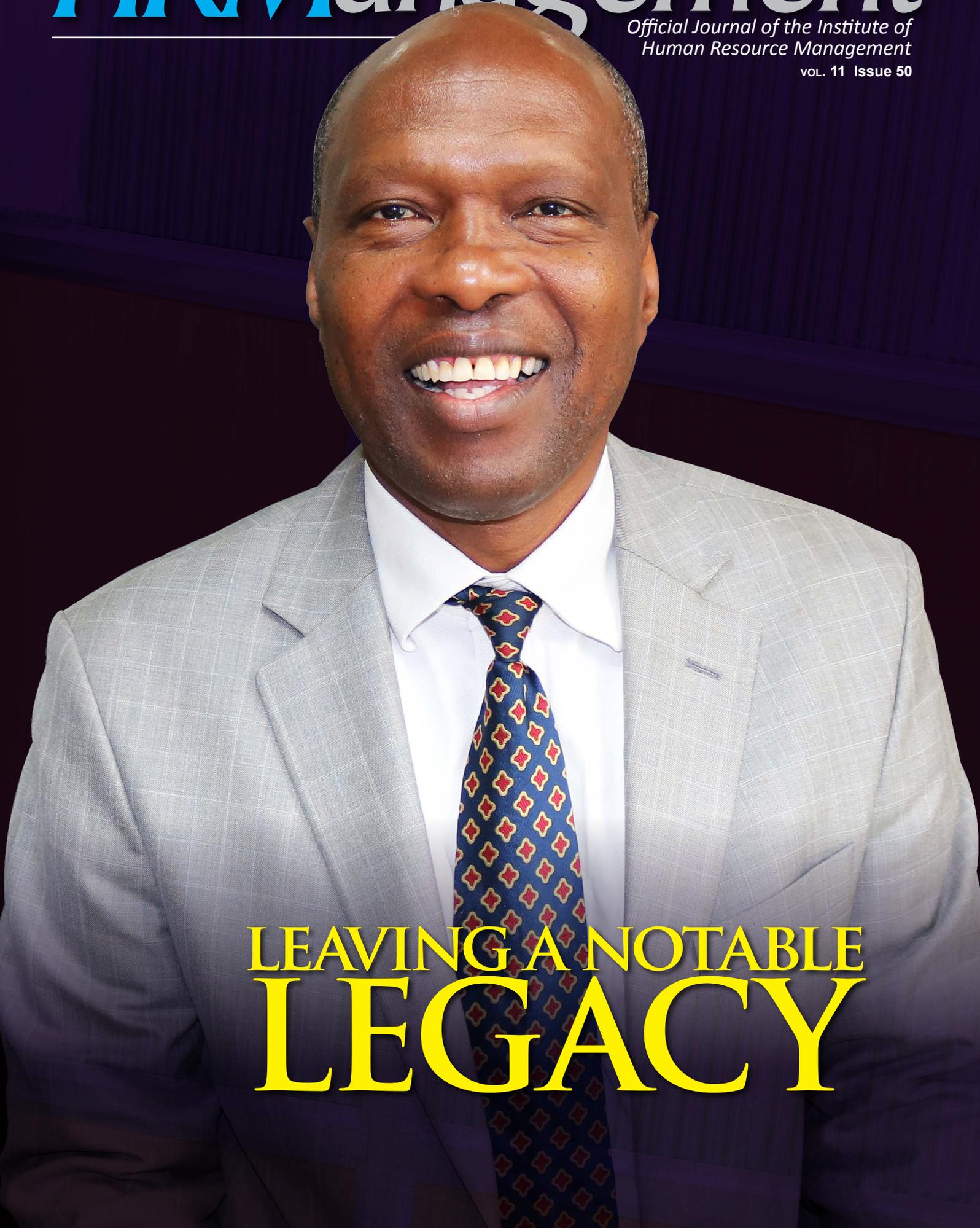


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LEAVING A NOTABLE
LEGACY



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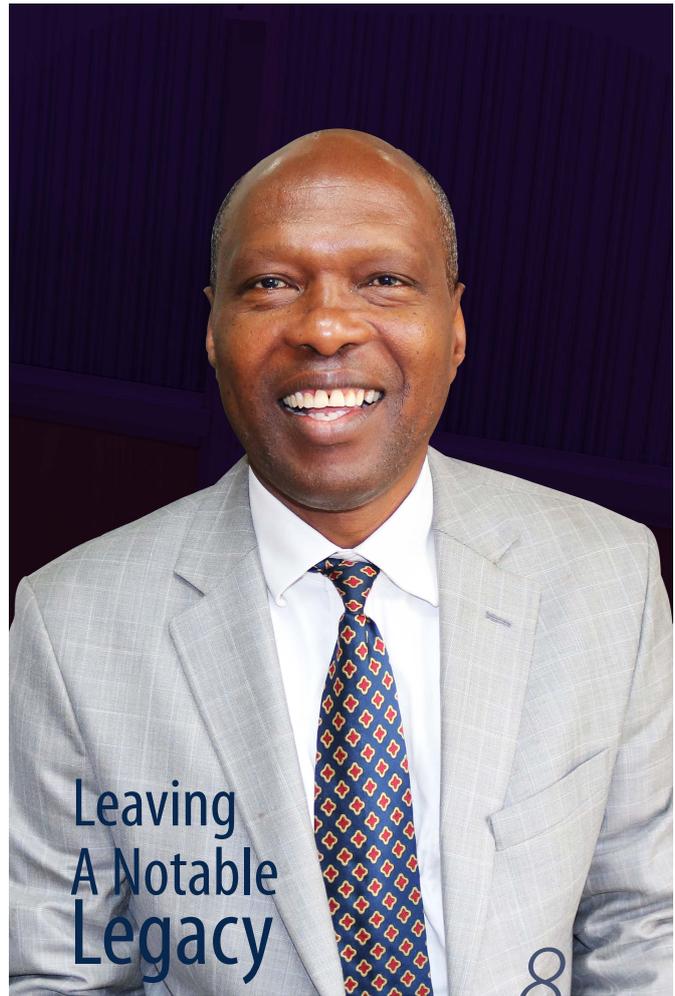


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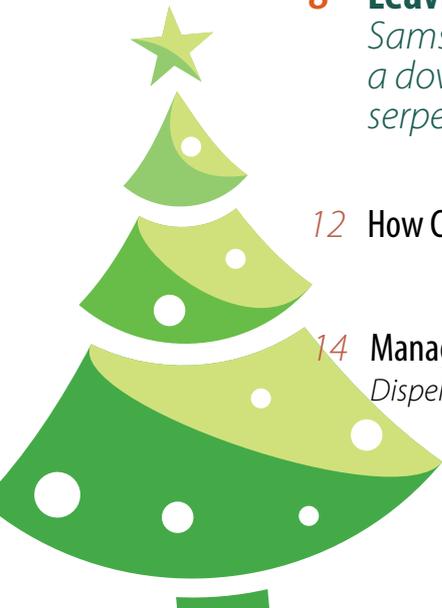
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Season's Greetings, HR Professionals,

I trust you have had a fruitful year albeit the challenges of life, especially at the work place. I am confident that each one has a reason to be grateful for the year that has been. At an Institute 2016 has been a fruitful year full of growth and change, some of the change I am sure some of you have felt it.

