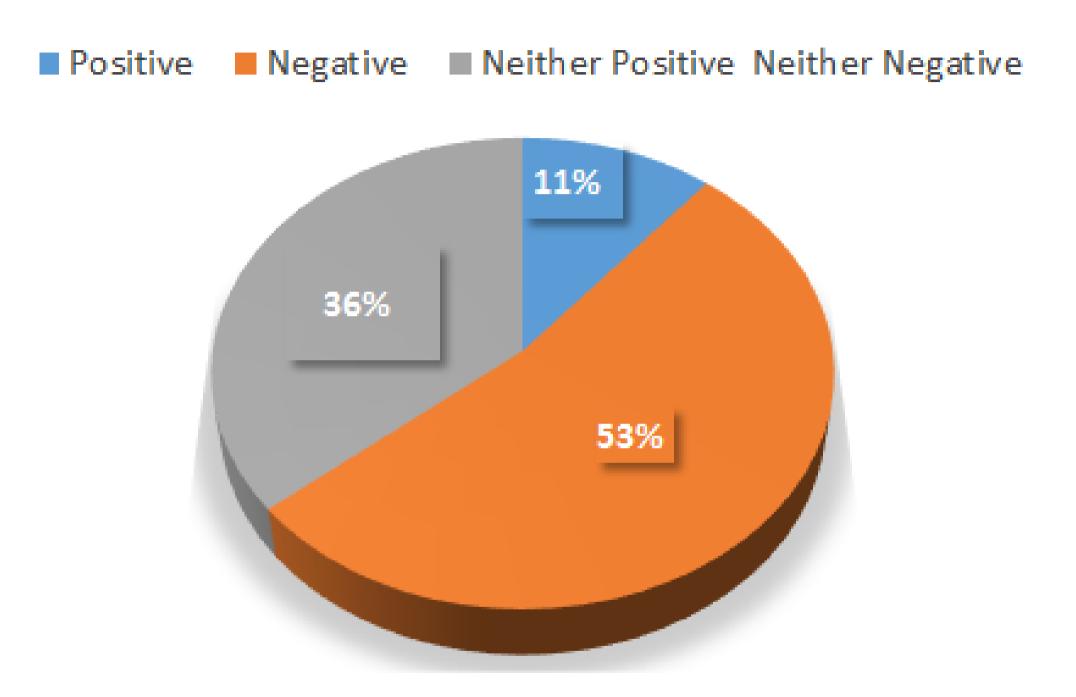
This pandemic is not something that the world has seen in the past 100 years. We have accepted our way of life as the only way of life, and this pandemic was a much-needed wake-up call for us. It's a harsh reality; either we are not open to acknowledging it or are complacent in planning for such an outbreak. There is one area, though, where the world isn't making much progress and that's pandemic preparedness, because if history has taught us anything, there will be another deadly global pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic has proved it right. The corona virus COVID-19 is affecting 192 countries and territories around the world and one international conveyance (the Diamond Princess Cruise ship harboured in Yokohama, Japan). For many, this pandemic seemed to have come out of nowhere, as an unexpected crisis that we couldn't have been prepared for. But some people have been warning of a global pandemic—and the fact that we are mostly unprepared to handle one—for years.

Just having a CMT in place is not enough; it should also be **effective** and **efficient** in carrying out its task. A CMT needs to be a **well-oiled machine** that can move ahead during crises without breaking down.

5. RATE THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 CRISIS ON OVERALL ORGANISATION'S BUSINESS OPERATIONS.

SURVEY FINDINGS

36% stated that it has **Neither Positive Nor Negative** impact on their business, till the time of survey being conducted

- ***11%*** *The ones that had an* <u>*EFFECTIVE CMT*</u> *in place and had rules and policies for working remotely, faced no problem with the lockdown. Their daily operations may not be as smooth as before, but they did not stop and were still making profit*

- ***53%*** *-* <u>*The ones that were not prepared*</u> *for this kind of crisis suffered a great deal of loss, since they did not have any policies and infrastructure regarding working remotely, their daily business operations were put to a stop, ultimately leading to loss in revenue*

6. WHAT CHALLENGES ORGANISATIONS EXPERIENCED DUE TO COVID-19 CRISIS AND LOCKDOWN ?

SURVEY FINDINGS

Overall

(Multiple Responses Type)

