

## Harmonising Productivity and Sustainability-- Role of People and Skills

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“Don't endanger your Company's future success by failing to nourish top talent.

If you aren't nurturing your high potential employees, you are missing on an opportunity to help boost your bottom line.”... Jill Jusko, Editor Industry Week.

The Energy Sector at heart is a people's Business, with Energy resources in focus on the world stage. Globally the Energy Sector employs the best Engineering and Technical experts and specialists, in view of the urgent need to develop technologies and new way of thinking. Years of experience of these specialists and technicians is harnessed to boost productivity of existing resources and develop new resources. This Sector needs to essentially maintain skill level and attract new talent.

People and Skills are key to Sustainability and Productivity of an Organisation, where Sustainable Productivity is about maintaining the balance of the needs of the Employees, the Environment and those of the Organisation at large, leading to continuous Business growth and at the same time high levels of Employee Well being and Environment Management.

The key differentiator for an Organisation is its people, For effective Organisations to maintain high Productivity and Sustainability, its imperative to have an effective HR Strategy aligned with the Business Strategy, well crafted talent management processes, including for Skilling and Development, since Talent drives Business and Skills fuel Talent.

Whereas Business Strategy, the hardware, drives future Organisations, Values led and purpose driven HR practices, the software, must drive sustainable and responsible growth. So as may be seen, HR is at centre stage for progressing or developed Organisations, high in both Productivity and Sustainability. People being a critical Resource it's important to keep a focus on their Aspirations, through their desire for responsibilities, challenges, and rewards, entailed by senior roles, their Ability and through Engagement with them.

The Energy Sector has the most unprecedented changes and challenges in the Industry. some of the common Disruptions being:

- Changing Geopolitical Relationships as an impact of Globalisation
- Disruptions in existing Business Models due to changing Business scenarios world over such as Brexit etc
- Increased Competitors
- Changes in supply and demand dynamics
- Demographic shifts such as availability of youth, ageing population or migration of workforce
- Social and environmental pressures
- Rise of exponential technologies

Being aware of the impact of fast rising exponential technologies, there was a focus on gearing up for Industry 4.0, when suddenly everything was out of gear with the onset of the unprecedented Covid-19. The New Normal was work from home, social distancing, multitasking and digitalisation. Every Industry, including Energy, was affected, and brought out the urgent need for display of effective leadership, empathy resilience, agility which were crucial to bring back the momentum of Organisational activity and sustain it with high productivity amidst all kinds of challenges such as lock downs and mental health issues amongst teams. The future of work changed abruptly. The fact that People are at the heart of any Business including Energy could not have been understood better.

Energy Sector needs to focus in a large way on multiple actions to meet the challenges and achieve desired results:

- Effective Skilling to meet the multitasking needs
- Effective Up- Skilling & Re- Skilling to to keep pace with changing needs
- Redefining of Job Roles
- Redrafting the Standard Operating Processes (SOP's)
- Review of Skilling Curriculum
- Review the Skill Gaps Studies
- leverage Gig and Platform Workers
- Impetus to Entrepreneurship
- Focus on Traditional Clusters for certain jobs

A Ficci Study in August 2021 on Skills and Jobs --A pre and post Covid perspective, highlights a Global shift in workforce and workplace transition, where it defines Shifts in Work, Workforce & Work place as follows:

- Work -- focus to shift on investments towards Automation & Cognitive Technology
- Workforce-- important to look at alternative work force models and leverage on Gig Workers to the extent possible
- Work place - to be hybrid-- physical and remote.

Managements need to review the Employee related policies and be innovative to have the right resources.

Shifts in Key Skills Post Covid highlighted by the Study are Data literacy, Digital & Coding Skills, Critical Thinking, Creativity & Innovation and know how of Technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Big Data, Internet of Things, Robotics etc that will make Businesses more resilient. These Skills along with domain specialisation are as relevant in the Energy Sector as any other Sector. There is hence a growing need to Skill, reskill, and upskill existing and new workers through Skill Development programmes.

In the recent years Government of India has given a great impetus to the Skilling ecosystem through setting up a Ministry for Skill Development & entrepreneurship, with a view to be able to enhance employability by Skilling of youth and school drop outs and making them ready for job opportunities. The Government Skilling initiatives include several funding schemes for different levels such as at University, below graduation and school drop outs. Besides the Central schemes there are special Skilling schemes through various Ministries and Departments, States Skill Missions and other such agencies. Many Corporates are also promoting Skill Development through their Training infrastructure or as part of their CSR initiatives.

In view of the importance of Workforce and Skills and their complexities in the Energy Sector, it is imperative to have the right people for the job roles. Building the Foundation through people is a critical activity for all Organisations more so in the Energy Sector which has largely the pool of Engineers and Specialists. I recall in all the Organisations I was in, this was a very important area to carefully build the foundation for selection of Resources, which are like gems, who are the wealth of the Organisation and will steer the Organisation further to great heights -- ONGC, (upstream Oil & Gas), MRPL (Down Stream-- Refiner), and EIL (consultancy--from Concept to Commissioning in the Energy Sector).

The process to be followed included:

- Role Analysis on a KSA Framework (knowledge, skills, attitude)
- Identification of critical roles through interactions with experts
- Align roles to Organisations Vision and Business Strategy
- Identification of key stake holders for development of critical role profiles
- Identification of technical, functional and behavioural competencies
- Identification of the Orientation programmes

- Developing Career paths & Development plans for those inducted
- hand holding and mentoring at different stages.

It is important that the workforce built is Agile, where teams can handle any changes to be able to meet the challenges of new opportunities through diversification. For example a team of chemical engineers have been hired for a design and structure department and if the requirement comes up later to diversify into areas of renewable energy, or some water projects, the team should exhibit talent fungibility. Skilling and Re-Skilling should make them ready for the change. Special care is important to ensure capacity building of trainers too, by harnessing the knowledge of experienced Specialists and Technicians. Rotational training and job rotation can also be looked at as a part of the Career Development Policy, to give sufficient exposure to various areas and spheres of work and challenges.

Another area towards having a skilled robust workforce, is through Collaborations-- within the country or globally, with Organisations or Academia. This could be through contracts or MOUs. Such collaborations for capacity building or research could be through specific strategies. Such initiatives are a great step towards joint setting of curriculum, so getting Industry ready talent, specialised capacity building, better result oriented research and even giving impetus to transfer of technologies-- research put to use. There are many examples of successful collaborations in the Oil & Gas Sector and the Energy Sector at large.

Challenges will keep increasing with people having greater aspirations and opportunities showing up. Future Organisations will evolve on Process Excellence, Purpose driven Culture, Design thinking being key to making best products, State of art Adaptive Technologies, Agile Teams, Top driven through Effective Leadership.

Adaptive, Agile and Resilient Organisations will survive the fast moving changes and global shifts, and continue to exhibit Productivity and Sustainability.