ABSTRACT

It is a well-acknowledged fact that, the automotive industry is a fast-growing industry. Because of globalization, there is a direct competition in the market. Hence, continuous research and development is required to overcome this challenged situation. The innovation, resulting from the research and development, is the life-line for achieving and retaining the competitiveness in the industry. This competitiveness, in turn, depends on the ability and the momentum of the industry to innovate and get better. The most significant indices of competitiveness are the creativity of labor as well as of the resources. Human resource is the only active resource that must be handled very carefully for sustainable growth.

The concept of attaining competitiveness, on the basis of inexpensive labor, positive exchange rates, and concessional duty structure, is becoming outdated. Also, it is not sustainable. In light of the above, it is felt that, a greater importance is required in the training practices, which can make sure competitiveness on a long-term basis. The automotive sector with its associated linkages (such as metallic components, plastic components, paint, glass, electronics, capital equipment, warehousing and logistics, dealership, retailing, credit and financing, logistics, advertising, repair and maintenance, petroleum products, gas stations, insurance, service parts, etc.) have been known and well-known at different fronts as a sector with a very high share of auto sector in GDP, exports and services. The automotive segment is also seen as a multiplier of industrial growth by:

- Increasing profitability by providing mobility to other industries.
- Providing different services to other industrial segment.
- Increasing agricultural productivity through farm automation and catering the needs of agricultural produce transportation.

Universal development, in availability of trained manpower and good infrastructure, is necessary for the sustainable enlargement of the industry. But these wide-spread efforts in training practices, related to the production, rarely produce competitive advantage. Only advanced, specialized and industry-specific initiatives can lead to competitive advantage. A plan is necessary for creating a meticulous institution in the automotive sector for education, and training practices, market analysis and formulation, and spreading of different training curriculums in the automotive sector.

It has been noticed that, the automobile industry has developed in clusters of companies interconnected by commonalities. The quick development in infrastructure, including road, port, power and global services for testing and certification, as well as trained manpower and government policies are very much essential to encourage fair competition.

Training can do wonders. A methodical training approach had brought a standard transformation in the behavior and attitude of the trainees. Workforce of General Motors in US, when trained by the Japanese, made an unbelievable turnaround of the organization through training interventions. The Japanese proved that, the training of the employees can put the organization at the elevation of success.

Flourishing candidates, placed on the jobs, require training to carry out their duties effectively. Workers must be trained to operate machines, reduce scrap and avoid accidents. Not only workers, but the supervisor, managers also
require training to achieve organizational goals by encouraging their co-workers and employees working under them.

FedEx Corporation is one of the company that take training seriously. Every year, it spends 155 million dollars on training. The company allocates almost 1523 man-hours every year for training. Every employee is required to spend 4 to 6 weeks per year for compulsory training. There are also voluntary courses of 15 days. Every employee is permitted for $2,500 as a tuition reimbursement. This encourages many employees to take short-term courses for acquiring multiple skills. In addition, the company has a tie-up with Skill-soft, and Email Knowledge Gateway, which offers nearly 800 short-term online courses to the employees. FedEx has a clear strategy of admiration for training. It will use that training in the development of its employees and for lateral hiring, which is most effective and inexpensive.

After success in the thriving BPO (business process outsourcing) market in India, Indian training companies are now successful in new territories. Indian professionals have set a benchmark for up-and-coming market such as Philippines, Middle East, Taiwan and many other Southeast Asian nations. Indian trainers are more and more demanded by foreign firms across the sectors such as finance, BPOs, hospitality and healthcare, which has created a great impact on the global outsourcing.

Indian trainers are all over the place. They are imparting - training for local BPOs in the Philippines; training for soft skills to hotel staff in Southeast Asia; training for people in Genpact’s China Centre. Indian training companies such as Reliance’s NIS Sparta, Hero Mindmine, Delhi-based Mind Trainer is finding themselves as the leading companies providing trainers.
LG Electronics has made it compulsory for its employees doing two modules a month and every module has an examination that has to be clear. Every three months a review of the complete examination is done and prizes are distributed to encourage people for studying.

The American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) says, “Latest organizations typically bring 20% to 30% of training through technology”.

Cisco uses web-based training as an important tool to create additional creativity in employees because web-based training can be obtained anytime anywhere.

General Electronics believes in on-the-job approach to train its employees. It trains consumer service operators on the job so that the ability of listening, thinking and responding is developed. Present research concludes that, the importance of training is always extremely high at the selected companies in advanced areas of automotive technology. Engineers from various groups are sent abroad for training in specialized areas related to the facilities available in those companies. The trainings are being conducted at some of the best laboratories of research and training practices in leading automotive industries of the world. Engineers have also been trained at research institutions and by the specialized consultants. The overall idea behind training activities and the system adopted for imparting training in the selected companies is excellent, result-oriented and encouraging.

There is sincere participation of the top management in organizing training activities. Training Management Committee (TMC) reviews the training activities and helps manager of Human Resource Department (HRD) for
continuous improvement in training. The employees are benefited from the training imparted by enhancing skills, knowledge and competence.

I would like to suggest that, accessibility of trained manpower would not only aid in the growth of the sector, but also make easy in meeting employment goals. Hence, sufficient steps should be taken to ensure availability of trained manpower.

There is a necessity to train the management staff in the area of ‘Manufacturing Management’. This would engage teaching and guidance on subjects such as TQM, Six-Sigma, Lean Manufacturing, Breakthrough Management, etc.

Training is a very important function of HRD, but it is essential to have an additional attentiveness. Hence, management should set up a training cell of two persons, who can personally and regularly check in the general training activities at the company.

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