

NASSCOM Emerging 15 : I like It Here, Do You?

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Profiling the NASSCOM Top 15 Exciting Emerging Companies to work for in 2008-09

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All of us would love to work in companies that offer excitement from professional challenges to new interesting work and inculcate refreshing values and learnings that help us develop as better human beings. Its often better if the company is an emerging one, as it offers a close-knit family kind of atmosphere with enough opportunities to fall back on one another during potential crisis situations.

Emerging companies are sought after by career seekers for their close knit, non-hierarchical work environment, culture of innovation and commitment to employee empowerment. The focused approach of these companies makes them the perfect platform for nurturing specialized talent and building cross functional skills.

Recognizing the performance, proliferation and increasing importance of emerging companies within the IT-BPO ecosystem, Nasscom has been actively tracking their evolution and growth by means of an annual survey.

There were over 13,000 employees from 61 companies participating in the second edition of the survey this year. The objective of this survey, therefore, was to identify the best small and medium sized IT-BPO companies to work for.

Hero ITES

- Its a Hero for Many

Home grown performance management tools like H-profile, Hero Assure, Hero Ensure and Hero Check
A comprehensive e-learning solution

A comprehensive e-learning solution

Part of the \$1.3 bn Hero Group, Hero ITES is an international BPO firm headquartered in Gurgaon and offers both voice and non-voice BPO services to offshore clients. Hero ITES has taken some industry-leading initiatives to emerge as an employer of choice. One such idea is HeroLive, a collaborative intranet (to which even clients have access), which is more than just a platform for posting company announcements and feel-good news such as birthdays and anniversaries. In fact, it includes a knowledge marketplace where team members exchange/trade their thoughts/suggestions and collaborate in the actual solution building process. The other way it differs from most traditional intranets is the level of transparency it provides. The team has complete visibility to key statistics in the business, their performance as well as that of their peers.

Apart from that the company has homegrown performance management tools like H-profile, HeroAssure, HeroEnsure, and HeroCheck. Identification of training needs, scheduling appropriate development programs both skill and behavioral, and assessments (pre-, mid- and, post-) are conducted through an e-learning solution, developed jointly by the company with an external partner. Employee scorecard comprising of key elements like coaching, training, assessment, performance evaluation and review are generated automatically through this system.

Corbus (India)

- Do It Yourself

Employee engagement initiatives managed by employees themselves

Corbus (India), a wholly owned subsidiary of Soin International LLC, creates SCM solutions and services for aviations, BFSI, consumer package goods (CPG), retail, manufacturing, and media and entertainment sectors.

The employee engagement initiatives in the company is managed by employees themselves. As part of this, employees are empowered to contribute in the organizational decision-making process through a structured forum and to help the management in the implementation of key business initiatives. Employees are also encouraged to get trained on cutting edge technologies and on key behavioral skills. The HR initiatives in the company are aimed at not just developing employees, but to ensure their career progression horizontally and vertically within the organization.

AgreeYa Solutions

- Home Away from Home

Formally measures its Employee Engagement Quotient periodically

AgreeYa Solutions is an ISO 9001:2000 certified and SEI CMMI Level 5 assessed provider of various IT services.

It provides its employees rich exposure to emerging technologies. The companys HR initiatives follow its set of core values, represented as I CARE standing for Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect, and Excellence.

In fact, the thrust on employee engagement can be gauged from the fact that it formally measures its Employee Engagement Quotient periodically to understand the high and low points of employees perceptions, thereby triggering a closed loop action plan. Super Performers are able to participate in a fast track program where a SWOT Analysis is completed at an individual level and special programs and rewards are designed to excel them further. It complements these with regular fun@work programs. The buddy program hand holds new employees through the orientation process and helps them to get to know their way around AgreeYa, their home away from home.

Methodology

The survey ranks the participant companies on a composite score known as the Excitement Index which is arrived at after analyzing both the employee perception inputs (captured by an online perception survey) and the HR diagnosis inputs (captured by HR diagnostic study conducted for each of the participating companies).

The 4-part tailor-made procedure adopted for the survey ensured that both the employees and the employers perspectives were well reflected:

Employees Perspective: An on-line survey was designed to tap the employees perception of their respective organizations on five dimensions: career development (CD), fairness & equity (F&E), reward & recognition (R&R), work environment (WE) and work satisfaction (WS) as observed and practiced in their organization. It reflects an employees perception on the above parameters on the climate, attitude and satisfaction scale. An employee perception score has been generated for each participating firm

HR Diagnostic Study - A score for each participating company was generated, following an in-depth meeting with their human resource personnel, understanding the design and implementation of the HR systems and processes, and studying the related documentation.