The Institute has made great strides towards achieving the vision of our founders that of a nationally recognized Human Resource Professional body. In 2016 the new council was gazetted kicking of the journey towards the full implementation of the Human Resource management professional (HRMP) Act No 52 of 2012.

The Institute launched the 2016-2020 Strategic Plan which will guide us moving forward on how best to achieve our objectives. Just recently in the month of November the Certified Human Resource Professional (CHRP) Examination Curriculum which will be administered and managed by the Human Resource Management Professional Examination Board (HRMPEB) was launched. You are encouraged to learn more about the curriculum and how it applies to you depending on your current qualifications.

As you get into the festive mood and join your family and friends over the holiday season. I would encourage you to ensure that you are in good standing with the Institute ahead of the compliance deadline of 31st December 2016.

I trust that you will enjoy this edition of the journal. We have endeavoured to have a variety of articles aimed at offering you an enjoyable read and one that will provide a wide range of lessons and experiences.

The Institute of Human Resource Management (IHRM) wishes you a Merry Christmas and a prosperous new year 2017.

Editor

You are Your Career, Choose Wisely

Introduction

The term career is traditionally referred to as an occupation. In today's world of work however, career is a continuous process of learning and development. It is a journey through life mostly from adolescence to retirement. Career is also an individual's sequence of attitude and behaviors associated with work related activities and experience over a lifetime.

Career has components which include community involvement, social responsibility, enterprise activities, hobbies and interest, cultural activities, education and training and life roles. It is therefore true to say "A persons' career shapes up their perception towards people, things, circumstances and issues.

Choosing a Career

Listening to different professionals discuss the economy or politics as well as observing their lifestyles, makes one appreciate the extent to which career defines an individual. The course and career a person chooses is vital in one's life because it greatly influences the kind of friends and associates one has, where one lives, physical presentation and even political and religious affiliations. An individual should therefore, choose their career based on their natural strengths, personality traits, and passion.

FACTORS INFLUENCING CAREER CHOICE

Personality Types

Personality is the character of emotions, thought and behavior patterns unique to each person. It is reflected in enduring patterns of perceiving and relating of oneself and the environment. Personality traits come out in various personal and social contexts. However, knowing the different personality types leads to an understanding of self and of others which leads to self-actualization.

Personality is the single most important determinant of behavior and therefore it has a great effect on our world view, hobbies, and work life hence highly linked to career. However, whatever the basic personality orientation of a person, everyone stands an equal chance of succeeding in life. It is how we utilize the strengths of our personality type and overcome any inherent weakness that makes the difference between success and failure.



*Rachel Mboni
Mambua
Management
Consultant
Member, IHRM*

Career Path

A career cluster is a group of careers that share common features. A career path is a smaller group of jobs within a career cluster that use similar skills.

Each career cluster contains several career paths. One can start in a lower-level job in a career path and with advanced education and experience, move up within that path. A career path helps us find out how we can move from one job to another within a career cluster.

Here are a few examples of career paths:

- ▣ "Administrative Support" is a career path within the "Business" career cluster e.g. Receptionist □ Office Clerk □ Office Manager
- ▣ "Safety" is a career path in the "Public Safety" career cluster e.g. Security Guard □ Fire Fighter □ Fire Inspector

IMPLICATIONS OF CHOOSING THE WRONG CAREER

There is a need for individuals, companies and nations to treat career choice seriously. Career decisions should not be based purely on material benefits, ignoring psychological and spiritual tenets. While such extrinsic motivations such as salary, fringe benefits and prestige cannot be fully ignored, they should not be the basic motivation for career choice.

The basic motivation should be purely intrinsic which requires knowing a person's basic personality type hence utilizing the strengths and overcoming weaknesses. Intrinsic motivation refers to internal forces that make a person do or not do something e.g. feelings, attitude, mood, emotions, skills e.t.c . while extrinsic motivation are the external forces that motivate a person such as reward, working environment, management style and even friend.

Lack of intrinsic motivation leads to frustration in ones career meaning they will not give their very best especially if the external factors are not favorable.

CAREER SETBACK

Career setbacks can come in many different forms; it could be that you missed out on a promotion or a big project. Even worse you could be facing some disciplinary issues which when on record cause you a career setback.

Like any other venture, career choice and advancement has its challenges e.g. failure to get a place in preferred field at university or middle level colleges. In Kenya, thousands of students qualify to

join university every year but only a few are selected due to limited facilities.

While one may consider these changes as being setbacks in career, this experience may simply be a temporary delay in order to allow you time to learn new techniques, explore new opportunities, or gain the additional required knowledge to perform new tasks or achieve new goals. It is therefore advisable not to immediately assume a setback as the end of the line.

Moreover, of those who join universities, only a few get places in their preferred fields of study because employment opportunities are so few that even for those who studied their preferred courses, find it difficult securing a job in the said fields and end up accepting the available jobs never mind that they end up in a completely different field.

Change can be difficult, though, and people often resist it. When change occurs learn to embrace it and don't always view it as a negative thing. It's important to talk to your supervisor and better understand the change and what necessitated it. If the setback occurred because of something that you either did or did not do or an action that you took or did not take, resolve to make the necessary changes. Recognize that your supervisor has given you a chance to make things right so seize it.

HOW TO HANDLE CAREER SETBACKS

1. Adopt a Growth Mindset

You are either smart or not and failure is believed to automatically mean that you are not smart. Research defines this mentality that one's talent and intelligence is "cast in stone" as the fixed mindset. People who have a fixed mindset don't really believe in effort; they believe in talent.

But the most successful people, have what is called a growth mindset. They believe that "your basic qualities are things you can cultivate through your efforts." When there's a setback, such people see it as an opportunity to rise to a challenge and to grow, not as a sign of their flaws.

2. Imagine a Different Future

Vividly imagine a future in which your problems are resolved and then work backward to the present to determine what needs to be done in order to make that future a reality. When going through a rough patch, we tend to dwell on the circumstances that have caused our situation. A better way to go about things is to think about how you can achieve a positive outcome in the future.

If you're unhappy with something that's happened on you, stop replaying that situation over in your mind or wishing it had gone differently and instead focus on how you want things to change. Then, work towards making that happen.

3. Redefine Success

A better approach is to really think about the meaning of success. Is it about your resume, or is it about how you're living your life? No matter what professional setback you're experiencing, the most important thing you can do is to put it in perspective. It may be easier said than done, but if you can try to let go of your fixed mindset and redefine success for yourself, you may find that this setback is, in fact, something that will propel you to a future you had once only imagined.

OTHER WAYS OF HANDLING SETBACKS

Self-Assessment

Effective career planning involves critical decision making which makes self-assessment one of the most important steps one can take. When done well, this assessment can help you identify the career options most suitable for an individual.

The self-assessment process requires you to understand yourself before you start exploring careers and jobs that you would find satisfying. The key step is identifying your interest, what activities do you enjoy most, what kind of people do you like working with and so on and so forth. Second establish your skills – what are your most outstanding abilities, what are your strengths and weaknesses, know your transferable skills. Next establish your personality and finally know your values.