Challenge	Percentage
Well-being of an Employee	43%
Managing employees morale	52%
Decrease in productivity due to remote work	54%
Difficulty in staying connected with customers	48%
Difficulty in staying connected with employees	33%
Other	15%

Refer Page 13 for Other Challenges Briefed By Participants

OPERATIONS

- Suppliers & logistics problem , shortages in supply of raw materials
- Local authorities like Gram Panchayat and local villagers not permitting some plants to restart their operations, though it is situated in a non-containment zone
- Getting government permissions for the operating units .
- Getting e-passes for employees commuting to essential work
- Difficulty in labour mobilization
- Handling large amount of data, without regular maintenance of the server

HUMAN RESOURCE

- Employees' layoff, Salary cut ranging from 25% - 50% for next six months
- Unorganised work process resulting to late hours work even on weekends thus leading to Mental distress
- Extra workload on employees without consideration of current situation and challenges they are facing while working from home

FINANCE

- Impact on export & imports
- Limited cash flows
- Decrease in sales numbers

- Many organisations faced difficulty in **transitioning to the work from home stage**. Others found that it was hard to keep up the **employees' morale** during this uncertain time, which led to a decrease in productivity.
- Another challenge which contributed as a factor for less productivity was **staying connected with employees and customers** at the same time since companies lacked the practical plans and policies for work from home and the essential setup for the same.

7. WHAT ACTIVITIES ARE PLANNED BY ORGANISATION FOR EMPLOYEES WELL-BEING, DURING COVID-19 LOCKDOWN?

SURVEY FINDINGS

MANAGING PHYSICAL - MENTAL - EMOTIONAL WELL BEING OF EMPLOYEES

Online Various Physical Workout Sessions Such As Yoga, Zumba	Motivation Talk By HOD's Discussion on Various Business Ideas, Overcoming Challenge, Talks On Cost Saving	Flexible Working Hours With Frequent Breaks Focus on Work-life Balance	Other Initiatives such as Virtual Employee Engagement with Family & Children such as Magic Shows, Painting, Singing, Extempore	Counselling Sessions on Anger, Anxiety and Stress Management	Encourage Virtual 'Water Cooler Moments'
19%	20%	27%	14%	11%	9%

The organisations have started identifying the challenges and have initiated to take up the responsibilities for the **physical, emotional and mental well-being of their employees.** Some of these initiatives are:

- Counselling sessions as and when required
- Talking to them about the essential savings
- Organising different training programs, with focus on capability development programs, preparing them for the future
- Motivational talks by various Head of Departments
- Team engagement activities
- Work-life balance and positive reinforcements

The COVID-19 outbreak has not just affected the physical but also the mental and emotional well-being of many employees. Depression, anxiety, frustration and sleep disorders have become common issues. Further, without any domestic help, women are being overloaded with both personal and professional responsibilities. Domestic violence at homes is on the rise too due to lack of equal partnership and work pressure frustration. Adding to this, are the unorganised work from home processes stretching beyond 12 to 15 hours a day. With no physical workouts and positioning oneself for hours in front of the laptops increases the risk of health issues.

But the list doesn't end here. The children are home vying for more attention than ever before, with no friends to play with or scope to go out. The education system has penetrated into our homes with online classes. During school hours, the resources i.e. the laptops or phones have to be shared.

