

Seismic Shift in Human Resources for Powering Growth Next

A Report on SSF's 4th HR Leadership E-Summit 2021

November 18-19, 2021: Shared Services Forum (SSF) India held the fourth edition of the **HR Leadership Summit** on November 18 & 19, 2021. The summit was held virtually with **22** eminent industry leaders as honorable speakers. The 4th HR Leadership E-Summit (HRLeS) 2021 provided experiential insights and perspectives through multiple discussion and presentation sessions spread across 2 days, under the umbrella theme of:

Seismic Shift in Human Resources for Powering Growth Next Work Force. Work Place. Work Pace.



The summit was formerly opened by **Rakesh Sinha**, Co-Founder & Member Governing Council – SSF; CEO & Executive Director, RvaluE Group and CEO & Founder, Quintes Global. He set the context for the 2-Day E-Summit, describing SSF as a growing community of Business Services practitioners from diverse sectors and multiple function focus/ areas. He highlighted that SSF is now in its 11th year of its mission of disseminating knowledge by bringing the industry leaders together on one platform to share their perspectives, experiential insights, innovative ideas,

success stories, challenges, etc., thereby making it truly a platform – “For Practitioners, By Practitioners” – ensuring that SSF keeps its focus on multiple areas for knowledge dissemination through seminars, focused group interactions, Journal – ‘Process Edge’, pioneering publications, survey, & research reports, curated models and frameworks for value delivery, as well as recognizing stellar contributions by leaders and organizations for driving transformation, value delivery and business impact through SSF Excellence Awards & Recognition. He commented on the theme of the HR Leadership Summit – on how talent management has transformed in the recent, and there has risen a pressing need to relook at the Human Resource as a function, largely because humans as corporate resources have themselves reorganized. The two days will have multiple conversations/sessions with our expert speaker faculty for strategies to help guide the HR strategy with the focus on driving ‘Growth Next’.

Prabir Jha, Founder and CEO – Prabir Jha Advisory, who is widely recognized as a ‘Transformation Guru’, and an accomplished thought leader, presented the Keynote address. The topic of his address – ‘**Designing and Adapting to Culture for Growth in the New World**’ brought the focus on the concept of impact influence from culture to the business growth. Organization effectiveness, as he rightly pointed out, is a triumvirate between system & processes, talent or leadership, and culture. He highlighted that there are three reasons that should shape the culture approach for an organization:

- **Enterprise value outcomes** – what the organization seeks to achieve
- **Cost** – all the relevant costs for your business
- **People risk** – in the context of growth, customer experience, changing technology



Prabir stated – “Culture for me is very simple. It is a smell of a place – how do people in your organization think, behave, relate, deliver experiences and outcomes... It is not just a follow through of strategy, it is an integral part of strategy. Culture is the strategic choice that you make.” He spoke of the 10 types of deployment vehicles that can be used to create the kind of culture that becomes the channel for the strategic success – communicating intent and logic for the culture; organization design; hiring practice; performance management; rewards & recognition management; promotion & talent management; leadership modelling; entire policy framework; storytelling; and finally, PDCA (Plan-do-check-act) cycle plan. He remarked that ‘Culture Change’ will very much required to be reflected in all the business processes as much as HR processes, and multiple points for culture shaping and enhancement.

The first panel session of the summit – ‘From the Lens of the CHROs – Building the Workplace of Future’ **deliberated** on strategies & challenges to stay ahead, and the seismic shift from ‘new normal’ to ‘next normal’ while adopting innovations and intelligent automation. The panel also talked about decoding the art & science of ‘integrated workforce & talent’. The esteemed speakers of this panel were **Arun Dinakar Rao**, Chief People Officer, Birlasoft; **Mukta Nakra**, Head – Human Resources & Sustainability, Marks & Spencer Reliance India; **Naveen Narayanan**, Chief People Officer, Biocon Biologics. **Rakesh Sinha** moderated this panel. The conversation highlighted multiple key factors responsible for building the workplace for future from CHRO’s lens. Some of these included: Mukta’s view on keeping the focus on



‘People Data’ and new tools & technology as the game plan to stay ahead; Naveen’s belief that digital, robotics, data science and adult education at scale are the future; and Arun’s conviction that embracing technology, finding the right business case, going ‘single platform’ for HR services, and predictive analytics are much required to keep up with the pace for the changing business environment.