Embrace Deviations

Embrace deviations but maintain focus. Isabel Moore notes, 'life is a one way street. No matter how many deviations you take none of them leads back. And once you know and accept that, life becomes simpler' what is required is to ensure every route and vehicle we take and every deviation we make is in the right direction and takes us closer to our destinations.

Think outside the box

The world is full of opportunities but one must think outside the box to profit from them. You must be able to move out of your comfort zone and explore the opportunities within and without. A successful man is one who thinks wide and wild on matters of opportunities.

Do something

The worst enemy of humanity is inactivity. Whatever a person's background or status, there is definitely something positive they can do. Energy channeled towards a positive end always boosts an individual and the society. They say a wild animal lying down to rest after a meal is vulnerable and easier to tackle than one that is in motion and alert.

This must have been the reason that influenced Martin Luther King Junior to say, "If you can't fly, run, if you can't run walk, if you cannot walk, crawl but whatever you do, keep moving."

Benefits of Aligning Rewards to Generational Needs

Many organizations over the years have put in place a “one-size-fits-all” set of policies, to address employee benefits in the workplace, without any differentiation of the unique needs different generations of employees have.

A generation can be interpreted in terms of cohorts, life experiences or historical experiences. A cohort is a group of people who share a similar experience or characteristic within a specific time frame. The generational school of thought argues that values have been influenced by the defining moments or major historical events that occur as individuals grow older. Each group originates from a distinct and unique era and therefore has its own view on business issues. As the millennial generation (also referred to as the Generation Y or futuristics) grows in the workforce and baby boomers retire, managers and human resources professionals will need to be innovative when it comes to policy formulation and implementation. They have to take into account the generational diversity in the workplace.

Most employers are struggling to find a lasting solution and are asking “how do we make available meaningful benefits and inspire employees within a varied age range?” Employee engagement should be prioritized by managers and human resource practitioners in establishing benefit packages to suit the generational diversities in the workplace.

There are four distinct generations in the workplace. These are the veterans, born before 1945, some of who experienced the great depression and the Second World War. The Baby Boomers were born 1945-1964; they had the Vietnam War and Watergate,

but in general enjoyed more prosperity. The Generation X individuals born 1965-1980 become the first group to experience technology in new ways such as VCRs, microwaves, and personal computers early on in life. Lastly, Generation Y or Millennials born 1980-2000 have never known a world without computers and access to information 24/7.

These generations are at different stages in their worklifecycle, while the veterans face retirement, the Baby boomers are delaying their retirement plans, the Generation X is climbing the corporate ladder and Generation Y is just entering the workforce. Other than the fact that one generation group was born earlier than another, they have also been living and working for longer. This comes with all the associated changes that may result from experience. Further each generation has a drastically different outlook on what they expect from their employment experience.

The veterans who are mature and traditional are said to value conformity and sacrifice, but are risk averse and resistant to change. Conversely baby boomers are believed to be optimistic, they value personal growth, but are idealists.

The generation Xers are said to be technoliterate, independent and value their needs before those of their employers; while the Millennials are thought to be sociable, street smart, eager to learn, expect reward for just showing up, lack loyalty and have a hard time accepting seemingly negative feedback.

These intergenerational differences mean differences in preferences for benefits. Studies have found that veterans valued flexible schedules, part-time hours and recognition of expertise and experience. On the other hand Baby Boomers prefer

*By Lucky Clair
Kisaka Associate
Member, IHRM*



recognition of hard work, healthcare, retirement benefits and autonomy. Generation Xs' value flexible work arrangements, work-life balance and tangible benefits. While generation Ys' prefer learning and development opportunities, immediate performance feedback, team work and having positive role models. These generations share the same management, utilize the same spaces and collaborate on the same projects, but that is where the similarities end. Hence, employers will need to make adjustments in their engagement and benefit models to address this diversity in preferences, without segmenting the employees at the workplace.

The entry of generation Y into the workforce has added to the growing complexity of the workforce. This complexity is reflected in their values, beliefs, ethical considerations, cultural, ethnic and religious affiliation, gender and other diversities and these have implications on an organizations reward mechanisms among other HR procedures. With the age gap at the workplace between the youngest and the oldest employee reaching up to 50 years, it is evident that there exists a wide differentiation of the needs of these various generations. It is imperative, as the first step, to acknowledge that employees' formative experiences will influence their benefit preferences based on their current needs.

Organizations should consider offering benefits that are creative and designed to meet their organization culture, thoughtful planning will enable any company to reward its diverse workforce with valuable benefits that will keep the worker happy and the company productivity goals on target. If employers can successfully find ways to bring out the best from each of the four

generations, the challenge can be an opportunity for a more efficient, productive and successful company.

Critics to the theory that generational differences influence benefit preferences, argue that the different generations are not necessarily homogenous groups, and some studies have shown that statistically significant differences in benefits preferences depend upon employees' independent characteristics, such as sex, level of education and work values. For instance, women have been found to assign greater importance than men to several relational rewards like recognition, job security, high-quality leadership, work life balance and feedback. Other studies have also shown that within each generation there are differences based on the privileges they have had in their upbringing, i.e. those brought up in upcountry, in towns or abroad will vary in their preferences for and perceptions about benefits.

This however, does not diminish the fact that there are differences between generation preferences for benefits; it just highlights the complexity associated with understanding this study area. Further research is therefore proposed to further elaborate this topic.

In conclusion, today's employers need to take note of the generational differences that shape employees' approach to benefits. As millennials continue to enter the workplace in ever increasing numbers, it's important to understand what millennials really want out of employer benefits. Motivating, engaging, and retaining people will never cease to be a managerial priority, therefore employers will have to carefully consider what strategies they will use to cultivate and retain valuable employees now and into the future.



LEAVING A NOTABLE LEGACY

*Samson Osero, as humble as a dove
but as clever as a serpent*

Mid Friday Morning and the opportunity is finally here, securing this interview has not been easy, something more pressing always got in the way. Samson Osero moves away from his executive desk to a round conference table on the side in his spacious office. He likes holding his meetings there, perhaps because at that point even for just a few minutes he makes you feel that you are on the same level.

The soft spoken man pulls his glasses out as he takes a seat to share the story of his life and at IHRM in particular. Such opportunities are rare, his memory does not fail him as he remembers every significant date and describes the events in such detail one would think it all happened yesterday.

Earlier Days

It is the end of nearly two eras as Samson Osero retires as the Executive Director of the Institute of Human Resource Management (IHRM). The retirement has ultimately closed one of the longest leadership epochs likely to be witnessed in the history of IHRM. The HR patriarch whose name, features and demeanor has become so

synonymous with HR leadership in Kenya will retire at the end 2016 after twenty (20) years of dedicated service to the only known HR regulatory body in the region. Of the entire period of service, he remained in the helm for close to a decade.

A Canadian-trained Accountant, Samson started his career as an accountancy teacher at Nakuru High School in the early 80s and later worked as an accountancy lecturer at both the current Kenya School of Government, Mombasa (then GTI, Mombasa) and the Kenya Teachers Training College (KTTC). He was the pioneer of the training arm of the Institute of Personnel Management (IPM) the precursor of IHRM and the current College of Human Resource Management (CHRM). "I was head hunted from the now defunct Kenya Management Assistance Program (KMAP) to come and establish IPM College" he recently disclosed to IHRM journal. At KMAP he developed programs which assisted people start, grow and finance their small and medium businesses.