Unfortunately, many do not even have the much required infrastructure to work from home with people living in joint families. The frustration reaches a peak with unstable network connectivity, no domestic help and a lack of equal partnership practice. Hence, a rise in mental, physical and emotional stress can be seen specifically when both the wife and the husband are working. With each person having to attend to their own work schedules, another challenge that arises is managing their own private space of comfort where one can professionally connect with their office colleagues or be a part of corporate meetings. Amidst all this, many organisations are resorting to salary cuts, holding increments and with each announcement for the extension of the lockdown, the insecurities about one's job is increasing. People have EMI's to pay and such salary cuts are impacting their lives adversely.
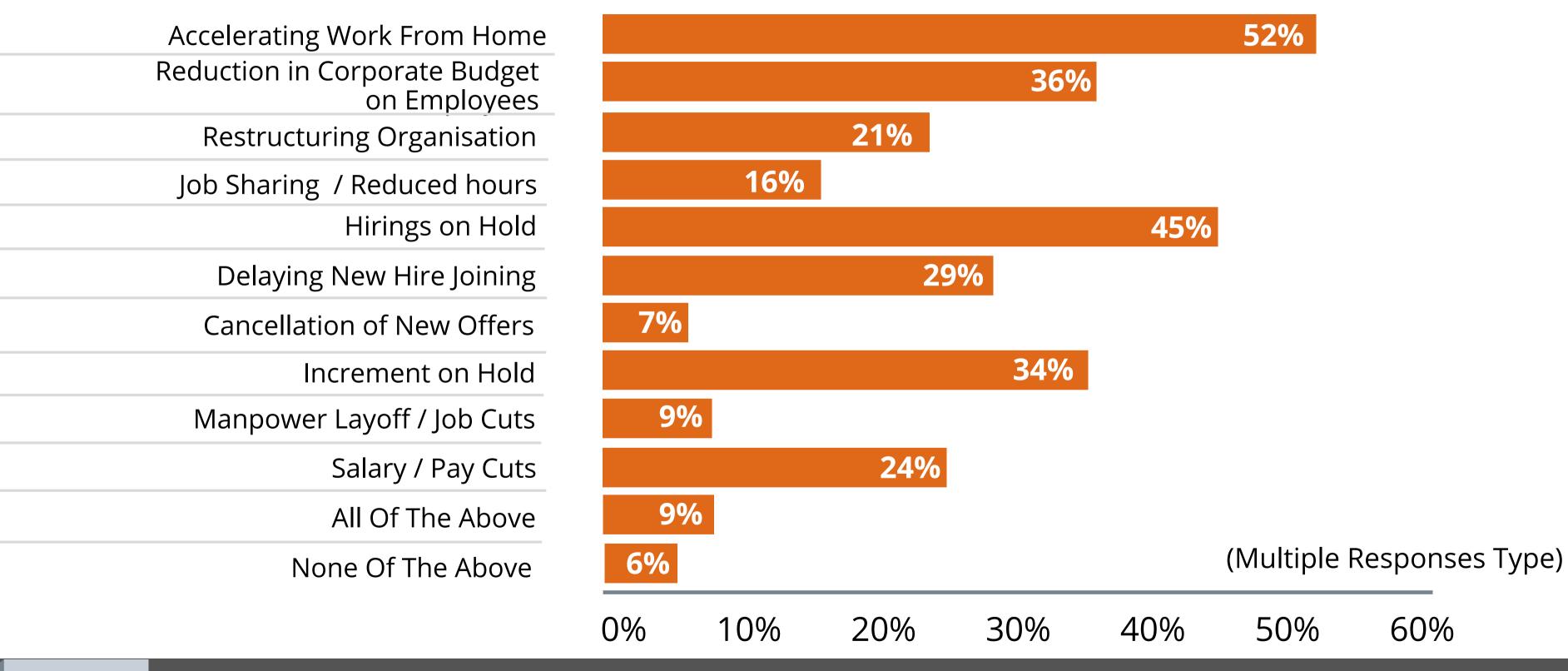
RECOMMENDATION

Organisations are in uncharted territory. They need to tread carefully and make sure that the over-all well-being of their employees is being looked after. Majority of them have opted for working from home. This, while being a great initiative on their part to make sure the employees don't get infected, has led to a rise in anxiety and stress among employees. Being cooped up at home with no way to blow off steam and a looming fear of uncertainty is not exactly what the employees had in mind when they were asked to work from home. Respecting work-life balance, fixed working hours and avoiding unnecessary pressure on the employees to make up for the lost time is a must. It is vital to understand that human resource is the biggest asset for any company and only when the employee is healthy and happy can a business succeed.

Trainings using different online learning platforms will not only enhance the skill-set of employees but also prepare them for the challenging future which lies post the pandemic. Encouragement and appreciation will serve as greater motivation to work towards the organisational goals. In such a difficult time, the employees, who are holding and working by the values of the company, should be specially acknowledged.