Arun made a very relevant point on embracing “shared services as a concept in every possible avenue within HR – what need not be managed as a core element of the HR service delivery, can be looked to aggregate, consolidate and be seeded in the shared services, and bring in productivity improvements, technology enablement, so that they can deliver at a price point with the efficiencies and effectiveness, that actually are called for in today’s organizations.” The discussion brought up “hot desking” as an integral part of the businesses or shared services today thereby addressing the “social need” of the people – and creating the right work design that enables the people to work remotely as well as let them come to office every once in a while. The online poll conducted during the session, to get a larger viewpoint, also pointed out that most of the people, a whopping **63%**, identified ‘**Hybrid (Physical/ Virtual) working environment and workforce bonding**’ as the most significant factor that is likely to impact the future of workplace, followed by ‘**Increasing transition in ‘human’ jobs onto automated systems and tools**’ – 20%.

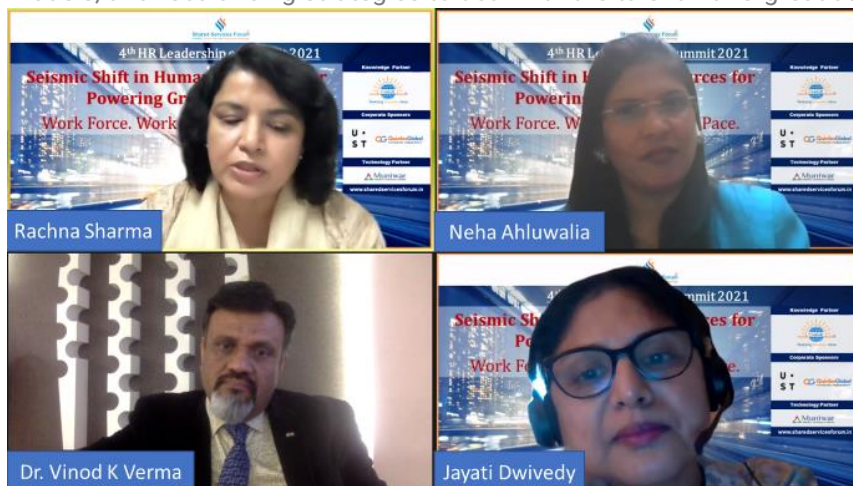
The next session for the day was ‘Fireside Chat’ with **Animesh kumar**, Chief People Officer, ZEE Entertainment Enterprises on the topic ‘**The Recipe for Powering Growth Next.**’ Animesh highlighted four key ingredients which according to him will drive organizations for ‘Growth Next’:

- **Exponential thinking** within the organization, balanced by execution excellence and scale
- **Thinking-doing framework**, to envision and to deliver
- **Hunger for impact**
- **Seamless collaboration**

In response to how should leaders today inspire people, Animesh stressed on the point that “Leaders are no longer people who have the right answers, leaders are people who can ask the right questions to the right people and discover those answers that could then be deployed. The model of leadership that was of a knowledge expert in every area and were accountable for is passé. Today, what is more important is knowing the right questions and having the humility to understand that the answers might lie with people who are much younger to you. Your job is to bring that together and construct it orchestrate it and make that happen.”