Background

The first assignment Samson undertook was to establish IPM's college arm which he ably took off the ground in January 1997 due to his strong background in education. The first batch of seventy (70) students was admitted at that time. Most of these students are now holding senior HR positions in various organizations across the country.

Ten years later, in the year 2007, he led the re-branding of IPM into the Institute of Human Resource Management (IHRM). The objective of starting the college was first the need to offer formal training to Personnel Managers in Kenya and secondly to serve as a feeder to IPM memberships register. He says the re-branding of IPM into IHRM was in response to global changes that came as a result of the new world order of the new millennium whereby there was a rapid paradigm shift from personnel management to Human Resource Management.

This was the year IPM was celebrating its first decade since it was registered by the registrar of Companies as a company limited by guarantee. Although he assisted the late Mr. William Gitobu to manage IPM, the late Mr. Gitobu introduced Samson into the field of HR consultancy through on job training. Using his excellent writing skills, Samson was good at writing HR consultancy proposal and reports at the conclusion of the consultancy assignments.

Although IPM had a clear objective when it was registered in July 1987, to register personnel

re-branding of IPM into IHRM was in response to global changes that came as a result of the new world order

managers in Kenya, it remained moribund and a paper tiger until 1994 when its founders decided to acquire a physical office at BP Shell (now Office of the Deputy President using individual donations. The late Mr. Gitobu was then appointed as the first Executive Director as a stop gap towards his retirement as the Personnel Manager of the East Africa Industries (now Univiler). Samson would later occupy the position of Executive Director when the late Mr. Gitobu retired in 2008.

The idea of establishing IPM was first conceived by Adrian Muteshi who had traveled to Singapore as a Kenyan delegate to the ILO conference in the earlier 80's. Upon his return, he and other founders including the late Mr. Gitobu ventured to put into practice what he had learned at the conference, thus the birth of IPM.

Mental Gymnastics

The coming of Samson Osero into the Institute two years after the Institute had acquired formal reference and a permanent address seemed to inject a new lifeline into its operations. Later, the training arm of the Institute in which Mr. Osero served as the Training Coordinator in charge of training frog matched the Institute into national recognition making it a pioneering Institute in offering the Higher National Diploma in Human Resource Management.

Beneath a shy looking man who outwardly appears humble, vulnerable and easy to harass lies an intellectual mind, a strategist, a creative innovator and a decisive mind of a Machiavellian nature. His innovative intellect which usually appears to him in the form of visions is attributed to the entrepreneurial training he acquired from the University of Illinois, USA. "The mental gymnastics I underwent through in my Master of Entrepreneurship Development lit a bulb in me as far as entrepreneurship and business management is concerned." The lover of nature is a part-time flower photographer who runs a Face Book Page titled Nature Scores. He has a collection of over 4,500 flower photos and

He dubbed himself the Chief Product Development Officer - not CEO

doubles up as a scribe cum wordsmith when it comes to writing matters. He is behind most of the HR Conferences and HR Congresses themes and HR topical issues. His philosophy in life is, 'there is a way to everything,' loves traveling. He is at his best in terms of creativity and innovative juices when he is in a quiet and serene environment. His writing skills have enabled him write catchy business letters to organizations and adorable speeches that have been read in various functions of the Institute.

"During our training in Masters in entrepreneurship, we were subjected to rigorous psychometrical exposure that developed our decision making abilities and capacity to solve complex managerial matrix." He told the IHRM journal writer during the interview. Samson who describes himself as a business manager whose role was to mobilize resources to drive the IHRM agenda, agrees that he is not a typical HR practitioner. All the HR competencies in consultancy he exhibits are attributable to the late Mr. Gitobu who tutored and mentored him on HR matters.

A systems thinking person

The product innovation and the historical development of IHRM products and services clearly reveal a charismatic persona behind their development. Over time, he has overseen the metamorphosis and development of market driven products and diversification of various trainings which are currently offered by the Institute.

He breaks into a hearty laughter which almost brings tears to his eyes as he describes some of the lengths he went to in coming up with catchy inventive events.

"One time I organized the very first Africa HR summit in Kenya. Although it largely appeared a local event since nearly all the delegates in attendance were Kenyans, it attracted 1 participant from Uganda, 1 from Tanzania and 2 from the Republic of Mozambique." He acknowledges the tedious nature of marketing such an event across the continent at the time when the internet penetration was fairly below 2%.

To separate the Institute from the many bodies that offered HR professional training and consultancies, Samson designed and developed new demand-driven programs that were unassailable in the market. Such trainings comprised of Certified HR Consultant (CHRC) and Certified Professional Trainer (CPT) courses. These were born out of identified training need and after a thorough scanning of the training market.

The encounter with constant inquiries by HR professionals facing challenges to offer complex HR consultancies led Samson to come up with CHRC training aimed at imparting practical knowledge on how to carry out HR consultancy. The training has since remained popular among prospective HR consultants over a long period of time. He however regrets that the choice of an area of training is direct proportional to the turn out of participants. He illustrates that the choice of an area of training must appeal to decision makers in the corporate otherwise a training topic may sound popular but fail to attract trainees. He concludes that training MUST not threaten those that hold the key to the bourse.

His magical role at the Institute has remained that of idea generation, dubbing himself as the Chief Product Development Officer not CEO. Once he has originated an idea he lets other experts such as program drafters to develop content and facilitators to deliver the content. He says that when he first came up with the concept of HR congress, many professionals questioned the difference between a congress and a conference which the majority was familiar with. He was quick to differentiate the two by saying that a Congress usually focuses on a single topical area of discussion while a conference deals with multiple topics. The two activities have so far remained popular among IHRM members to date. Usually, the Institute organizes for a Congress in the month of May while a Conference is held in the month of October.

He however, laments of his poor agility in monitoring and evaluating projects he initiates a weakness that he admits as the chief cause of failure of some of his popular initiatives like the IHRM Mentorship Program.

The HRMP Act

Samson finds the period of developing the Human Resource Management Professionals Bill and its initial operationalization as the most challenging period of his career in the HR field. Lobbying members of the National Assembly to appreciate the importance of the Bill was a gargantuan task. Due to huge vested interests quite a number of provisions were dropped a long the way as the Bill developed

through. Among them, Samson says was the provision that all organizations with fifty (50) employees must have a human resource manager. According to him, the clause never saw the right of day due to vested interests.

However, he hails Dr. Eseli Simiyu for his resilience and determination to push the Bill through parliament. He attributed the success of the Bill to Dr Simiyu's military background that gave him discipline and a focus of purpose. He particularly recognized the MP as a strict time keeper. Samson regrets the period between September 2013 and June 2014 when the midwifing of the Act ran into a long, winding dispute that resulted into litigations and therefore a delay in its operationalization.