8. WHAT ADJUSTMENTS ORGANISATION IS CONSIDERING TO MAKE DUE TO THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 CRISIS?
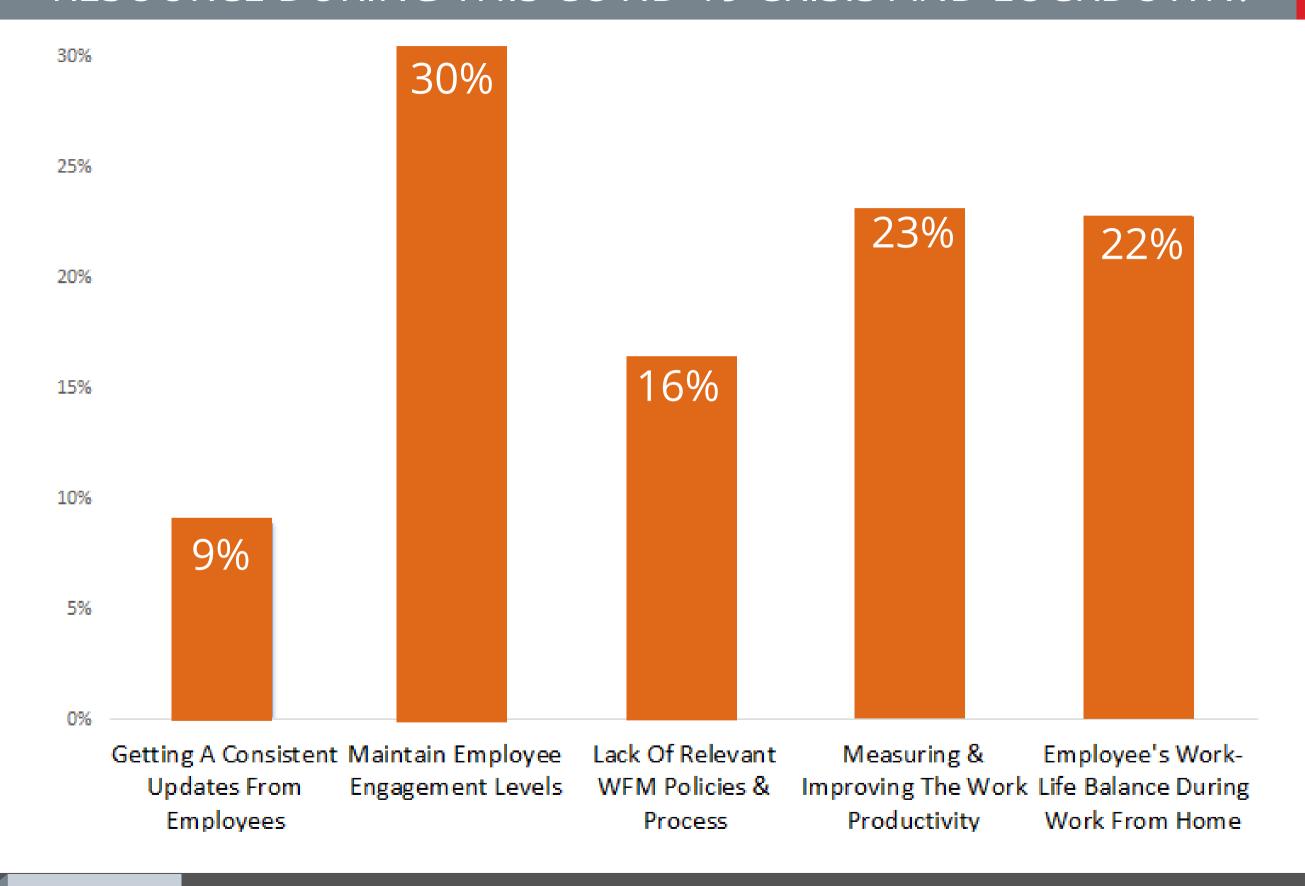
Overall

Category	Percentage
Accelerating Work From Home	52%
Reduction in Corporate Budget on Employees	36%
Restructuring Organisation	21%
Job Sharing / Reduced hours	16%
Hirings on Hold	45%
Delaying New Hire Joining	29%
Cancellation of New Offers	7%
Increment on Hold	34%
Manpower Layoff / Job Cuts	9%
Salary / Pay Cuts	24%
All Of The Above	9%
None Of The Above	6%

(Multiple Responses Type)

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60%

The lockdown has impacted hiring; from slowing down to absolutely halved. A lot of companies have cancelled/ withdrawn job offers or delayed joining of new people. Many freshers are even working for free, afraid that they'd be left with nothing; **no money, no knowledge, no skills** due to lack of opportunities. And there is no commitment from the hiring companies on-boarding the selected candidates. A lot of people, who resigned from their previous jobs because they got a better opportunity and their joining period was in March - April - May - June 2020, are now put on hold. Organisation restructing process might result in mass job cuts, layouts of employees. Pay cuts between 10% to 30% have already been announced. Many organisations have cancelled the employees' salary increment for this year. Others, who've postponed it might also cancel it in future if the business does not pick up. The concept of job-sharing has been introduced, although it has not received a warm welcome. Expenditure on employees has been reduced to nothing.

