

A fresh take on people skills

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Strategic human resources management, employee engagement, diversity management, talent retaining skills were some of the golden words that were heard of in the last few days at Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS). The inception stage of the batch of 2007-09 HRM & LR course at TISS was peppered with insights from the representatives of the HR industry. The power drivers of HR fraternity made their presence felt in a strong way through engaging discussions. The topics were diverse and relevant to the modern HR practices not only in the Indian industry but also in the global scenario.

One of the main focuses was on aligning HR practices to the structure of the organisational processes. I learned some very important points during the discussion. One of the key learning was that for an HR function to succeed, it would be imperative to understand the ongoing line processes and their impact on the personnel functions. A lot of emphasis should be on the role of HR being a strategic partner in the decisions taken by the top management officials.

Another important point of discussion that was verbalised was the stress on the values, integrity and accountability of the HR processes followed in the companies. The human behaviors have come of an age wherein the interpersonal skills of the HR professionals are being touted as the crux of the success stories in the organisation.

The personnel officers will have to inculcate the right attitude to understand the significance of people and their issues. This will allow us to understand the business, customers, and other dynamics beyond the obvious frontiers. The 'business' aspect of an HR professional is vital as we leverage not only the internal customers of the organisation but also the external customers. There is a need to change the lens through which we see the world and influence change for the betterment of the organisation.

Global managers recognise diversity management as a key role to play into the growing global HR policies. The entire face of employee relations and industrial relations in the Indian industries is changing. The deliberations will help the budding HR professionals in us to develop a varied insight towards various aspects of HR.

This discussion with the HR honchos has left me with an unquenchable thirst to be committed to perfection and quality. We were shown the way by the trend setters who have paved the way to start a fresh journey on people skills. In the end it can be said that "This is not the end. This is not the beginning. This is not the beginning of the end. This is at best the end of the beginning".