Work Ethics

Samson an early riser whose work ethic has gained praise in the Institute is a stickler of time and procedure. For instance, he will always arrive fifteen minutes earlier ahead of his appointments. He expects the same kind of discipline from his reportees. This fact is demonstrated in his conservative British traditional office style of dressing complete with, a tie and a suit. What surprises many is the fact that he does not impose his dressing style on work-mates. Simply, he has no defined dressing code for the staff.

With his laissez-faire leadership styles he has empowered employees in the execution of their duties and responsibilities a fact that employees of the Institute concur with. *"Especially the habit of shaking everybody's hand in the morning makes*

the office environment friendly and relaxing," an employee was once quoted as saying. Mr. Osero says that his wishes are that in the future, the HR legal regime be enhanced for reliability in professional development; this according to him will be achieved through the amendment of the HRMP Act.

He also hopes that more HR professionals will rise to become CEO. This is why the Institute has strategically designed a new curriculum which will make a future HR professional an all round person. That way they will have more influence and power to make a difference.

Political Survival

Although he admits that he does not admire competitive politics, this student of Niccolo Machiavelli and a strong believer of forty eight laws of power displays a strong appreciation of politics of survival.

He recounts that his long stay at the helm has been an art of balance between demands of the Council to win their approval while meeting the never ending expectations of members. This balancing act has in the past resulted into attrition of his opponents leaving him standing.

As the general bids everyone farewell, IHRM Council remains with the enormous task of sourcing for another Executive Director who will continue to grow the Institute to even higher heights. The position was advertised in the month of September and the substantial office holder is expected in the office before the end of the year.



How colleagues at IHRM describe Mr. Osero and what they will miss about him

Mr. Osero has been a mentor and a coach who gave me an opportunity to advance my career. He is also an advocate for education and he challenged me to advance my education and for that I will always be grateful to him. For over 15 years I have worked closely with him and I'm amazed at his humility and ability to listen and guide. Despite being the CEO he is easy to interact with and has over the years created a conducive working environment and an open door policy which meant he was always available for consultation. I will miss his leadership and counsel.

Ms. Milka Murimi
Ag. Executive Director
IHRM



Mr. Osero has always encouraged me to keep moving albeit the struggles of life and the workplace. He is a humble and accessible man who is always composed even when he is annoyed. He has helped me learn that one has to be dynamic at the workplace and learn as much as you can as opposed to concentrating on one area of specialization. He is witty and is able to resolve difficult situations. I will miss his sense of humor and his leadership at IHRM.

Catherine Baraza
Membership Registration Officer
IHRM

Nothing I say will ever convey the amount of gratitude, I owe to Mr. Osero for showing me how to have the right attitude. For converting my mistakes into lessons, pressure into productivity and skills into strengths. He really knows how to bring out the best in me. I thank him for putting pressure on me, being tough on me for my mistakes that were silly. Sometimes tough love is necessary, which is what I have learnt in my career's journey. Apart from the decision making, communication and overall professionalism, the most important thing I have learnt from him is how to be a good human being. I will never know what it feels like to work under a boss who is annoying, grumpy, irritating and always angry. But this is one work experience that I am glad not to have had – all thanks to him.

Mr. Fredrick Karani
 Snr. Admin Assistant, Membership
 and Licensing Services
 IHRM



I feel lucky and blessed to have worked with a man so humble, knowledgeable and dedicated. Mr. Osero gave me a high degree of opportunity to get on with my job while always there to help with any unusual or difficult situations. He developed his team members and always appreciated the work done. He showed compassion and sensitivity to the feelings of others, he was very much approachable on a personal level and made employees feel valued, respected and understood. I will sincerely miss his open door policy and the morning greetings, a culture which I guess many organizations are not practicing. I will really miss his presence at IHRM. I wish you well my mentor.

Ms. Milka Owao
 Training/CPD Manager
 IHRM

Managing a Downsized Workforce:

Dispelling Fear After Retrenchment



Nowadays you can't open a newspaper or visit a news website without seeing notices of corporate layoffs. Layoffs create downsizing survivors, the people who remain in your company after a lay-off. Layoffs are now a common phenomenon in many organizations as companies try to restructure and position themselves strategically in the industry or sector in which they operate. Many organizations do it silently others go public. Whatever the case, redundancy is never fun. It is one of the most painful decisions made by employers. Nonetheless, a decision must be made to cut the size of the workforce, when a company is experiencing some difficult circumstances. Using best practices employers can make lay-offs more palatable for employees who leave, managing the employees who remain and still maintain a good reputation.

Certain critical questions should inform lay-offs decision: is your company experiencing slump? Is your company pushed to the corner due to competitive pressure in the industry? Is your company affected by economic downturn of the country or global economic crunch? Has globalization or entry into the local market of so many foreign goods or firms affected your ability to compete and sustain the size of your workforce? Is the company experiencing cash flow problems to sustain the current wage bill? Was there some sort of mismanagement pushing the company into financial quagmire? Whatever the reason, redundancy may be inevitable.

What is redundancy?

Redundancy is inevitable in today's world and every organization must be prepared to deal with its aftermath when it comes. Redundancy, if all the correct procedures are followed, can be defined as a lawful and fair way of dismissing employees for whom the employer no longer has work. There is no longer anything for the employee to do. So the employer has to terminate their

contract of employment. The employer therefore can only lawfully make employees redundant if:

- The business as a whole is closing.
- A particular branch office or work is closing.
- Few employees are needed to do a particular work.

Whatever reason your organization downsized, experienced layoffs or cut staff. No matter the circumstance, you all have something in common during and after downsizing – layoff survivors, those who “could be”, “should be” lucky employees who made the cut during the layoffs and downsizing.

To truly benefit from layoffs, the company needs to invest more energy in the people who remain after downsizing and layoffs. They will aid recovery, full productivity, boost morale, despite the loss and minimize the damage to workplace trust. Some damage control must therefore be done by the management. With few employees, a quieter workplace and emotional trauma of layoffs, it is tough to rally the remaining troops to contribute on the necessary level.

Many organizations do nothing after downsizing as they wait for the “dust to settle down” and normalcy to resume. They see people group and discuss in fear but they don't care and only react much later when the damage is already done to the organization which may result into more quits and fear affecting work performance. As you plan for retrenchment (a humane way of carrying out redundancy) you need to ask yourself: do you have in place adequate measures to address its aftermath? The Human Resource Manager, line managers, team leaders and top managers of an organization, all have a responsibility to ensure that managing downsizing aftermath is as smooth as possible. There is need to dispel the fear and instill confidence in people by reassuring their jobs, organizational stability and

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promising future. The “damage control” is not just the exclusive responsibility of the HR, but all managers including the CEO of the organization. They must talk to their employees and encourage them to see downsizing positively. This may involve holding meetings with all employees to offer such reassurance.

Restructuring after downsizing

Employees need reassurance about their security. They need reassurance about why the people who were let go in the downsizing were chosen. They need reassurance about their future in the organization. You don't want your layoff survivors to feel as if they are the victims. In many ways, they may feel like victims. They may have more work to do; they may have different jobs to learn; you may ask them to step up and take on higher level and broader responsibilities. For some, this is exciting and career expanding. For others depending on their life circumstance, this may prove difficult.

