

## *[working title]* **Tomorrow's people management**

It has become obvious that we are entering a new era where value sets are shifting. Today we clearly see self-actualisation and social responsibility are top of the agenda. As a society, we have reached the apex of Maslow's pyramid, as outlined in Hierarchy of Needs. Since we have already discovered that money can't buy happiness, we are looking elsewhere for meaning.

For the past ten years I have predicted this 'Emotional Decade'. When I first used to mention 'Feelings' to clients, their usual response was: "We want 'Facts'. But today corporations recognise the value of empathy, and we already see the emergence of "Empowerment Companies". These are businesses that embrace ethical, empathic and inspiring branding and mission statements. Their aim is to facilitate knowledge to people both inside and outside their organisation in order to empower them on all levels. I predict that this will become a given: look at Apple, Tate Modern, Philips, Unilever and Ikea, they're all companies or organisations focusing on empowering people.

With emotional values increasing in importance, then new paradigms are needed when addressing the future employee. It is no longer enough just to offer material benefits – you also have to stimulate the emotional and the ethical dimension of tomorrow's people. Companies have to re-think the rules of engagement with the single biggest challenge being managing and anticipating your workforce's needs.

In my view the key to understanding people is to tap into their emotional and spiritual dimension where a much broader wish list contributes to that all-important job satisfaction rating. Neuroscience divides the brain into: left and right, and this ties in perfectly with my Multidimensional philosophy:

- left brain – Analytical – Good at breaking the whole into components and looking at details. May talk in terms of pure and simple cash and benefits.
- right brain - Synthesis - Specialist in weaving components into a whole and seeing the bigger picture. Recognises the quality of life in a broader sense.

For too long, I would argue, we have favoured Left Brain thinking - ignoring Right Brain qualities. What I believe is essential in the future is holistic thinking: utilising the "whole" brain. Tomorrow's successful leaders will be 'whole-brain' thinkers and practitioners. This is critical to the future success of flexible HR programmes. At the same time it ensures you reach people in meaningful ways and offer them rewards and benefits that stimulate and engage with them.

Flexibility must replace rigidity because of the age-span and diversity of tomorrow's people. Old top-down hierarchies are dinosaurs – so how do companies inspire respect and maintain loyalty? More than ever, we see them recognising that they need to embrace deeper human and conscience-led values. Tomorrow's people will have many different and complex mindsets, with two contrasting mindsets increasingly coming to the fore:

- The hunters – “Me”-oriented individuals focusing on life according to themselves
- The gatherers – “We”-oriented individuals focusing on the more collective values relating to the group.

Whether you are dealing with a Hunter or a Gatherer, the priority must be to make their working life motivational and emotionally rewarding. We will see the emergence of the so-called Yeppies (Young Experimenting Perfection Seekers). Unlike yuppies, their aim in life is not to collect worldly goods, but as many experiences as possible. And so we see more and more companies offering motivational work schemes. These can be tailored to suit team or individual.

In order to reach tomorrow’s people and address their demands - businesses must offer a HR programme that will fulfil the needs of both the Hunters and the Gatherers. In some organisations the focus has always been on retaining Hunters, to the disadvantage of the equally valuable - if less vocal - Gatherers.

However, there are no set-in-stone types since you are dealing with people who may be contradictory in their aims and ambitions. It is also important to remember that our values clearly shift throughout life. Working with contrasting mindsets and coming up with solutions that can adapt or be used across the board is definitely challenging, but it also provides a framework and a deeper understanding of future opportunities – and how to capitalise on them.

One of the biggest challenges facing HR professionals is the ability to adapt to the changing role of HR in light of so many areas of advance and change, such as smart technology, an ageing population, female empowerment, globalisation, Asia and new economies, the creative class, global sustainability, health and wellness and spiritual awareness. Taken together, the ongoing changes forecast a quantum shift in our very understanding of what it means to work, learn, and live.

Many will see this wave of change as frightening. But it does not have to be viewed that way. The one million dollar question is: What is the best future strategy for me? Do I sit back and wait it out pretending that this will not affect me? Or Do I ride the wave turning changes into opportunity? Personally, I find the answer in this proverb: ‘When the wind of change rises, some people build walls. Others build windmills.’

This is already the Emotional Decade – emotional consumption rather than material need increasingly rules the day. That is why a multidimensional strategy - a body and soul approach – paired with a lot of common sense is key to the future success of HR.

*Anne Lise Kjaer, Futurist and Chief Executive, Kjaer Global Ltd, will be talking on Exploring the Future Workplace and Tomorrow’s People, Thursday, 09:30-11:00, seminar code F2*