

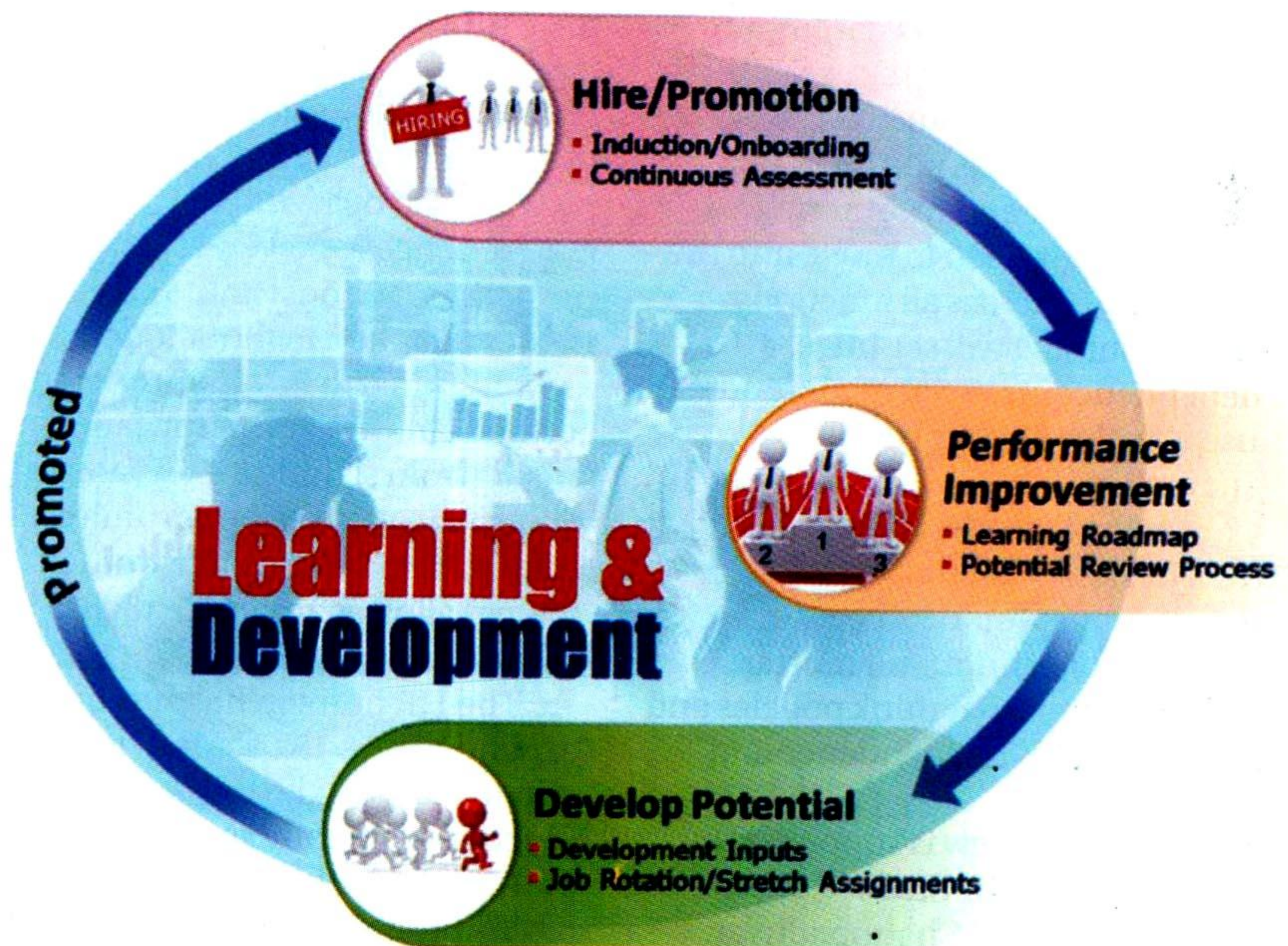
Though used often interchangeably, the terms learning and training are vastly different. Learning begins where training ends. Training is task oriented. It is a one-time activity limited to the knowledge or skill required at a point in time. On the other hand, learning is an ongoing process that encompasses the overall development of an employee. .

An organization is only as strong as its human capital. Thus, only an organization committed to learning can thrive in today's VUCA world . Learning helps employees be successful and it is only through them, that an organization succeeds. .