You need to look for ways to streamline current work with fewer people after layoffs, work with your customers to identify the work processes that add the least value to the customer experience and eliminate them. Consider restructuring your organization. Perhaps the initial plans for restructuring were made by management before the layoffs which required a learner structure. In most cases, these plans often determine who is laid off. You may need to find out how your role fit in the new structure and participate actively in it by making it more meaningful. The management should provide the necessary learning and skills to enable employees cope with increased job demands. If you are a manager, it is important to reassure the people who report to you of their value to you and the

organization. You need to talk to each one of them individually to let them know why and how they are valued.

It is important to understand that no matter how re-assuring you have been giving them, believe me on some level after layoffs, trust has been injured. Inspire confidence at this time so people feel you can be depended upon as they take the first steps into the unknown future. Re-emphasize mission, vision, values and goals after layoffs. Morale, climate and culture are negatively impacted during layoffs and downsizing. You will need to recreate work environment so that people can build their self-esteem find work satisfying and achieve at higher levels. The foundation for this progress is to re-emphasize the organization mission and the values.

Way forward

The vision for the future has undoubtedly changed or received new life in the downsizing process. Now is your opportunity to spend time with small groups of people talking about each of these. Reaffirm their meaning and impact for your organization. Let people ask questions and talk about how their goals fit into the large picture after the layoffs. Talk about the culture and work environment you want to create post layoffs. Define what you need to do as a group to move in this direction, despite the loss of co-workers. You need to pay more attention to rewards, recognition and the future. Let the employees know that the organization is still a better employer. You can thank each individual for their contribution to making the changed organization more effective and inviting.

Leaders must be visible and involved during the layoffs. It is not the time for organization leaders to retreat to the board rooms and private offices to plan for the future. After downsizing or following major change, leaders must be visible and accessible. Layoff survivors need to interact with their superiors on a daily basis. Leaders may have to listen to people express pain and sadness. As a leader, you can only use each conversation as an opportunity to re-emphasize why downsizing took place and promise a better future for the organization. Talk positively about plans for the future and how the remaining employees will benefit when they accept and contribute positively to the change process after downsizing. This is also a good time to look at the goals of each work unit to assess their relationship to the overall plan. It is important following a downsizing for each of your survivors to feel his/her work is integral to the accomplishment of the overall business goals.



Effects of Coaching on Employee Productivity

Most people graduate from the University with outstanding qualifications ready to hit the job market with a bang oblivious of what awaits them out there.

Organizations or potential employers on the other hand are eagerly looking for candidates with relevant educational qualification and with reasonable experience to fit the bill.

What is your value addition to our organization? Is a commonly asked question during interviews. Every new employee should want to confidently answer this question comprehensively.

Operations in one organization in the same industry can never be comparable to the other. You may have an admirable educational background with the required experience, but no, that is not enough

A coaching framework needs to be put in place to be able to achieve results in the most reasonable time frame.

Just like training, coaching has been viewed as one of the strategies that would influence employee productivity positively. Organizations are now emphasizing on the need to coach employees into their new roles yet this has been done in a very informal way. A number of employers' ingrain the role of coaching in a manager/supervisor's job description without any care of how this exercise would be carried out, or without clear structures and frameworks in place.

For the effects of a coaching exercise to be quantifiable, an employer should establish the following before hand;

- ◆ How will this programme run in terms of
- ◆ Who is in charge - the coach
- ◆ Does the coach have the required skills to carry out this exercise?
- ◆ How long should the programme run?
- ◆ Does the personality of both coach and coachee match?
- ◆ How will the feedback be evaluated in terms of Return on Investment (ROI)

WHO IS IN CHARGE (COACH)

An employer may decide to contract a professional in this area as a consultant to carry out this exercise. The beauty is the professional approach the coaching exercise takes when conducted by a professional, in most cases the consultant is well versed in this field bringing with them a wealth of experience living no doubt for positive results. The unfortunate bit is that, in most cases, the consultants have always complained of lack of cooperation from the 'insiders' and is often viewed as an impediment to positive results. Another thing is that confidentiality may be compromised by inviting an outsider to carry out an exercise that requires disclosing sensitive information concerning the organization.

1. Does the coach have the coaching skills?

Many a time's employers ingrain coaching role into employee's (manager/supervisor) job description without caring whether the person has the interest, skills and ability to coach a fellow employee into improved productivity. One of the requirements of an effective coach is that one needs to have the knowledge, skills and ability to transfer the necessary knowledge in order for the exercise to yield the desired results.

2. How long will the programme run?

Unlike mentorship that goes on indefinitely, a coaching programme must be well defined. The duration of this exercise should be communicated from the onset such that the parties' i.e. Coach, Coachee and Employer are aware of the programme's end.

3. Coach/Coachee personality match

There are two key players in a coaching exercise namely coach and coachee. The personality of the involved parties should be compatible for the programme to be effective. The coach is tasked with the role of imparting knowledge while the coachee has a task to ensure development of knowledge and competences required to grow professionally and impact productivity. To avoid possible personality mismatch, some organizations have discovered ways to go about this. At Hartford Financial Services Group, Inc., the employer can interview and then make an appropriate selection from a pool of three prescreened coaches while other organizations use a detailed questionnaire, similar to those used by dating services to help with the coach selection.

4. Evaluation of Feedback

Once a coaching programme is complete, the employer should evaluate the effectiveness of the same to assess the return on investment (ROI). Some of the areas to focus on are the time taken to achieve results and the financial implication to see if the programme is worth the course or was it just another time wasting and energy sapping exercise.

The evaluation can be both short term where the players evaluate how they feel about the exercise and what they hope to achieve. In the long term evaluation can be done a few weeks later where actual change can be measured, for instance is there notable improvement in how the trainee is carrying out their mandate thanks to the coaching experience?

The practice of coaching, if adopted with clear frameworks with objectives clearly articulated it is likely to yield positive results leading to an increase in employee productivity and organizational performance. This ultimately would boost employee engagement and individual confidence at the work place.



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Organization's Performance vs Employee Engagement

Employee engagement has become a top business priority for senior executives. In this rapid – cycle economy, business leaders know that having a high performing workforce is essential for growth and survival.

An engaged workforce produces better business results, does not hop jobs and more importantly is an ambassador of the organization at all points of time. This engagement is achieved when people consider their organization respects their work, their work contributes to the organization goals and more significantly their personal aspirations of growth, rewards and pay are met.

The Hay Group defines engaged performance as *"a result that is achieved by stimulating employees' enthusiasm for their work and directing it toward organization success. This result can only be achieved when employers offer an implicit contract to their employees that elicit specific positive behaviours aligned with organization's goals..."*

Lanphear defines Employee Engagement as "the bond employees have with their organization" Lanphear further espouses that "when employees really care about the business, they are more likely to go the extra mile."

The definitions, as seen, focus on employer as well as the employee. Today's millennial workforce is more informed, connected, willing to work given learning opportunities. Personal growth, opportunities to learn and explore is becoming a primary driver. Equity more than pay is a driving force. Catering to the changing needs to foster engaged employees is the need of the hour.