Companies are ready to adopt drastic measures to survive this crisis, and they're not afraid to try anything.

9. WHAT IS THE **BIGGEST CHALLENGE** FOR THE HUMAN RESOURCE DURING THIS COVID-19 CRISIS AND LOCKDOWN?

SURVEY FINDINGS

HR will usher in the new normal!
The agility of a business to transform may be dependent on so many factors, including investment in technology and internal protocols on decision-making, but in all these decisions, an agile HR function is the catalyst to close these gaps. Demonstrating employees care and trust will be essential now to win their hearts. HR's value is in constantly ensuring organisations have the right policies, procedures, communications, processes, etc. to make shift of change in the organisation. [Forbes]
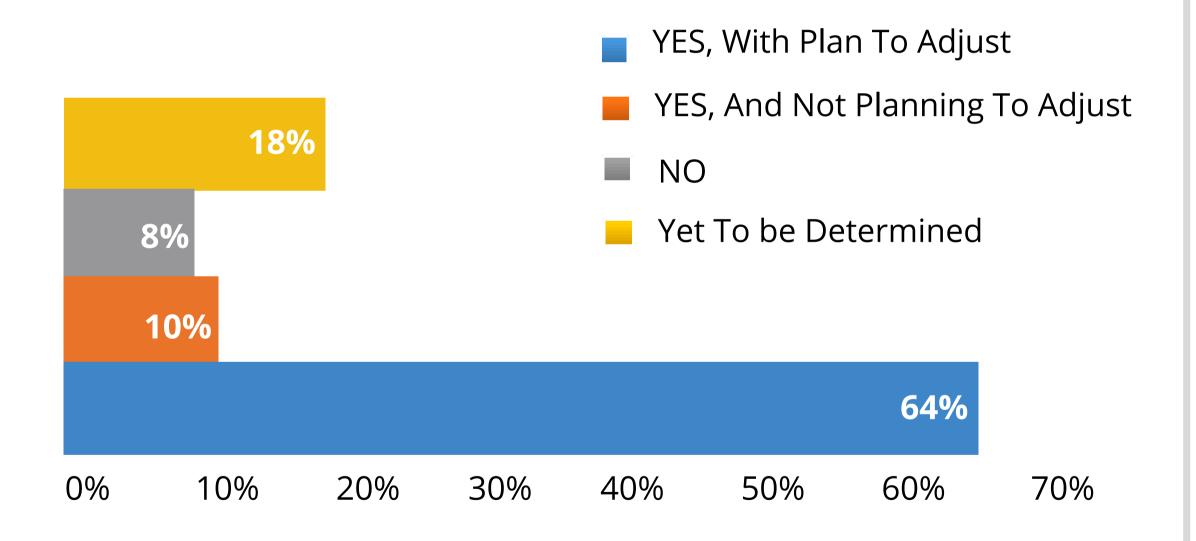
Chart: What is the biggest challenge for the human resource during this COVID-19 crisis and lockdown?

- Getting A Consistent Updates From Employees — 9%
- Maintain Employee Engagement Levels — 30%
- Lack Of Relevant WFM Policies & Process — 16%
- Measuring & Improving The Work Productivity — 23%
- Employee's Work-Life Balance During Work From Home — 22%

Since the pandemic hit, Human Resource has been in the spotlight . HRs have to go above and beyond their role of paper-pushers. Role of HR has changed now. It is not limited to recruiting, salary management and personnel management; it has evolved into managing employee's well being and productivity in this crisis.