The next session on the topic – **“Mind Over Matter – Developing and Strengthening Workplace Culture in a Multi-faceted Hybrid Environment”** with – **Dr Vinod Verma**, Head – Regulatory Affairs, Hindalco SVP – Group Corporate Affairs, Aditya Birla Group; **Jayati Dwivedy**, Head – Talent Acquisition/ Director ISC, Philips; **Neha Ahluwalia**, Global Head Business Line HRBP, ABB; and **Rachna Sharma**, Vice President & Lead Coach RvaluE Group, who also moderated this panel. The context of their discussion was about – embracing diversity in the work world; harnessing cultural transformation for business growth, redefining the relevant communication and engagement framework, creating integrated capability & competency models, and rebalancing strategies to deal with the talent war & great attrition.



Jayati highlighted that “Getting to know the business and work together by being highly inclusive towards a single purpose of having the right work model” – is key for the HR organization to succeed. Dr Vinod stressed that at production units like his, having a proactive approach towards diversity and inclusion are great enablers for the workplace. Neha, who has previously also set up the HR shared services for ABB,

mentioned that career growth as an engagement model, solutioning as a mindset, and competency approach to the inclusion strategy are the key enabling factors for an organization’s success.

The online poll to include the views of the people into the discussion got **41% votes** to **‘Innovative large scale communication models to engage the hybrid workforce’** – as the most important factor to create a stable and uniform workplace culture in the new-age world of work; and **24% votes** to **‘Building a wide sense of employee wellbeing, caring, and development.’**

For **Day two** of the HRLes 2021 conversations, SSF had curated four powerful sessions taking a deeper dive into the role of HR in making the relevant impact to the business.

The day started with a **Special Session** on **“All is Well – Myth or Reality? – Balance, Purpose & Happiness at Work”** by **Geetanjali Pandit**, ‘Stress Guru’; TEDx Speaker; Global Bestselling Author & Columnist; Former CHRO – The India Today Group, The Indian Express Group and Zee Media Corporation. She addressed some major concerns for the HR fraternity, that included:

- how to manage stress of being in the business of HR
- how to manage and balance different elements – work life balance, and time & technology balance
- how to keep people motivated and engaged

She took the example of contemporary high-level sports, where millions are at stake, where athletes have trained extensively to perform excellently, where failure or success of the athlete depends on physical, technical, and creative abilities. Victory greatly depends on the ability to use these precisely when it is needed. This approach holds true for life or for work, “to move to being better versions of ourselves – from past to the present, from present to the future... and that what will enable the businesses, employer brands or talent to come on board – is the culture established that listens, acknowledges, awards; a culture that is fair and not equitable, a culture that acknowledges a response with respect; a culture where we begin right by hiring right – for remaining engaged and motivated, in the new reality.”



The next was a conversation on the topic **‘Walking the Tightrope – Unlocking Value through End-to-End HR Shared Services Adoption’** – with eminent technology experts, shared services practitioners and HR leaders. The panel speakers included **Arun Phulera**, Senior General Manager & Leader HR Services, Cummins Business Services; **Kavita Mathur**, Chief People Officer, Trilegal; **Kavita Kurup**, Senior Vice President – HR, UST; **Nyree Harmse**, Director – Global Workforce Operations, Avery Dennison; and **Rahul Puri**, Director, Business Development, WorldatWork India, who moderated this panel.



The panel deliberated on managing talent using agile tech with technology-adoption – augmenting HR processes with AI/ML-based automation for value delivery; driving business impact with data analytics in the new age HR function; a change in the hiring outlook to meet the new ecosystem of work; and on the importance of engaging the virtual GBS workforce through specialized skilling & capability development. Kavita Kurup stressed on the point that the employees of today can stay engaged with the right tech intervention that has now become BAU; following design elements like:

- **Ecology-driven purpose** – of transforming lives, making the shift from success to significance
- **Experiences** where technology plays the key role in standardizing processes that comes from the value and ‘tech jazz’ making experiences consistent, allowing opportunity to better the performance
- **Diversity**, which is beyond gender, region, or orientation, to about thoughts, backgrounds and cultures

