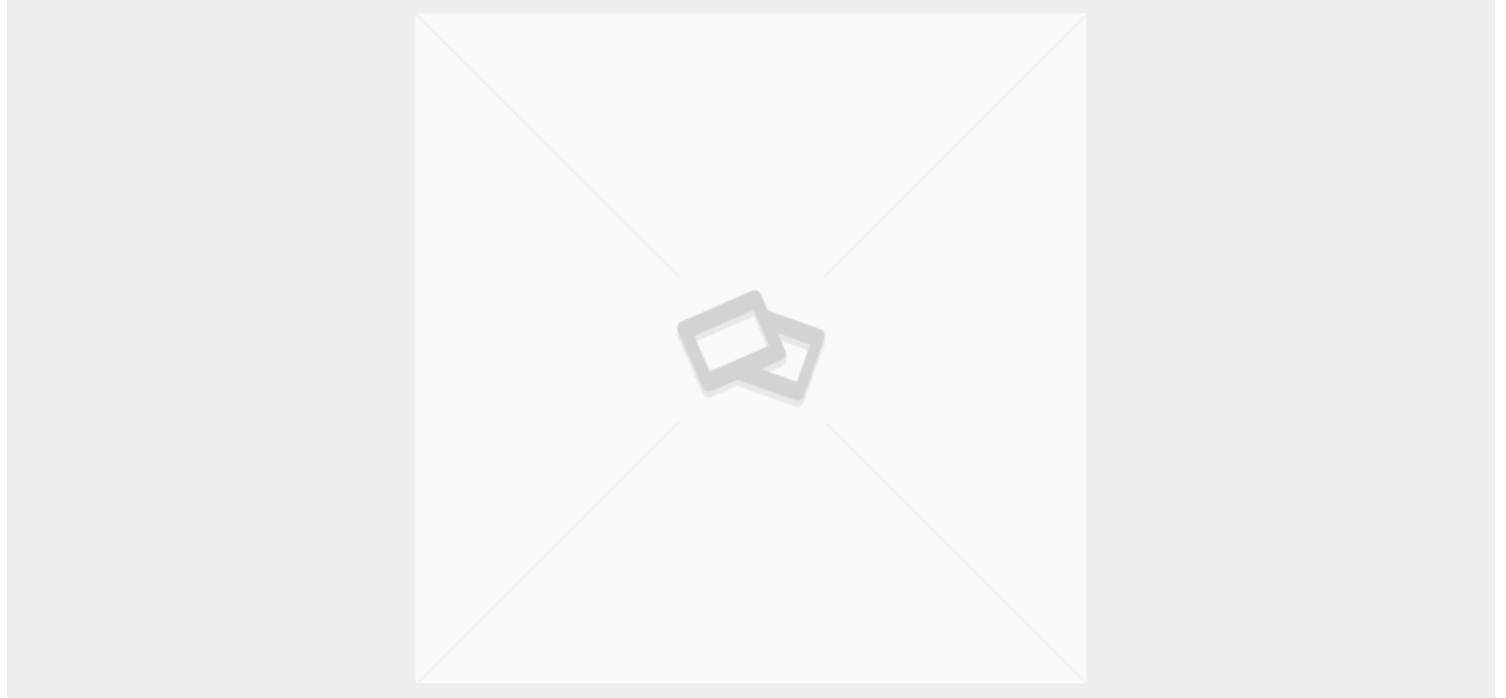


PREPARING TOMORROW'S WORKPLACE TODAY

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Workplace cultures are rapidly changing with the new age of ever changing priorities and adjustments. What remains to be thought out meticulously is whether the departments of human resources are getting enlightened with this changing cultures.

Sizeable number of institutions in India and around the world, especially in low and middle income nations have taken to biometrics as they feel employees cannot be trusted. But with restrictions on workplace being brought in, frustration is rising and creativity is killed. A wise man had once said, "a man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still."

Visionary management will know that talent remains the corner-stone of institutional growth. If you invest in monkeys, you will reap peanuts. And increasingly so, talented people will not work in cultures where biometrics and attendance is the dictum of the day. A few global institutions have come forth to revisit their work place policies and have brought in greater flexibility with regard to work from home option, increased maternity leave and paternity leave, adjunct faculty positions for which they are permitted on duty.

Many talented people associate with multiple organizations around the world and to restrict them to remain within the confines of a certain boundary would be a fool's wisdom. Often enough average sized institutions do not let their employees become adjunct faculty's at other institutes, they

bargain with regard to pay-scale and their focus is narrowed towards immediate gains. This problem also co-exist with bureaucratic Government Institutions and the United Nations leadership which still struggles to reform itself.

Administrators should realize that when people offer customized work space, they are trying to assure the best in them to the institution concerned. They request for such customization because they respect and value the institutions. Broad minded administrators must allow people to work with them instead of working for them. It would help enhance cross cultural networks, bring in newer ideas to the table and bolster multi-dimensional growth. Recent studies have indicated that institutes that offer workplace flexibility have people more dedicated and less absent and the overall turnover and productivity is immensely high. Common sense points to tell them when you offer individuals flexibility you foster in a value of trust and responsibility that is bestowed upon the person. Every well-meaning individual will deliver through in such instances.

Google's way of motivating employees stands out head and shoulder beyond the other institutes. Google provides maternity benefit of 18 weeks off with 100 percent pay & the parents of the child are given expense of maximum of \$500 for take-out meals. Lunch and dinner on google campuses are available free of charge with new menus by gourmet chefs. Google offers its employees vacation packages, tuition benefits, sends its staff on sabbatical for academic engagements and best practices. Professor Michael Marmot, Department of Epidemiology and Public Health at University College, London found that in a period over 4 decades into the health of Government workers in Great Britain, highest mortality and poorest well -being was seen in employees who had the smallest degree of control over their work lives. It is important to recognize that the one can bring out the best in employees by giving them freedom and not feeling insecure.

Drawing inspiration from Google work policies, what holds back Universities to do the same in their campuses, what stops corporate power houses to cultivate this trend. I believe it is the fear of taking risk and the exposure levels that administrators and human resource teams have. Unless they see, they will not believe. Lot of regulatory agencies use innovation as a buzz word for sustainable development and to mark indicators of growth. Customizing workplace is the foremost innovation today. You may work in a corporate office or an academic university or an inter-country organization like the United Nation agencies, flexibility at work-place remains the song to retain dedicated and promising talents.

Bringing flexibility can sometimes be tricky to administrators, especially if those administrators are conservative and old fashioned. They would prefer going by their informants and guidelines rather than going by what is the honest ground reality. Institutional leadership cannot be run with insecurity and neutral stand attitude. The ability to discern when confronted with challenges is what makes a great leader, great!!

People who gossip during work hours and do unproductive work will eventually perish in visionary organizations. With the explosion of social media, sometimes, institutes are wrongly advised to block social media sites like twitter, facebook, skype and also at times certain applications get blocked. In a world that is closely mapped and connected through networks, blocking networking sites does not help in Institutional growth. Enlightened administrators encourage collaboration, participation with other institutions and insecure administrators tighten the process to suffocate people and keep them under control. And with all of these, mind you they pay heavily. Cheap labour will yield low

calibre result.