The Industry Panel run-through: The survey panel comprised of industry experts as well as senior representatives from NASSCOM and Right Management India to ensure that no ambiguities were creeping into the system and that there was no experience or expertise bias

Analysis: The collated data was then calculated and analyzed to arrive at the final list.

Nagarro Software

- Of Geeks, for Nerds, By Nagarro

HR headed by CTO

Founded in 1996, Nagarro has offices in the US, Germany, Sweden and India.

One of the few companies that started going out to campuses early in the evolution, Nagarro has created an image of a company where nerds love to work. In fact, its selection in the campus is not by testing only IQ and mental agility. It actually tests students on coding. For a company whose HR is headed by its CTO, the whole HR initiative is driven by challenging the employees to give their best.

One of the few small companies that largely recruits freshers, Nagarro has always drawn the brightest talent by virtue of cutting edge technology. Under its Employee Development Program (EDP), the HR group organizes personalized career counseling sessions for employees with the management to help them identify their potential and tap it to fullest. Its flat structure ensures that ambitious high performing engineers and managers get instant recognition, rewards and visibility.

The high performers are provided with the best compensation, challenging and high-end work, greater responsibilities and quicker promotions. Promising managers are personally mentored by the management and their career paths are carefully chalked out.

R Systems

- Feel good is the X-Factor

Assessed at level 3 of PCMM by KPMG

R Systems International, a Software Development and Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) Company approximately 2500 people and maintains seven Centers of Software.

The areas where R Systems actually scores over other companies are in career development, work satisfaction, work environment, rewards and recognition and fairness in short, all the performance related areas rather than feel good areas. The strong people processes that the company have strengthened its ability to attract, retain and nurture its resources to give out their best. In the month of August 2008, the company was assessed at level 3 of PCMM by KPMG for its laudable people practices.

Syngy

- The Importance of Mentoring

Adopted an online peer-to-peer recognition program

Syngy is an enterprise product development and IT consulting company and a specialist in sales compensation management.

The company has a successful mentoring program which helps in providing meaningful work to all employees and is centered on creating an excellent working relationship between a manager and the employee. Everyone at Syngy regularly meets with their mentor to discuss and evaluate their performance. These evaluations focus on how the employee has demonstrated Syngys core values of (Ownership, Professionalism, Teamwork, continuous Improvement, and Customer focus known as OPTIC) and the specific job skills required for their position. The feedback is based on specific examples, providing the employee with actionable information about areas needing improvement.

Syngy has adopted an online peer-to-peer recognition program, in which any employee can recognize any other employee for his/her efforts merely by the click of a button. Feedback sessions and team building exercises are conducted on a regular basis

to ensure that every employees voice is heard and the feedback given by them is used to make Synggy a great place to work.

Acclaris Business Solutions

- Promoting Talent from Within

Starting up of a BPO Academy in collaboration with a renowned university

Acclaris Business Solutions (Acclaris India) is a wholly owned subsidiary of Acclaris. The company pursued strategic human resource orientations under four specific categories of acquisition, development, motivation and maintenance. Some of these include a change in the recruitment focus and starting up of a BPO Academy in collaboration with a renowned university for recruiting the right kind of people and retaining the recruits for a long period of time.

Improving the efficiency of the job rotation process through unique training programs like Acclaris Leaders Program for Success (ALPS), creating healthy competition by facilitating the earning of open-ended incentives for all employees, and successful implementation of various initiatives like Kaizen, Star Program, 5S, Walk the Talk, Team Dinner, Family Day, Open House, Wall Magazine, etc. The idea is not just to create a culture of openness and improve process efficiency but also facilitating Work Life Balance. The company calls its core values IDEA, meaning Integrity, Diligence, Enthusiasm and Accountability.

HyTech Professionals

- Satisfied Employees= Satisfied Customers

An effective grievance redressal plan in place along with employee feedback on an ongoing basis

HyTech Professionals is an ISO 9001:2000 software engineering service company that delivers services in custom software development, healthcare solution consulting and testing. The companys principle revolves around the phrase Employee Satisfaction leads to Customer Satisfaction. Training, seminars and engagement activities are arranged throughout the year to improve individual skills and productivity. The management makes sure that the companys HR processes are based on constant reality checks. They also ensure that process adherence co-exists with fairness & equity and that the two do not conflict with each other. To support this, they have an effective grievance redressal plan in place along with employee feedback on an ongoing basis.