In India, HR is experiencing the importance of crisis management in the organisation. There are some characteristics of HR that have created extraordinary value – namely, HR's ability to lead and act with agility. HR Managers/Leaders should seek out opportunities in this pandemic to focus on attracting the best, developing potential and retaining value. We mustn't lose sight of things that don't seem urgent but are very important, for example, Performance Management, Leadership Development, and Diversity. In these changing times the HR's need to make sure that their organisations are prepared to face challenges head on. The business world is rallying to accept this new normal; HRs is going to play an essential role in bringing the changes, they're the ones who have to prepare, deliver and implement new rules and regulations that would help the organisations survive in these uncertain times. **#HRWARRIORS**

10. DO YOU HAVE **BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN** IN PLACE POST COVID-19 CRISIS ?

SURVEY FINDINGS

As business owners, we all like to think about success and profitability; however, you should simultaneously consider the risks, too. While you should always aim for the best, unfortunately, you must also plan for the worst.

Legend:
- YES, With Plan To Adjust
- YES, And Not Planning To Adjust
- NO
- Yet To be Determined

Chart data:
- Yet To be Determined: 18%
- NO: 8%
- YES, And Not Planning To Adjust: 10%
- YES, With Plan To Adjust: 64%

(X-axis: 0%, 10%, 20%, 30%, 40%, 50%, 60%, 70%)

According to our survey :
- **64%** of respondents said that they have a BCP, and they're planning to make adjustments to it.
- **10%** of respondents said that they have a BCP, but they're not planning to make any adjustments.
- **18%** of respondents said that they are yet to determine their BCP.
- **8%** of respondents said that they do not have any BCP in place in their organisation.

The survey findings clearly show that just having a BCP is not enough to handle the impact of COVID-19 crisis. For the industries, this is a chance to **RE-MODEL** itself; change the very core of the business, and the BCP needs to be tested and reworked every day given if they want to move forward with the changing times and survive.

Unplanned events can have a devastating effect on organisations. COVID-19 poses significant challenges and, unlike many crises, has unfolded without much advance warning or scope for preparation. For any organisation, the biggest challenge right now is business continuity. Business continuity plans are being tested and reworked every day given. Even well drawn out BCP are suddenly in deep water and efforts are to keep the nose above the water. Uncertainty over the lockdowns has made it impossible to predict business impact so multiple business scenarios and models are being prepared. As the COVID-19 outbreak hits companies hard, organisations are bracing for what many are referring to as the toughest phase from **survival to sustainable to scalable**. There's a war at every front, with organisations finding themselves in the middle of managing <u>Working Capital</u>, <u>Cash Flow</u>, <u>Garnering Revenue</u>, <u>Sustainable Margin</u>, <u>Treasury Operations</u>, <u>Low Collections to Zero Billing Revenue</u>, <u>Market Stability</u>, <u>Falling Share Price</u>, <u>Consumer Consumption Capacity</u> - and the most fearful factor: **Market Uncertainty.**

"Expect the Best, Plan for the Worst, and Prepare to be Surprised." Denis Waitley

RECOMMENDATION

In difficult times, people need leadership more than anything else and not just from the top. Still, each one of us in an organisation is equally responsible for doing our best to protect teams, our clients and our organisation at large.

PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE BY EXAMINING THE PAST

Many leaders think crisis management is not the part of their job profile. That's why organisations hire risk mitigation experts to see them through a sustained crisis which will not be a sustainable process in future. Creating organisations that are strong in the face of uncertainty requires a new **mind-set** and that must be driven from the top. **Its time to look within**, identify **Leadership Agility** , pick your players, form a core team, take a pivotal role in identifying the organisational goals, prioritizing the various operations, and getting the best people to frame BCP, which **minimizes interruptions, potential damage** and **establishes alternatives** to **disruptions**.

Anatomy of a Business Continuity Plan - Adapt and Evolve

Framing a BCP is of utmost importance to deal with this crisis. The first step towards building a Business Continuity Plan (BCP) for your organisation should start from assessing the business processes and identifying the areas which are most vulnerable due to the crisis. A core team should be made consisting of senior representatives from all spheres of the business.

The following points should be carefully considered while planning the BCP during the COVID-19 crisis:

- Operational losses due to reduced or no work on-site or in offices
- Financial costs in mitigating the effects of the crisis
- Safeguarding of the health and safety of the employees in the organisation
- Realistically determining the acceptable level of service from the employees during the recovery phase

Communication is the KEY - Effective Communication is the Bridge between Confusion and Clarity.

