

Firms innovate to bring back fun at work

Aparna Ramalingam | TNN

Chennai: Placing a smiley on your desk, trainers contextualising mythological tales, company reforming its motto to 'leave no one behind': India Inc is trying every trick to bring back fun at work and keep their employees' chins up during these tough times.

For instance, IT major HCL Technologies unveiled its motto "No Hclite will be left behind," late last year. "So far, we have had two big open houses where over 40,000 employees participated and the top management allayed staff concerns related to the downturn. The common message to all was to work hard and also



HCL has unveiled its motto "No Hclite will be left behind. NIIT has 'fun managers' to ensure employees 'celebrate events at the workplace'

upgrade their skill sets," says D K Srivastava, head, corporate human resources, HCL. With volume of work down, employees are now busy signing up for certification programmes on the company's intranet 'I Learn'. "We have had about 50,000 registrations till date. In this dynamic business environment it is no longer enough if you only know Java.

The need of the hour is to upgrade skills on a constant basis and with more time in their hands now, our employees are just doing that now," reveals Srivastava.

While focus on self-esteem is one way to tackle slowdown woes, reaching out to God may provide solace to others. Retail major Future Group embarked on one such exercise almost a

year-and-a-half back when it conceived the post of a 'Chief Belief Officer' (CBO) for the company and whose main role is to contextualise age-old Indian beliefs and culture in the modern organisational context. "The whole idea was to look deep into our own civilisation which has survived so long to find answers to many issues that confront managers today," says Sanjay Jog, head, HR, Future Group.

Currently, trainers at the company are conducting a workshop on the mythological 'Krishna-Kalia' story. "Krishna stepped into uncharted territories when he took on the dreaded serpent. We are currently in the process of im-

plementing a new change management programme and we want to pass on the message to our employees that progression won't happen unless some risks are undertaken," says Jog.

NIIT has the concept of 'fun managers' who ensure employees 'celebrate events at the workplace,' be it going out on birthdays and anniversaries. New recruits are also taken out by regional managers as part of the 'babies' day out' programme of the company. "There is spot appreciation too like placing a smiley on an employee's workstation, congratulating him/her on their performance," says a senior official of the company.