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Invest in talent development to tackle business, environmental challenges: Aircel



NEW DELHI: GSM telecom service provider Aircel's Chief Human Resource Officer (CHRO), Sandeep Gandhi in an exclusive interaction with ETTelecom talks about the role of HR in a changing business environment, key HR challenges faced by the company, and the Aircel Academy.

How has HR's role evolved amid the changing times? What are the key roles that HR plays?

In an industry as dynamic and competitive as telecom, HR has evolved as a key contributor to the success of the company. The role of HR has shifted from traditional talent attraction and retention to a more focused approach to align HR strategies to organizations priorities. Today, organizations demand HR to play multiple and significant roles which is an essential element to the strategic planning of an organization. The success or failure of any organization depends largely on how aggressively the HR function can maintain, motivate and improve the human capital base, tackle business challenges and deliver on business goals.

What are the biggest HR-related challenges faced by Aircel?

As global competition intensifies along with slow economic growth, many organizations across industries are pressurized to sustain growth and ours is no different. The idea is to constantly align the skills and competencies in line with the business objectives.

Which initiatives are you really proud of and believe that they differentiate Aircel from other telecom companies?

At Aircel, we believe in developing and fostering talent to ensure a skilled and competent pipeline for the organization. Focused and relevant training programs guarantee talent readiness at all levels which is key to our success.

Aircel has a number of unique learning and development initiatives which set us apart in the industry. To ensure that we provide the best of training, we have set up the Aircel Academy to provide learning and specialized development for employees. Our Academy plays a pivotal role in up-skilling and providing virtual-experience to new employees/freshers.

The Aircel Academy's vision & mission manifests itself in its logo, the learning-wishing tree, wherein learning is meant to be both an inward and outward journey. Just like a tree must have deep roots to enable it to touch the sky, so must learning enable an Aircelite to dig deep within to improve skills and branch outwards to utilize the skills in attaining higher benchmarks towards self and organizational development.

The Academy has partnered with renowned colleges like Harvard Business School, Duke University and Stanford College for our leadership training programs. At a national level, we have partnered with IIM-Ahmedabad and XLRI for corporate education programs. We have different programs for different levels starting with the Emerging Leader program for management trainees going up till Executive Coaching which is for the senior leadership team.

Why is it imperative for a telecom company to have a robust learning and development program?

In a volatile telecom space, it is necessary to invest in the growth and development of talent to help prepare it to tackle business and environmental challenges. Hence, it is imperative for a telecom company to have a robust learning and development program. A right learning program ensures that the new talent turns out to be an asset for the organization.