

HAYS VIRTUAL LEARNING SERIES

#1 STRATEGIC HR Q&A

 Human Inc

Q It seems many organisations think this current status is going away and therefore are in a waiting or sleeper phase and this is complicating the lives of the workers. Why is the leadership mindset so fixed on the past? Why is it not changing and no, it is not age driven.

- Chai Ping - Leaders are perhaps still stuck in the old ways and have not been 'agile' to move forward; the fear of the unknown still looms especially with job security which may cause leaders to still want to manage rather than lead.
- Sharheel - Simply put, A growth mindset is a belief that people, including oneself, can change their talents, abilities, and intelligence. Conversely, those with a fixed mindset do not believe that people can change their talents abilities and intelligence – People; We must find ways to make them realise that our people are our greatest asset

Q With Covid-19, we were all forced to work from home and many companies are now looking at flexi work. How do we measure productivity or flexi work? and how do we measure productivity with flexi work?

Chai Ping - Performance and productivity can be measured if we already have clear KPIs and metrics. Once they are in place, employees are measured on deliverables and outcomes. FlexWork can be implemented more easily if the performance management is clear and well defined.

- Sharheel – Flexi Work Policies might help too. Examples such as 1) Alternative work arrangements: Can you telecommute on a regular basis? Is written consent required? Is working non-traditional hours allowed, such as working 7am - 3pm instead of 9am - 5pm? 2) Compressed work weeks: Do you allow for 4/10 or 9/80 schedules? If so, do employees have to request this schedule? Is it allowed at any time of the year or only during the specific times of the year? 3) Expectations of employees: If your employees will be working from home or changing their schedule, what is expected of them in relation to communication, job performance and availability during core hours?

Q Now that we're almost 6 months into flexi working arrangement during MCO for most companies, there are often a couple of staff who under-perform. Can you share how to improve staff's performance and capability while the staff works from home?

Chai Ping - Ditto as above and as long as the KPIs/metrics are well defined, we can coach and support the employee on the gaps. If the situation persists, a performance improvement plan (PIP) can be put in place.

Q Experience with challenge will come with the potential of paying a price or failure. Senior management or the managers want to play safe, especially during this time when it might not be feasible economically. How will you change the mindset and culture (especially the decision maker of the firm) before the people can actually adopt an agile mindset or approach in work?

Chai Ping - It is a process of evolution and learning; pre-Covid, we had the luxury of more time but with Covid, time is of the essence and the future has arrived and agility is key.

Q To have an agile culture, I supposed it needs to start from the top before it is 'infused' into the organisation. How can HR convince/influence the top management that agility is key to organisation success?

Chai Ping - HR today is the trusted partner and needs to role model the agile mindset and coach leaders.

Q How to change a senior management mindset on micromanagement their team and stop reprimanding on the slightest mistake?

- Chai Ping - Help leaders understand that creating a safe environment for employees to fail fast and learn fast is perhaps the best way forward in this VUCA/Covid world.
- Sharheel - Refer to this [whitepaper](#) which I liked very much when I read it, it will give you some ideas on how to shape this.

Q To our 1st speaker, what's your take on people's thinking that hiring young blood will result in an organisation being for sure agile?

Chris - The best thing about young talents is that an organisation has this unique window of opportunity to mold and shape them into the best talents that can help fulfil the organisations' needs. Having less learned 'bad habits' over the years may allow for more room for newer and awesome 'agile habits' to be installed early - on the caveat that the organisation's ways of working and culture supports agility. In a nutshell, it can be said that it's not the 'young blood' that would drive agility per se, but rather how can organisation create a space for these talents to grow their agility - and in time improve the overall culture / working experience in an organisation.

Q To build on Chris's value driven change, it is exactly of what he pointed out about bottom value driven change but senior management do not see the necessary change. How can someone at the lower management make the senior management to see the real challenges and take immediate actions. This is also related to the topic about sustainability which related to Sharheel's point.

Chris - How can you lead your leaders to see and understand your challenges, and have them help you address it - this is often about leading upwards and stakeholder management. Having curiosity about what it takes to make your leader succeed in his or her goals is crucial when leading upwards. Find out for what your leader(s) is/are looking for - what is it that he/she is trying to drive and show them how your problems might hinder their goals. This creates the experience that you are co-creating leadership, increasing empathy between you and leaders.

We have also seen instances where it is useful to bring in an external party into the picture - to help facilitate this problem discovery process, and support with the design and the delivery of the solutions to the discovered issues. When companies are working on a complex challenge or a controversial project, it can be difficult for leaders or project team members to make hard decisions or take the necessary actions without getting wrapped up in emotions or politics. At Human Inc, we often get requests to come in to help with the facilitation of change involving supporting both project teams and the senior leadership teams to achieve their common goal.

Q In a highly competitive environment where performance is constantly being reviewed, how to balance your team in ensuring high performance and learning to 'fail forward'?

Chai Ping - Now more than ever before, we need to fail fast and learn fast to enable high performance, failing which the competition will come up with better value, better services, better offerings, better products.

Q Traditionally there are job roles that needs use "punch card" mechanism but nowadays the new generation want to be measured by "responsibility" like you said, how do we handle that mentality or set back? job scope like engineer, are traditionally measure by billable hours.

Chai Ping - As the nature of work evolves, so will the workforce and the workplace. The future of work is fluid and agile and hence the "punch card" system will be come passe and irrelevant. Employees want to be trusted and measured on their caliber and deliverables, not their clock-in, clock-out times.

Q I am sure there will be a challenge for women to be a leader in your industry (IT and Logistics), what is your advice to women that want to be a leader in a male dominated industry?

Chai Ping - Stay relevant, be confident and remain real; show up and speak up. You are measured by what you know and not by your gender; don't let the glass ceiling intimidate as it is only made real by you. Find a mentor and sponsor (internally and externally) who will support you.