No business continuity plan will be effective without candid and open internal and external communication between all stakeholders. For any BCP to succeed, communication between the stakeholders plays the most critical role. An open communication channel towards people within your organisation is vital in assuring that the business goals are achieved.

The employees are the lifeline of any organisation. So, a **"People-First"** approach demonstrating responsibility towards its employees through **regular engagements**, **providing flexibility** in their work, with meticulous attention towards their **mental, emotional, and physical well-being** should be adopted.

Encouragement towards **skill development** and acknowledgment for **excellent performance** during this period should also be a part of the organisational culture.

While revisiting your workplace policies and reframing them, keep in mind what is essential for business and its people; **don't miss the emotional side of the crisis.**

"YOU NEVER KNOW WHEN A MOMENT AND A FEW SINCERE WORDS CAN HAVE AN IMPACT ON A LIFE"
~ ZIG ZIGLAR

Every business is different, but mapping out a Business Continuity Plan before the disaster strikes will help the company as well as the people, to recover after the worst is over. To **survive, sustain, scale-up** from such crisis, organisations must typically have a **well crafted and well-tested** business continuity plan or prepare such a plan promptly. With strong leadership who are ready to take up mundane and predictable problems of business continuity, must ensure decisive action in response to immediate uncertainties and communicate swiftly and frankly with stakeholders. Also, where appropriate, they must demonstrate practical compassion for those who are impacted or do not have access to financial and other resources to absorb the effects of the crisis. The organisation must conduct an early and aggressive review of cash flow and develop a cash management plan.

If there's one thing that this crisis taught the business world, is that **agility in leadership, in technology, and policies**, must be the core of workplace culture in any organisation. In times of crisis, it is a challenge for businesses to safeguard and support employees while continuing to deliver the services needed to keep the business operational and revenue flowing.

LEADERSHIP AGILITY | TEAM AGILITY | ORGANISATIONAL AGILITY

The Need to Develop Higher Levels of Agility

Creating organisations that are strong in the face of uncertainty requires a new mind-set and that must be driven from the top down. By developing a culture and mechanisms that support superior adaptive capability, companies will inoculate themselves against a range of threats, not just pandemics. They'll become more resilient and competitive in the complex and uncertain business of business. [Credit - HBR]

"To manage this crisis an epic team was formed involving the CEO, CFO, EHS, HR - the top management.
A perfect strategy was formed to prepare the organization with BCP – with the core values of maintaining
employees' health, looking after their well-being during the lockdown, maintaining social distancing and hygiene practices.

The CMT thus created, led to a business continuity program where a standard SOP of 'what', 'when' and 'how' procedures were laid down.
Here is what the HR initiative's action plan with the Crisis Management Team shouldered the responsiility during this pandemic crisis :

- Covered every employee under a COVID-19 Protection Insurance scheme.
- The HR team connected with 700 employees, one-on-one basis, and the first thing we did was confidence building and eliminating the
   insecurities of job loss and pay cuts among employees.
- We assessed the employee's wellbeing, physical, mental and emotional, as we noticed some shades of anxiety and frustration, due to the
   lockdown and work from home. So we started with online workout sessions and one-on-one talks.
- Since work from home was not a culture at the workplace, it was initially difficult to set up the process but the HR team pulled together every bit
   and piece of information and successfully set up a work from home procedure and infrastructure, along with WFH policies.
- Trained the employees on this new normal - WFH and URA (Remote Organization Network)
- Trained all employees to be hands on in everything to move forward with the work easily.
- WhatsApp groups became the official communication channel for all operations. Separate groups were formed according to the location of the
   employees to connect and solve the issues on emergency basis. HOD took once a week online meeting with all his team members.
- After few days, with proper approval and all hygiene practice, production in shifts, with employee's safety and wellbeing at the core was started.
   A place was created for the production team employees to stay at their workplace, from Monday to Friday with every necessity taken care of -
   from food, laundry to comfortable beds for sound sleep was arranged. They also included medical checkups at regular intervals."

Mr. Abhijit Deherkar
HR Head - (India)

"The first initiative, which was most essential for us was that we take the right precaution, ensure people's safety over everything else and work to build an environment that fosters trust. Empathy and people-centricity exhibited today will only serve to build loyalty, positivity and success in the long-run. Working from home does not mean that the employees need to be isolated from their team, bosses, clients, friends or colleagues.

