

E- News from Palan - December

I write this note on Christmas Eve. My sons have left two letters for Santa Claus. They are hoping for their presents though they are beginning to wonder if all the stories of Santa are true. However the presents keep the myth alive. Happy holidays, happy New Year and Merry Christmas.

2004 is just about to end and to me it looks like it was only a short while ago we started the year. As we greet the arrival of the New Year, we are well aware of the challenges facing the Human Resources community. Hope the New Year will usher in all the best for the world and humanity.

Some of the issues we will cover in this month's Learn & Perform e news which is basically structured on our key business areas:

- The Malaysian Prime Minister's visit to India
- Making Training FUN
- Issues in Competency & Performance
- Personal Growth
- Management thoughts
- SMR 2004 news
- Personal

THE MALAYSIAN PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO INDIA

The Malaysian Prime Minister undertook his longest ever visit to a foreign country – a 5 day working visit to India. The visit essentially to strengthen trade and bilateral relations between the two countries resulted in the recognition of India as an emerging powerhouse. The Prime Minister exhorted the Malaysians to emulate the human capital and knowledge management practices of Indian corporate titans such as the IT powerhouse Infosys and biotech giant Biocon. He lent credence to the theory that human capital and knowledge management can be a powerful competitive edge for organisations going global. For more details

<http://www.uniindia.com/unilive/unisite.nsf/All/7FE08625F0DA973D65256F730027A7BC>

FUN TRAINING TOOLS

I had the opportunity to dine with Scott Friedman, the current President of National Speakers Association on his recent visit to Kuala Lumpur. He was also delivering a tea talk for the recently formed Malaysian Professional Speakers Association. Scott who calls himself a motivational humorist and who has asked me to deliver a session for the National Speakers Conference in Burbank California in February 2005 stressed in his talk the importance of using humour in presentations. I was pleased with the similarities in his ideas and our FUN principles. His story about bringing in humour in a tense situation intrigued me. The story of his father confronting him at the dinner table while he was a child about his poor grades was an interesting one.

"Scot, what grades have you got?"

"Hi! Dad, the grades are a single person's opinion."

"Scott, how is that Andy has much better grades than you"

"Dad, you can't compare me with Andy."

"Why not, Scott"

"Dad, his parents are smarter than mine."

Scott's ability to tie the humour with the content is awesome. For more details on Scott, please visit

<http://www.funnyscott.com>

COMPETENCY& PERFORMANCE

I conducted a competency based Training programme for a National institute today. The goal was to convert all traditional programmes into competency based ones. In a traditional educational system, the unit of progression is time and it is teacher-centered. In a Competency based system, the unit of progression is mastery of specific knowledge and skills. The approach is learner centered. Two key terms used in competency-based training are:

- **Skill**—a task or group of tasks performed to a specific level of competency or proficiency which often use motor functions and typically require the manipulation of instruments and equipment. Some skills, however, such as counseling, are knowledge/ attitude-based.
- **Competency**—a skill performed to a specific standard under specific conditions.

Some interesting information at The Reprline Reading room

<http://www.reproline.jhu.edu/english/6read/6training/cbt/cbt.htm#CBT>

Personal Growth series

Professors Dorothy Leonard and Walter Swap writing in the Harvard Business Review contend that "deep smarts" in your company – that is your best employees' deepest knowledge can't be transferred onto a series of PowerPoint slides or downloaded into a data repository. It has to be passed on in person – slowly, patiently and systematically. Some very good information on Knowledge management. Details Reprint RO409F; HBR OnPoint 7731 www.hbr.org

MANAGEMENT TRAINING

The ASEAN – EC in Brunei is organising a high level international HRD Conference in Jan 2005. Leading personalities such as the former Malaysian Prime Minister Dr Mahathir will speak at the event. For more details please contact hrdcongress@smrhrd.com

SMR NEWS

We were very proud to receive three awards recently. The first was presented by the Small and Medium Industry association to SMR for promoting Information Communication technology in HRD. The second award was presented by India based leading portal HR Power Jobs for making a global contribution to HR and the third award by KERIS International, an Asian body promoting ethics in business; was for promoting fair practices in business. The three awards coming at more or less the same time was indeed motivating and satisfying. At SMR, we are busy preparing for the January Learning Extravaganza, fully resourced by SMR's accredited training professionals. Contact hrdcongress@smrhrd.com

PERSONAL

I had the opportunity to watch two reasonably good films. The first one Christmas with the Kranks brought across the idea the importance of a community spirit and Christmas being more of a time to spend time with family, friends and neighbourhood rather than just a religious festival. My sons, wife and I enjoyed the film. The second film Bride and Prejudice starring Aiswarya Rai and Mark Henderson stressed the importance of understanding cultures by getting inside of them rather than passing comments from the outside. Both my wife and I enjoyed the Indian film made in English.

I will be in touch in January 2005. Happy New Year.

Regards

R. Palan Ph.D