Nucleus Software

- Measuring People Success

The development team works closely with HR to install automated and human intervention free systems

Nucleus software is a leading product company out of India with a high market share in lending products market for banks. Despite being a comparatively smaller company, it has taken a broader approach to HR, integrating all the modules ranging from manpower planning, recruitment, employee relationship management, performance management, career planning & tracking, workplace communication and systems to be able to read the impact of any strategic move.

At Nucleus they share the belief, Something that cannot be measured is anathema. That extends to HR as well. The development team works closely with HR to install automated and human intervention free systems.

Infogain (India)

- Training the Mind

Online training material, training videos, and training tutorials are part of Infogain Knowledge Portal, Gyan Kosh

Infogain is a SEI-CMM level 5 compliant and ISO 9000:2001 certified company. Some of its unique HR practices

include an Online TNI process that collects training needs of each individual which in turn gets translated into the monthly training calendar. Additionally, an online Infogain Training University prepares employees for international certifications financed by the organization. Subject matter experts called technical mentors guide individuals through this complete roadmap leading to accomplishment of international certifications. Online training material, training videos, training tutorials are part of Infogain Knowledge Portal, Gyan Kosh, which is the backbone of the training system at Infogain.

The interview panel is comprises well-trained subject experts identified by Centre of Technology Excellence. To provide maximum career growth opportunity to employees, priority is given to filling up of positions internally. Attractive employee and alumni bonuses are offered for references. A robust employee development and growth program called Gurukul has been designed to track and steer every individuals career in the right direction. The Online HR tool Aspire is a one-stop solution for all employees enquiries related to policies, systems, finance, training and performance appraisals thereby improving process efficiencies and the query resolution process.

Inter Globe Technologies

- Highly Proletarian

Even the quality of the appraisal discussions between the appraiser and appraisee gets measured

InterGlobe Technologies (IGT) is India s leading pure-play travel technology organization. The two successful anchors at IGT in managing talent are its employee engagement philosophy and its performance management system. IGTs Employee Engagement scores conducted by a Neutral agency has shown remarkable improvement year on year and currently stands at 71%. People managers including IGTs Leadership carry employee engagement scores as part of their success measurements in their KRAs. The employee engagement activities are tracked through the engagement calendar, which is a published document. In IGT, they say, whatever can be measured gets measured; its a metrics driven organization. Even the quality of the appraisal discussions between the appraiser and appraisee gets measured.

Cactus Communications

- Only the Best

An equal opportunities employer where talent, learning ability and the right attitude are parameters for growth

Cactus Communications is a specialist provider of editing, education and transcription services to individuals and institutional clients worldwide. It attracts talent from several countries, including Japan, China, Taiwan, Korea, Canada, USA and the UK. Cactus is an equal opportunities employer where talent, learning ability and the right attitude are rated above everything else and serve as parameters for growth. It has a very rigorous selection process for people joining delivery teams wherein not more than 0.02% of applicants clear all stages of the selection process. Moreover, all selected candidates are put through an intensive training program, followed by on-the-job training and regular feedback.

Sopra India

- Hey Buddy

Ablend of programs such as Team Building and My Buddy proliferate gender inclusivity

Sopra India is the delivery center of Sopra Group, a major European consulting, SI and application outsourcing firm. At Sopra India, they practice e-HR with focus on responsiveness and openness. This is accomplished by empowering all team members through initiatives like My Idea & Rendezvous with COO. A blend of programs such as Team Building and My buddy and

policies which proliferates gender inclusivity, work life balance, empowerment and involvement across levels have been created to address the objective. A model which runs as a CLP-continuous learning program, ensure that the team creates a niche in their technical domain.

H5 Asia Pacific

- Legal Eagle with a Human Face

Effective alignment between its performance management activities and competency-based principles

H5AP is a wholly owned subsidiary of H5, a specialist in information retrieval for the legal industry. It starts its emphasis on HR from recruitment stage itself. An example of its best practices is the effective alignment between its performance management activities designed with competency-based principles as the shared foundation and the compensation system.

Saba Software India

- Its in Our Genes

An innovative career development program, Your Next 2 Jobs, lets employees choose a career track of their choice

Founded in 1997, Saba is a premier global provider of strategic human capital management (HCM) software and services. Sabas people management solutions are used by more than 1,300 organizations and over 17 mn end users worldwide. Sabas solutions increase organizational performance by aligning workforce goals with organizational strategy; developing, managing and rewarding their people; and improving collaboration.

People focus, of course, comes naturally to Saba. Some of its innovative HR programs include its career development program, Your Next 2 Jobs, which provides employees with an opportunity to choose a career track of their choice. Its program Saba4Saba uses its own people management solutions for training and performance management.