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"People First, Business Next, Profit Last": Marico CEO at 'Human Is Not A Resource' Program

June 12: If you focus on people, results will follow, said Marico's Managing Director and CEO, Saugata Gupta on the second day of "Human Is NOT A Resource" (HINAR) online program hosted by Isha Leadership Academy.

"In our company, we live by the mantra 'people first, business next, profit last,' Gupta stated, while speaking to over a 100 participants from 11 countries in a session on 'Culture - Secret to Uncommon Leadership'. He emphasized Trust as the most crucial factor in shaping Marico's culture.

Interestingly, Gupta revealed that Marico has reported the best growth in recent times, during the pandemic. This despite greatly lowered levels of supervision, management and face time with employees. He attributed this to reciprocal trust between employees and the organisation.

"Our tenet on mutual trust and respect is to create an environment of boundary-less behaviour, devoid of silos. We encourage employees to embrace ambiguity," Marico CEO said.

Resonating with Gupta's thoughts, Raj Raghavan, Senior Vice President, Human Resources, IndiGo (InterGlobe Aviation Limited),

said that in order to survive in today's economy, it is important for business leaders to adopt a strong corporate culture.

"Culture is valuable to an organisation because it reduces ambiguity," he said.

Quoting an example of culture at Indigo to "fly on time", Raghavan said that a great importance is given to the fact that all internal meetings and training sessions begin on time.

He stated that while there is no "the" culture, this intangible aspect of organisations is an important factor of how effectively people can contribute to the organisation.

A large part of Day 2 was devoted to 'Coaching-The Integrator'. The session was led by leading coach and best-selling author Ruchira Chaudhary, Founder, TrueNorth Consulting. Over two 90-minute sessions, Chaudhary explored in depth the critical, but often underrated responsibility of leaders – coaching.

"Building leaders of tomorrow is the responsibility of leaders of today. They need to build and enable others," she said as she took the participants through experiential sessions on how to coach.

The structured sessions, intricately weaved together by program hosts Ashutosh Pandey, MD & CEO, Mahindra First Choice Wheels and Sunil Buch, Non-Executive Independent Director, Orbit Express, also saw insightful sharing from Resource Leaders.

Sharing an actionable tip on keeping employees involved and passionate about work, Megha Tata, Managing Director, Discovery Communications, said, "Leaders must take 80% onus, the 20% will automatically take care of itself."

"In the absence of a purposeful Culture, the business outcomes will be there but the journey may not be efficient, smooth or

enjoyable," Amit Kalra, Chief Transformation Officer, HLE Glascoat Limited shared.

On the opening day of the event yesterday, Sadhguru addressed attendees and spoke at length about the possibilities and opportunities for business leaders to create impact in the world. He urged entrepreneurs to turn the challenge of the pandemic into a time of exploration, innovation and inspiration.

Other speakers on Day 1 included Rajeev Dubey, Former Group President (HR and Corporate Services) and CEO (After Market Sector); Aditi Bhosale-Walunj, Co-Founder of Repos Energy; and Lt. Gen. Alok Kler, PVSM, VSM, and former General Officer Commanding In Chief, South Western Command.

Human is NOT a Resource (HINAR) is an annual leadership program organized by Isha Leadership Academy. The proceeds from this year's edition will go to Isha COVID Action, an initiative to provide critical assistance to vulnerable groups affected by COVID-19.

Isha Leadership Academy was founded with the goal of developing leadership as an innate and intuitive process. ILA's programs are intended to provide insights and unique perspectives on developing the best in human potential. For C-suite attendees, the Academy has held several leadership forums focused on scaling up, leadership, talent management, and innovation.

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