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## **We encourage a transparent performance appraisal process and two-way feedback mechanism: Aircel**



By **Danish Khan**

NEW DELHI: GSM telecom service provider Aircel's Chief Human Resource Officer (CHRO), Sandeep Gandhi in another interaction with ETTelecom talks about the hiring process at Aircel, along with the training and development programmes and talent retention strategy.

He also talks about the initiatives taken by Aircel for leadership development and appraisal process.

### **Q) What qualities do you look for while hiring?**

At Aircel, talent acquisition is an area of heightened focus; we need to ensure that the new incumbents not only have the requisite skills and competencies but also the will to learn and adapt to the dynamic and competitive surroundings.

We expect people to thrive on ownership and team work in an environment wherein people are given sufficient learning and growth opportunities. This upstream challenge of finding right talent is mitigated by our elaborate process of talent acquisition, where in we adopt various methodologies to select and shortlist candidates on ongoing basis.

**Q) What are the kinds of training and development programmes that the fresh talent would undergo?**

In lieu with objective, Aircel too, has a dedicated academy which caters to the training and development needs of the organisation. Aircel Academy has introduced various unique programs for new hires to enhance their relevant skills and thrive in today's competitive environment. Induction workshops are conducted by functional heads to introduce the new hires to the vision, culture of the organization, followed by behavioural training programs, programs focussed on managing change etc.

**Q) Once selected and trained, how would you identify the best talent for your organisation? How would you spot the prospective leaders?**

Focused and relevant training programs guarantee talent readiness at all levels which is key to our success. Our Academy has played an imperative task in growing champions within the organization with requisite skills and competencies complementing the business needs. Through our tailor made programs in association with renowned universities like Duke and Harvard, we have churned out talent which is ready to take on higher roles and responsibilities.

**Q) How do you plan on retaining this talent, once they are trained and groomed?**

Talent utilization and engagement is something Aircel has been investing in constantly. We have innovative retention plans which are backed by a transparent performance measurement system and an embedded culture that transpires the desire to excel and experiment with in each Aircel employee.

Programs like job rotation, cross functional teams, ideation groups and various other learning and individual professional development opportunities serve as supper for intellectual engagement of employees and help them connect with the organization. The employee benefits, work life balance, open door policy etc. are one of the few motivators for employees at Aircel. The culture of the organization adds to the overall optimistic attitude within the employees.

**Q) What are the initiatives taken by Aircel for leadership development?**

We at Aircel believe in leadership development and fostering right talent to ensure a strong leadership pipeline for the organization. The 'Home grown leaders' as we call them help the company sail through turbulent times. Leadership by accident can work sometimes but powerful learning organization is built through 'Leadership by Design'. Hence, to ensure that we provide the best of training to our leadership team we have a dedicated Academy to cater to the learning and training needs of the employees.

The Academy has partnered with renowned colleges like Harvard College, Duke Corporate Education, and Stanford College for our leadership training programs.

These are usually year-long programs and offer graduation certificate to the participant from these reputed colleges. The prominent faculty engages with these participants on topics like Strategy, Business acumen, Innovation, Customer centricity through regular class room and webinar sessions. The class room training is conducted at our Academy or campuses of reputed management institutes.

**Q) How do you keep the staff engaged when so many opportunities exist in the market?**

Aircel deciphers the employee engagement as an element of employees connecting with the organization with their head and heart. Through our constant and focused employee communication we strive to imbibe the feeling that each one plays an important role towards achieving business goals. We have been instrumental in providing our employees numerous learning and training programs which helps them enhance their skills and competencies and prepare for high roles; also interacting through interesting fun activities to enable them strike a work life balance.

We also encourage and ensure a completely transparent performance appraisal process and two-way feedback mechanism. At Aircel, we also have an innovative performance linked scheme that gives an opportunity to employees to succeed in their roles which in turn helps in achieving the organizations goal.