

To spur innovation, cos look beyond experience

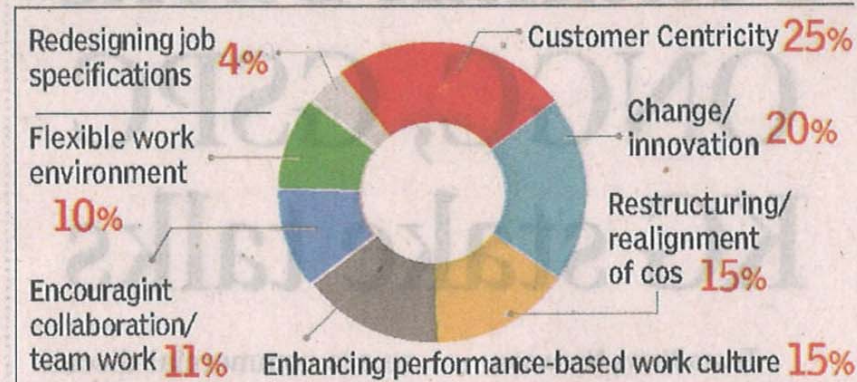
Fill Key Positions With Execs From Unrelated Fields, Focus On Customers

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Mumbai: When RPG Enterprises was looking for a talent management head, the group did not consider conventional options among candidates. Instead, it appointed Supratik Bhattacharya, who was not a true blue HR professional. Prior to joining RPG Enterprises, Bhattacharya was lead-chairman's office, Larsen & Toubro. Even for the post of digital head, RPG Enterprises appointed Sachin Nandgaonkar, president of the speciality sector companies, who was earlier a partner with BCG.

Organizations are increasingly filling key positions with candidates coming from different backgrounds as compared to the verticals they have been offered to lead. The objective is to get an out-of-the-box experi-

WHAT WILL DRIVE BIZ SUCCESS



Note: This reflects the views of CEOs/CXOs and senior managements across India from 272 responses

Source: Executive Access (India)

ence that can spur innovation. Customer centricity and innovation appear very high on the list of top business trends that will drive success in the current financial year, according to a study conducted exclusively for **TOI** by Executive Access. The study, conducted among CEOs/CXOs/senior management, re-

veals that companies are reluctant to hire somebody from the same industry.

Out of the 133 senior executive placements done by Executive Access last year, over 40% of the searches were such where candidates were hired from outside the industry. This figure used to be

a mere 15% a year ago.

Ronesh Puri, MD, Executive Access, said: "When we conduct searches now, about 50% of the time clients are asking for candidates with an out-of-the-box thinking. As innovation has become critical, organizations are willing to pay a premium for talent which can bring about game changing ideas."

Puri said he was surprised with the response Executive Access got from the study, with CXOs being highly skewed towards customer centricity (25%) and innovation (20%). "Innovation usually figured in the range of 8-10%. In this survey, it more than doubles, which is indeed a huge shift. With so much disruption taking place across businesses, companies feel they need to re-create to be one step ahead of competition," said Puri.

According to Harsh Mariwala, chairman, Marico: "While diversity is important to drive innovation, it is more important to create the right organizational culture which is open and transparent. It should allow employees to take risks without any fear of failure. At Marico, we hire from cross-functional domains to bring in diversity."

S Venkatesh, management board member & president, Group HR, RPG Enterprises, said: "In an era, where even the iPhone is being looked at as a plain-vanilla phone, piling in comparison to some upstarts coming up with new features, innovation will be a big differentiator. To create a differentiation and get an edge over competition, our approach to hiring is open... as we aim to bring in diverse talent from the market."