A robust learning program will focus on enabling employee success through the entire employment lifecycle. In order to align the learning to the goals of the organization and the individual, a competency framework for employees is set up. This helps establish the career, growth and learning path for every employee

Employee learning and developmental cycle

As shown in the box, a robust learning and development roadmap begins at the point of hire. Performance



THE CURVE OF LEARNING

improvement measures and structured interventions for developing potential are also included in such a learning roadmap. This enables an employee to reach the next rung in their careers. Once promoted, the entire cycle repeats itself.

So how do learning oriented organizations approach capability development of their employees?

Hire/promotion phase induction/onboarding

An induction and onboarding learning program is foundational to the success of a new employee or a promotee by furnishing critical knowledge and skills. While this is essential to make all employees job ready in the early days, it is especially critical for specialist roles. The role of the manager and peer group is irreplaceable in this phase.

Continuous Assessment

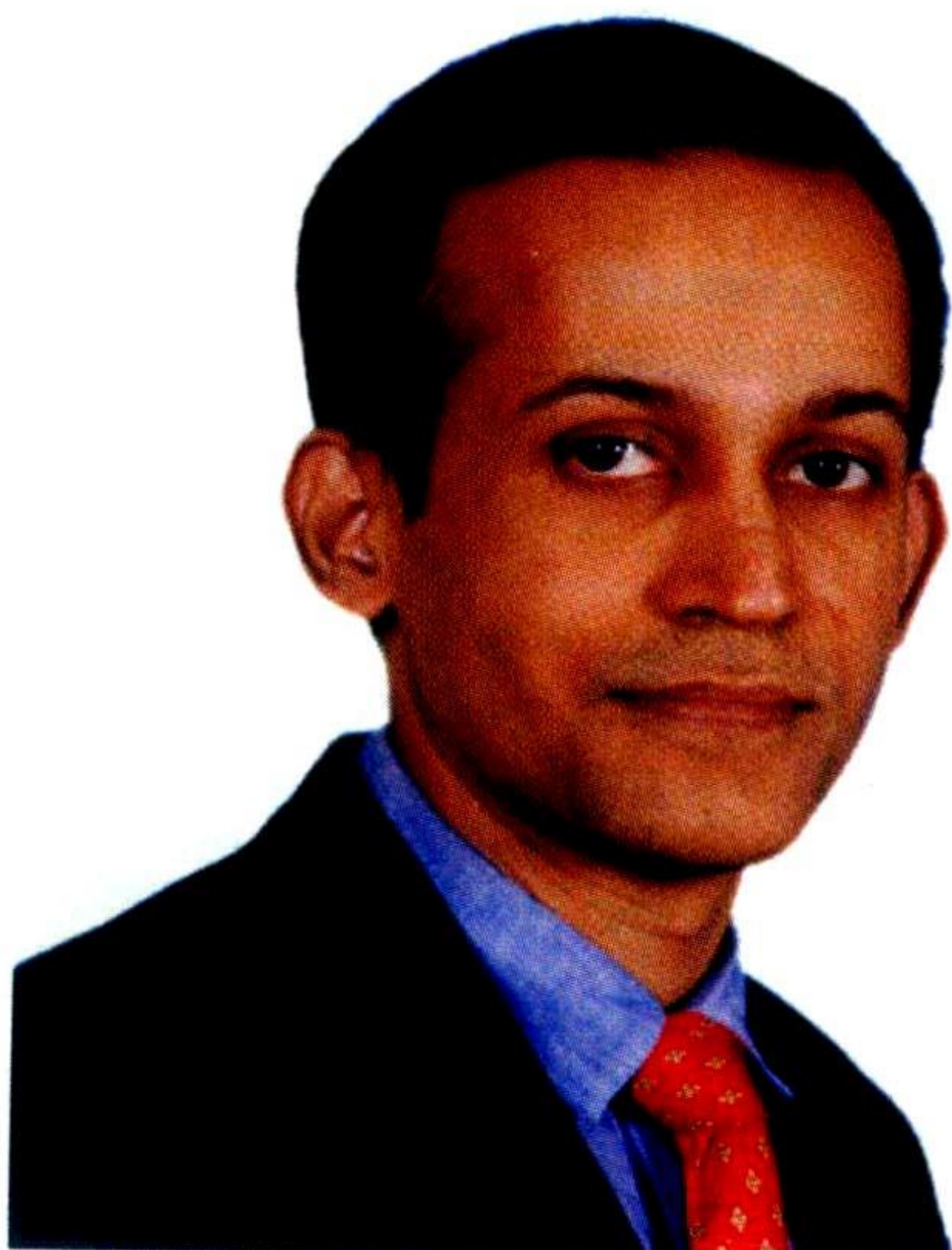
How can an organisation be confident that the employees are applying the knowledge and skills taught to them?