There is what we call the 3 C's of Employee Engagement which are

- * Career
- * Competence
- * Care

Career

When individuals join an organization, they expect to build a career with it. If the top management and immediate managers dedicate time in carving out the careers of its employees, they will feel that they belong to the organization. They feel engaged when they receive support from the management in growing their careers. An organization can provide its employees with opportunities to grow professionally through job rotations, indulging them in significant tasks, challenging assignments and promotions. They should also be given a specific level of authority and autonomy to take their decisions on their own. The organizations prepare an entirely new breed of employees if they genuinely invest in developing the careers of their people.

Competence

Competence is all about the ability to grow. Regular workshops and training sessions must be held in order to help employees acquire a higher level of skills and competencies. The focus should be on developing marketable skills. Most employees after spending a few months look for competence-boosting opportunities with the organization so that they can grow and move to the next level of their careers. While the career focuses on the actual growth in terms of designation, wages perks and authority, competence is the ability to grow utilizing the opportunities.

Care

Sitting at the topmost, care is regarded the finest art of the managers by which they can make employees feel they are an indispensable part of their organization. The managers need to be empathetic and sensitive towards people and understand their personal problems. Showing small day-to-day caring gestures towards employees make them feel that they belong to the organization and organization belongs to them.

Disengaged employees are disconnected from their jobs, tend to be significantly less efficient



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and less loyal to their organization, they are less satisfied with their personal lives, and experience and have more stress and insecurity about their job than their co-workers (Gallup, 2001)

With the current restructuring in the Government, that is, tussle between National Government and County Government, civil servants are becoming more disengaged especially with the feeling of lack of psychological meaningfulness and safety at work, lack of identification in the government public sector, lack of trust, sense of being undervalued, perceived inequalities in pay and performance, unrealized ambitions, stress and anxiety.

Organizations have to leverage the most valued resource that is the human resource for it to achieve its organizational goals. This means that they do not only attract and retain them but must keep them motivated and committed at all times.

Loyalty Effects

Numerous management studies and researches show that there exists a relationship between employee engagement and customer satisfaction. It has been observed that the actively engaged employees are extremely loyal towards their organization and are always ready to walk that extra mile to ensure success for their company. The studies such as 'Loyalty Effects' show that when people have a sense of belonging towards their workplace and feel great about being associated with it, they provide better customer service. They treat them as a company and therefore, strive to achieve excellence in whatever they do to serve customers better. Employee engagement correlates positively with customer satisfaction and increased productivity of the organization as a whole.

Equity more than pay is a driving force

As employees are considered the internal customers of an organization, their satisfaction level plays an important role in keeping the company in good health. When they are satisfied, it is obvious that they will treat the external clients in the best possible manner. It is guaranteed that customers keep coming back when they are treated well. It also helps in growing the loyalty level of customers towards the company which the government is striving towards – regaining the public confidence.

Experts say that every company that is looking to survive this ever changing business world must try to enhance the engagement level of their employees and those who want to take their business to the next level must make a dedicated effort and figure out the way of engaging almost every employee of the organization. Employee commitment towards their job keeps them engaged and results in high levels of satisfaction. The productivity of an organization not only depends on the time the employees spend in the company but it also takes into account the effort they put in executing their jobs ensuring the optimal use of resources. This in turn helps them grow and acquire more skills.

On Boarding:

Setting New Hires up for Success

Sometimes our great efforts to source the best candidate for a role do not necessarily result in the desired outcome. New employees known to be star performers in their previous companies, and who are highly sought after in the industry, do not always make successful joiners. Why is this so?

Identifying and contracting the best person for the job is not adequate for success. The **structured** efforts an organization uses to ensure new employees acquire the necessary knowledge, skills, and behavior to become effective organizational members determine how well new employees assimilate into the organization, and consequently, how fast they successfully contribute.

Joining a new organization or team is a social process, and like all social processes, **it is most effective when it is personalized.** A successful induction must be grounded on engaging appropriately with the feelings of new employees as these guides and influences all the steps that follow.

It all begins with how well a company tells its story to prospective employees. Well enough that the employee can visualize a day in the life of a person working there. This gives prospective employees an opportunity to review if they are a real match to the organizational culture. For example, if their value system matches and aligns to the value system of the company. Imagine that you value autonomy and work-life balance, and your last company offered this to you, and you excelled in that environment.

When you move jobs, not only are you expected to report to work at 8am, your new manager also has a daily 8:15am meeting where you and your team mates report back on the previous day's progress in your assignments. You do not think that this

is a good use of your time, and worse still, you feel this meeting reduces the time you would be spending on your work. Furthermore, you are now spending two hours in traffic each morning and can no longer drop your children to school. Gradually, you start feeling a loss of autonomy. You feel micromanaged. You do not think that your new company appreciates work-life balance. You feel you made a big mistake to jump ship. The **importance of realistic job previews** cannot be underestimated when it comes to successful on-boarding.

The on-boarding Program

To ensure no critical aspect of on-boarding is missed out, designing **the on-boarding program needs to be systematic and owned collaboratively** by a cross-departmental on-boarding team. Various departments will give unique but complimentary inputs. For example, HR knows compliance; Management has expertise in performance expectations; Coworkers understand the day-to-day routine; and IT knows how to get office equipment up and running. Forming a team with members from each of these departments helps to ensure that everything is covered. It is also critical **to involve the employee in developing their own on-boarding program.** It enables them to visualize how the different aspects are relevant to their assimilation into the company and their role. It also gives them an opportunity to prepare clarifying questions.

As we do not get second chances for first impressions, we need to **ensure that the first day is memorable for new employees.**

01. Colleagues should be informed to expect a new joiner.
02. Be clear on who will receive them when they arrive, and how they will spend their first day at work.



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welcome

To The Team

03. Appoint a 'buddy' for the employee and where possible, arrange for the new employee to meet their buddy prior to their joining date. This buddy must be the right match i.e. someone that has similar interests and is a good brand ambassador of the organization. This way for example, a new employee is not left alone at his/her desk because they do not have the lunch tag to be able to use the cafeteria or because other co-workers are having lunch at the popular Kiosk behind the office. How about paying for their lunch on his first day to facilitate them getting together informally?

Of equal importance is **implementing the basics prior to the first day on the job**. In some companies, new employees only receive critical tools of trade weeks into the role. This not only kills the initial drive and enthusiasm the employee had before joining the company, it also dulls the employee's perception of the company's expectations on efficiency. Often there is enough time from the day the company hires the new employees to when they report to work. Employers should ensure that tools, office space, access cards etc. are ready before they report.

HR and Line managers play a vital role in ensuring employees are clear on the legal regulations that govern their industry, and company policies, rules and regulations. **Managers must ensure that employees understand their new jobs and related expectations** including how these align to

the company goals, compensation and incentive structures. We should not expect new hires to hit the ground running. Create a transition plan that requires new employees' to understand and demonstrate accurate use of policies, systems and tools. This requires a structured approach to **induction training**. Define desired learning outcomes, content, facilitators, timelines and evaluation methodology. Use of technology where applicable makes it easy for employees to access required information and demonstrates initiative in driving their own learning.

It's critical to **connect new employees to key stakeholders**. It enables them to build vital interpersonal relationships and information networks. In these meetings they can agree on expectations, preferred mode of communication, meeting frequency and decision rights. It gives them insights on whom to approach for what. When new employees have greater clarity regarding their role and place within the organization, they are more likely to take risks, ask questions, learn more about their new role, colleagues, the organization, and be more effective performers.