In this uncertain and evolving world, we must remember that it's our relationships that hold us together. We made sure that we set some time to have those coffee conversations, take that e-lunch break and interaction"

*In difficult times such as these, **we all pledged to collectively suffer a little so that nobody suffers a lot**, and together, we are strong enough to pull ourselves , our business through this crisis faster. We gathered all our teams and let them work on solutions that can help get all of us through this crunch time. We assured, that nobody will lose a job in this economic environment.*

Mr. Abhijit Deherkar
HR Head - (India)

The first priority has to be the business. Most organisations, even those with so called Business Continuity Plans in place, have been caught unprepared in the face of this unprecedented crisis. The disruption to the economy is akin to a major war. While it is important to take an empathetic view of the employees' predicament, all stakeholders must understand that a State of Emergency has to prevail within the organisation. This means tough measures, including pay cuts or layoffs, will be taken using a Top Down approach. It also means that shareholders and promoters need to be responsible and not indulge in Disaster Capitalism. We have to remember that regardless of the state of the economy, the top 20% of the talent pool will always be in demand. This is also a golden opportunity to bolster employee engagement. The other massive opportunity is to undertake a comprehensive overhaul of all policies, processes, organisation structures, business and CapEx plans. Automation, high productivity, elimination of waste and focus on core competencies are the order of the day.
HR has to play a critical role in all these decisions.
So it's imperative for HR professionals to build their skill sets.

Mr. Arnab Mitra
Chief Human Resources Officer

The COVID-19 situation has tremendously evolved the overall role of HR. HR re-emphasises People Safety and care for their families through their actions and deeds. How to ensure that the employees are engaged through these tough and critical times was the greatest challenge faced by many HR professionals. Managers looks up to HR for guidance and way forward to deal with people in these uncertain times. This situation is a great example of VUCA environment where only uncertainties are being spoken, heard, experienced and felt by the people. The HR function has risen up to this dynamic environment proving that they are true business partners in all its sense. Engagement of employees by organising Town halls live events, Online learning, and regular work deliverables brings the employees and their cross functions together making them feel more belonged to the organisation. Real coffee breaks turned to virtual coffee time and an acceptable way to connect. Constant communication with both the top Management and the employees has brought the role of HR to a new direction –
Strategic Advisor, An Enabler, Policy Maker and an Implementer.

Ms. Geetha Ramaswamy
Director - HR (India & South East Asia)

Role of HR in COVID-19 "HR is a Leadership function". This statement can be read in both ways. One - the role of business leaders is to don the hat of people leadership and play the HR role, and two - the role of HR is to think, act and influence as a Leadership function- i.e. to provide thought leadership and ensure it gets translated into action. And this is evident in the current crisis of COVID-19. Never have we witnessed so much emphasis being laid on communication, engagement, connectedness and well-being. These are no longer nice-to-have topics and CEOs see a direct correlation between these topics and business continuity and business success in the current times. HR professionals across the industry have risen to the occasion once again - from crisis response, to proactive communication and connectedness, to helping employees adjust to the newer challenges of Working from Home, to making a positive impact on emotional well-being to focusing on skill building and mindset building for the changing business environment.

It is now time for HR Professionals to reassert their leadership to new ways of working that create sustainability for organisations and people!

Ms. Meghana Joshi
Chief Manager- Human Resources

The current pandemic is a unique situation which has taught us newer nuances of working!

3 things that organisations must focus on "Employee First" as a philosophy because if we take care of our people, they will take care of our business and they must keep the focus on ensuring that people are safe at home but also provide necessary support through masks / sanitizers / education around COVID-19 etc. Second thing is that keep your people engaged through different initiatives (webinars with inspiring personalities from the world of sports, Indian army etc) & finally organisation must drive the change that going forward the society / corporate world is going to have a **new normal** *in the form of more digitization (virtual meetings), thinking beyond the obvious (in terms of policies, benefits, etc). As long as organisations and employees focus on these 3 things, they will continue to grow in future.*

Mr. Bijendra Vats
Director - Human Resources

Industry and HR Pulse During COVID-19 Outbreak

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Recruitment is an EXPERT field, understanding Hiring EXPECTATIONS

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