It is imperative to build a culture of continuous assessment and evaluation. This can be done through a disciplined administration of knowledge and skill assessments. Another key indicator is the feedback of their immediate manager and trainers. This allows any knowledge or skill gaps to be highlighted which can be addressed in the next training program in the roadmap of the employee.

At HDFC Life, with more than 15,000 employees across 400 locations in India, we ensure that the Day 1 induction of all front line sales employees is done. The effectiveness of on boarding is monitored and rigorous knowledge and skill assessments are conducted and published. All other employees also undergo an induction in the first 15 days of joining.

Performance improvement phase Learning roadmap

Knowledge and skills need to be imparted continuously to take the



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performance of any individual to the higher level. Also, the right knowledge and skills need to be imparted at the right time. Information overload defeats the very purpose of learning. Hence, a learning roadmap sharply aligned to the job and role requirements is very essential. At HDFC Life, we provide a learning roadmap for employees in key functions across 2 years from induction to the time they reach the next level

Potential Review Process

Identifying and selecting the employees who show consistent superior performance through a potential review process is a very effective way of preparing them for the future levels.

Annual mapping of the potential of employees, especially at the level of managers and above, helps them understand their current level of competency. It also helps the organization map the talent for succession planning. A very effective method to select potential leaders is the use of a panel review, that reviews the current performance, value behaviours, health metrics (to evaluate how the performance was achieved), and 360 degree feedback to arrive at a holistic view of the employee. Ideally, regardless of whether the employee is selected or not, a complete developmental feedback should be provided so that they can work on their strengths and challenges. At HDFC Life, a detailed exercise is conducted annually for all managers and above to map the potential of talent. Feedback is provided by the line manager and HR along with a written report.

Develop potential phase Developmental inputs

Based on the potential review process, the employees showing potential should be sent for specialized training programs that prepare them for their future roles. Such developmental programs can be provided by tying up with management universities/institutes. They can also be developed in house. The talent can also be encouraged to opt for external paid

educational courses. At HDFC Life, we offer all three options. We also offer free access to MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) to help the talent succeed in their careers.

Job rotation/stretch assignments

An additional approach to prepare the employees for their future roles is to provide opportunities for job rotation.

This enables them to develop their knowledge, skills and competencies in functions other than their current role. Providing stretch assignments also provide the employees with the

University for a 1 year diploma course. The graduates undergo a 4 month on campus classroom training, 2 months of on the job training and a 6-month internship. On passing out, students are absorbed in the organization. This Smart Achievers program - a first of its kind in the insurance industry- is now in its 3rd year and we will be continuing this program in future, as we've experienced a 100% success in it.

Learning anytime, anywhere

Learning need not happen in the classroom alone. Large, geographically spread organizations

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required exposure.

Once the employee is completely ready and there is an opportunity to utilize their new capability, they can get promoted.

Developing raw talent

An innovative approach could be to develop talent, even before it is hired. This backward integration into the education of future employees, is a viable alternative model, especially for industries that require employees to have specialized knowledge and skills to succeed. This focused education prepares employees for the challenges of the job, so that they are more likely to succeed. With the employees having a higher job satisfaction index, retention will also be higher.

In the insurance industry, for example, the attrition is one of the critical issues that currently plague the industry. We, at HDFC Life, decided to experiment with a model, where we have tied up with the Manipal

need to focus on enabling anytime, anywhere learning. Providing access to online learning outside the organization's network, enabling m-learning (mobile learning) and introducing an enterprise social network (ESN) are great ways for providing learning flexibility to employees. Learning online and through social interactions (ESNs) breaks down the barriers of time, geography and hierarchy. It also enables free exchange of ideas, knowledge and information.

At HDFC Life, we have our own Learning Management System (LMS) that can be accessed from outside the organization's network. We have also enabled m-learning for our employees so that they can access online training and take assessments on the go.

ESN is also a part of our learning endeavours that has helped create valuable knowledge exchange and generate innovative ideas. **HC**