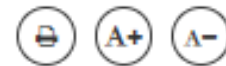


Re-discovering employee experience: A Covid-19 takeaway

It's the best time to reimagine employee journeys and invest in people!

ETHRWorld Contributor • May 15, 2020, 07:28 IST



Saba Adil, Chief People Officer, Raheja QBE General Insurance

By [Saba Adil](#)

Employee experience and new ways of working have been in conversations for a long time, with adoption and implementation being procrastinated for more than one reason! The recent times have made it more than clear that these are no longer a choice or a consideration but a necessity! Organizations that

are agile, nimble-footed are the ones that have already latched on to the opportunity the Covid challenge has brought in to emerge future fit in the markets today and leave long lasting employee impressions!

Businesses are all about people, and companies are reimagining their employee journeys right from their impressions in the talent market to an employee joining and experiencing through their stint, and even after. **Why is this important?** Best to understand from them, and having spent that time through employee immersions, few things emanate! Eventually, it's the experience that counts, specially the one in tough situations like these, it's like the 'moment of truth' - what the organization really stands for! Organizations and leaders have learnt to respond in calamities like floods & fire, terrorist attacks, competition from known & unknown quarters. But the situation that is right now - is a blend of it all! And that is what brings to the fore the true culture and character of an organization, the leaders therein and the team strength it has built over a period of time!

Employer Brand. Brand Persona. Leadership. These are words coming to life in the conditions today – vivid and unambiguous. The sense of purpose is more pronounced than ever before – people connecting to serve not only their personal ambitions, but the aim is to keep the organizations afloat, even succeeding in these testing times.

Employee engagement has ascended to mean connecting people to the larger purpose, enhancing the sense of belongingness, caring for them as individuals with hyper personalization being the core differentiator and competitive edge.

It's the time to Connect, Care, Communicate and Collaborate. Tough times will not last, but experiences will! Like the saying goes “People may not remember what you said to them but will definitely remember how you made them feel.”

Humanize the Connect!

Communication in today's context is never too much. It doesn't refer to information overload or inspiring quotes jamming inboxes but words that are meaningful, communication channels that are two-way and an approach that is personalized. Communication is a means to connect, to know the people well and engage with them in a manner that they want to listen in and feel listened to.

Care = Compassion

During tough times, what employees observe more closely than ever before is the organization as a caring employer with their best interests at heart! Compassion is well articulated and demonstrated in providing flexibility to suit people needs as they juggle home and work together in their new home offices. Conducting wellness & fitness programmes, putting together the health and safety measures, ensuring psychological safety are some of the touchpoints.

Innovation

More often than not, people come up with the most disruptive solutions when pushed in a tough situation and it cannot get tougher than this! It is a great time to get rid of old practices and welcome the new! Encouraging people to improvise, understanding and solving customer problems, giving suggestions to grow the business or finding a new product or a business line, improving processes, adopting technology in several myriad ways are some of the ways to turn the challenge into an opportunity, as well as to enhance employee productivity.

Community Building

This is an apt time to build relationships that last forever with conscious community building efforts based on common needs resulting in a learning community; or a hobby based community which could be based on common interests or a sharing community based on just listening to each other stories, problems, or experiences!

Capability Building

This is also the time to build the organization's capabilities through need based and outcome driven learning interventions, through looking at what the organizational direction is, and the skills of the future workforce needed. This is the best time to upskill, reskill and invest in learning and development. There are several e-learning programmes and one need to crystallize the needs and choose relevant programmes.

Strengthening the Culture of Appreciation

People are working under several constraints and challenges, making good of what one has and appreciation for good work done goes a long way in building a motivated workforce. It is important now more than ever to celebrate successes, albeit small! One needs to find stories and there could be several to celebrate success!

Fun @ Work

Not to forget or underrate the fun element, which goes a long way again to inculcate the sense of belongingness, feeling part of the organization and not losing one's humour amidst these social isolation times! Setting aside time every week, where people come online and engage in a variety of fun ways with their colleagues is imperative in building a well-rounded employee experience!

Holistic employee engagement and connect right from meaningful roles, learning new skills, engagement are some of the ways to connect employees to purpose, building future skills to keep talent and organizations relevant. The only way to win today is to build an [agile workforce](#) that can respond to new challenges and convert them into an opportunity and that can only happen if we truly invest and build our workforce for the future.

The author, Saba Adil, is Chief People Officer at Raheja QBE General Insurance Company Limited.