Lastly, it is important to use milestones such as 30, 60, 90 or 120 days on the job and up to one year post entry to check on progress.

It is clear that on-boarding is no longer the traditional two days orientation, where a new employee would be taken round for a meet and greet or a site tour, and get to complete tons of forms.



Give that Fresh Graduate a Chance

All HR Managers stand a good chance in transforming lives of the many young graduates in Kenya today. It is not news to anyone that the job market is a tough place; talents are in high supply, while jobs; on the other hand are very limited. A 2013 survey by Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) on the employability of graduates; only a half of the more than 50,000 students who graduate annually are suitable for employment. The survey also revealed that among these graduates; more than half are not suited in their career choice.



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In their job search therefore; they not only compete with the fresh graduates, but also thousands of job seekers with two or three times more experience than them. In Kenya, today, I don't think there is any University that helps graduates in

identifying job opportunities. As a result of the above challenge facing our brothers and sisters, HR managers should take up the role as mentors by coming up with programs to equip the fresh graduates with the right hands-on skills in preparation for employment. Such programs should be well designed to bridge the professional gap between the lecture room theory and the real work experience.

Most Companies have already embraced these programs and most of the graduates who have undergone such programs end up working for the same organizations while others are released to the job market.

A local Company - Adrian Kenya Limited specializing in Telecommunication, Power and ICT has set up a training Centre purposely for Engineers graduates to be taken through an on- the job training to

prepare them for employment. The graduates are then released to the job market while others are absorbed whenever a vacancy arises. The work experience which most employers are looking for in the market cannot be obtained without giving the fresh young graduates the opportunity to learn on the job.

Some of the problems facing young graduates include;

- * Inadequate integration of young graduates in the society hence they remain idle
- ** Inadequate access to the youth friendly learn and earn programs
- ** A general lack of an enabling environment for the access of effective guidance and mentorship programs and services within and outside
- ** Lack of public information centres on general advice and careers
- ** Lack of public recreational services that are youth based
- ** Limited awareness of policies and laws related to apprenticeship programs for young graduates among governments

Reasons why you should hire fresh graduates

It might be difficult to look beyond professional experience when hiring a candidate because experienced candidates require less training and know how to handle complex duties. Fresh graduates on the other hand don't have much experience. There are many benefits however to hiring a fresh graduate and all employers must recognize the following advantages:

THEY DON'T ASK FOR TOO MUCH: The opportunity given being the first in their life time, they don't ask for too much although this does not mean they are paid lower salaries than the market rate. But compared with the experienced job seekers, fresh graduates are less expensive at entry level. The company on the other hand has to invest on training in order to convert them to star employees.

THEY BRING INNOVATIVE IDEAS AND NEW PERSPECTIVES: The mind-set of the fresh graduates is clean and not affected by any previous company practices and can bring a new perspective to the Company. They might be able to point out flaws or solutions to existing problems in a creative way.

THEY ARE MASTERS OF CONTINUOUS LEARNING: Fresh graduates are eager to learn and determined to prove themselves. They question where not clear and easily adapt to the corporate culture and new ideas are easily welcomed.

THEY ARE UP- TO- DATE WITH THE LATEST TECHNOLOGIES: The younger employees are tech-savvy and well informed and know how to keep up with the latest technological trends and this is an asset to any employer.

Hiring fresh graduates directly out of school gives employers the opportunity to shape their professional growth and development and this experience is rewarding to both employer and employee.

However, the employers should make sure that the fresh graduates get encouraged, provided with advanced tools, offered with flexible schedules, ongoing trainings, recognize their efforts, coached and mentored and provided with regular feedback regarding their performance. Remember these are millennials generation who are considered as multitaskers whereby they switch tasks quickly enough to appear to be doing them simultaneously.

A study published in 2012 by the U.S Chamber of Commerce Foundation indicates that the millennials are never far away from their next text, with 80% sleeping with their cell phone next to the bed. For some, this bed is in their parents homes, as 13% have "boomeranged " back because of the recession after living on their own, 36% say they depend on financial support from their families

The graduates programs are often designed to allow companies to take on a large number of graduates and this keeps fresh ideas and talents flowing into the Company.

Executives

Redundancy plan

Make Termination Due to Redundancy Humane

What is Redundancy?

This is the termination of employees' services because of the replacement of labour by technology or closure of department due to continuing lack of demand for the products or services offered.

Most redundancies are as a result of cost cutting measures due to pressures from competition and introduction of new technology.

The criteria used to select individuals for redundancies must be fair and reasonable by law. The employees' connection with the employer is severed and the employees are usually paid compensation for the years of service worked.

Human Resource Professionals may have no choice taking part in employees' termination or separation such as in case of redundancy and down-sizing. But they can and should make an important contribution to managing termination or separation processes in order to minimize the distress and trauma that such termination can create or the distress and bad feelings that unfair dismissal practices can bring.

Human Resource Professionals should press for policies and actions that would minimize even if they cannot eliminate involuntarily separation. The organization therefore should have a

well-documented policy that clearly explains how various situations in terminating employment relationship should be handled through a redundancy policy.

What can Employers do through a Redundancy Policy?

The policy will state what the organization will do in the event that declaring redundancy is inevitable. It addresses how those affected will be given fair and equitable treatment, adequate warning and every possible help to enable them secure alternative work.

A redundancy policy should:

1. Emphasize the need to handle redundancies sensitively.
2. Advise line managers on the approach they should adopt.
3. Help in communication of the decision to the employees.
4. Lay out counseling and out-placement procedures.
5. Ensure redundancy procedures are within the code of practices and legal requirements.

Mercy Malinda Muema
Member, IHRM

What is the Procedure of declaring one Redundant?

1. An employer shall not terminate a contract of service on account of redundancy unless the employer complies with the following conditions:-
 - a. Where the employee is a member of a trade union, the employer notifies the union to which the employee is a member and the labour officer in charge of the area where the employee is employed of the reasons for, and the extent of, the intended redundancy not less than a month prior to the date of the intended date of termination on account of redundancy.
 - b. Where an employee is not a member of a trade union, the employer notifies the employee personally in writing and the labour officer.
 - c. The employer has, in the selection of employees to be declared redundant have regard to seniority in time and to the skill, ability and reliability of each employee of the particular class of employees affected by the redundancy.
 - d. Where there is in existence a collective agreement between an employer and a trade union setting out terminal benefits payable upon redundancy; the employer has not placed the employee at a disadvantage for being or not being a member of the union.
 - e. The employer has where leave is due to an employee who is declared redundant, paid off the leave in cash.
 - f. The employer has paid an employee declared redundant not less than one month's notice or one month's wages in lieu of notice.
 - g. The employer has paid to an employee declared redundant severance pay at the rate of not less than fifteen days for each completed year of service.
2. These conditions of redundancy shall not apply where an employee's services are terminated on account of insolvency.
3. The Minister may make rules requiring an employer a certain minimum number of employees or any group of employers to insure their employees against the risk of redundancy through an employment insurance scheme operated either under an established national insurance scheme established under written law or by any firm underwriting insurance business to be approved by the Minister.

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