On predictive analytics, Kavita Kurup emphasized that “algorithm needs manager too, data will make predictions more accurate, but they will also create their own risks especially if we don’t understand them. A sustainable data model needs human touch, smart managers and preparation to handle the insights that the data will throw.” Arun highlighted that “empowering the managers and bringing self-serve” have helped leaders to manage the expansion happening due to remote hiring and working. Kavita Mathur was of the view that making a conscious shift in some of the tenets of culture like “need for empathy”, “being in the moment”, “collaborations being driven across to emphasize on the business value created” and “influencing change across organization” – are the most significant factors to manage the boundaryless workforce. Nyree added to this that an innovative and collaborative culture, a robust and agile problem-solving approach, and designing for future changes have enabled the shift.

The Business storytelling session by **Eika Chaturvedi Banerjee**, Founder CEO – Eikam Resonance; Former CEO – Future Learning, brought out many valuable nuggets on – **‘Building Employee Resilience – With Work-life Design, Employee Success, and Empathy.’** She emphasized that the “concept of time has become completely variable and the biggest issue which come from this is that there are no sanctities of time and space, making our sense of identities very difficult to define.... our relationships – both personal and professional has changed.... the effect on future of work, on mankind and society has become a question”. Building resilience, which she defined as “holding through tough times”, is not sufficient to come out of this situation as a winner, and she highlighted that we need to move beyond resilience to “resonance – which is about punching above your weight, shining in your brightest brilliantest bestest version that you can be.” She wove-in ancient mythology life-concepts to re-define, re-engage and re-establish trust and enable us for future.

She urged us to “become aware of your emotions where you are operating from – identify the circle of concern and circle of control – as they allow you to shift from concern to control, become aware of your words they allow you to identify your self-emitting beliefs and go beyond them, replace the negative with the alternative it is immensely powerful”



The concluding session of the 2-day HRLeS 2021 was a conversation on the topic of – **‘Finding Clarity in Chaos – The Ever-changing New ‘Normal’** with HR leaders – **Sanjay Virmani**, Chief – Human Resource Management, Tata Steel; **Shalu Manan**, Vice President – HR Transformation, Genpact; **Konika Chadha**, Regional Market Leader & Head of Professional Search – India, Korn Ferry; and **Pooja Malik**, Group Head – Human Resources, DMI Finance. **Anand Maheshwari**, Member – SSF Governing Council; Founder & Chief Corporate Officer, Quintes Global moderated this panel. The context of deliberation for this session was designing parity between bot workers & human workers; adopting remote working models & hybrid workforce; and identifying the relevant technical & behavioural skills for the future work, enabling business growth.



Sanjay mentioned that “the intervention which unfolded in the last two years has been primarily on health and safety of our workforce.” Shalu stressed on the approach of – “Connect. Collaborate. Communicate. – the 3 Cs that have become the key factors that enabled us to not just continue to survive, but also helped many to thrive through this period – as an individual, as a company, and as a

country.” Konika highlighted that “as organizations are going through major power shift, it is a question about ‘we’ and not ‘me’ anymore, who have to think about inclusivity, think about the organization which are future ready. From the HR perspective, it has to be far more human because of the increased technological/ digital touch. They will have to be innovative in terms of workplace practices...” Pooja pointed out that “in today’s world, HR is a business partner, it’s no longer like a support service.... and that we have to understand what business wants and how we continue the business.”

The viewpoint of the larger audience through the online poll conducted during the session highlighted that **50%** people believed that **“Loss of interaction or bonding between employees”** is the significant challenge in managing a dynamic workplace of the future. Also **21%** were of the thought that the challenge of **“Sense of loss of control for the middle managers, over productivity and quality”** is also critical.

SSF’s 4th HR Leadership e-Summit 2021 concluded with key takeaways to apply and contextualize by the HR and business leaders to envision and enable ‘Growth Next’ for business. The summit was aptly supported by our partners – Knowledge Partner – **RvaluE Group**; Corporate sponsors – **Quintes Global** and **UST**; and Technology Partner, **Muniwar Technologies**. **SSF**