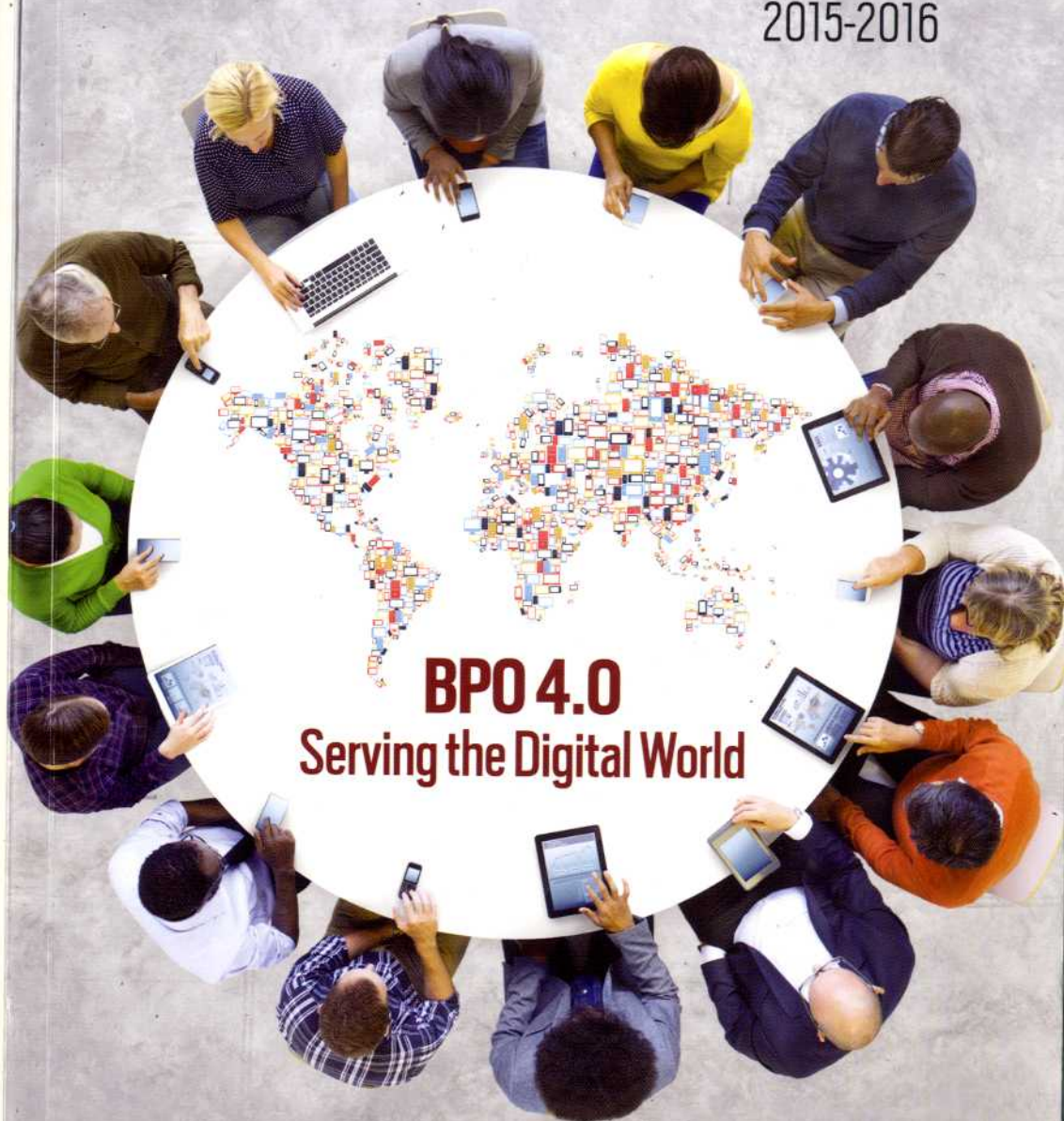


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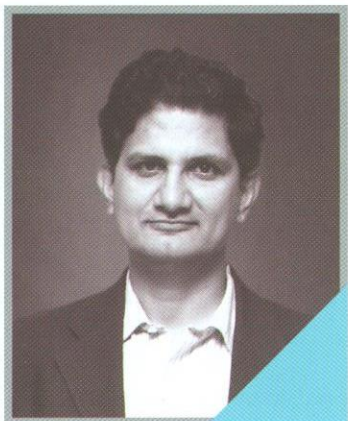


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AN ESSENTIAL HANDBOOK ON THE INDIAN BPM INDUSTRY



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Talent Debt

In the new world, productivity has indeed been redefined – today, it is driven mainly by customer expectations.

If you have ever watched hawkers at the traffic lights on India's roads, you have truly witnessed passion for productivity. Each hawker has perfected the art of selling as he approaches a customer to qualify, convince, sell, deliver change and, finally, hand over the sold item – all in a mere minute! This scene strikes me as incredibly similar to meeting customer demands in today's overwhelmingly wired world and marvel at how much business has evolved over the last two decades. The new world is divided into people

who drive the on-demand economy and consumers with a voracious appetite for instant gratification. Last year, Forrester Research's Clay Richardson, in his blog, predicted that Customer Experience will become the central focus for businesses in 2015 and re-shape the business landscape. Sure enough, business process services companies have employed analytics to understand the next generation customer, who is interacting with the brand through numerous touch points. In doing so, he is creating a reservoir of information – customer presence, their preferences, buying patterns, sentiment, feedback – that companies are leveraging to identify opportunities and bridge the current gap between a company's service delivery approach and the customers' growing expectations.

In the new world, productivity has indeed been redefined – today, it is driven mainly by customer expectations. It is not surprising that all notable consumer tech advancements have always been about speed and efficiency. In a world of Uber, Udacity, and Coursera, productivity is no longer about cost and efficiency. Today, productivity is about experience and how technology has time-crunched everything, just the way Intel® crunched the chip, to deliver instant gratification. Welcome to the 'Uber for X' economy! Here, a single tap on your mobile phone instantly delivers everything your heart desires – whether it is a make-up blowout, housecleaning, movies, favorite cuisine or, of course, the revolutionary cab service itself that lent its name to this term. Productivity in its new avatar is all about speed, val-



TIME HAS BECOME
AN INCREDIBLY PRE-
CIOUS COMMODITY.



ue, convenience, and experience.

As a result, time has become an incredibly precious commodity. With this, business process services are turning to technology – especially robotics and artificial intelligence – to achieve both cost and efficiency by eliminating human error. Here, it is easy to imagine that technology can solve all our needs. And, why not? After all, for decades, technology has bolstered higher GDP growth, fuelled productivity, and created better living standards across the globe. It shaped the current hyper-connected world where tasks were being off-shored to not just physical locations but even on to the cloud! However, forecast for the future is stormy. Apple played a key role in breaking the Chinese walls between industries through mo-



bile transformation. In the new economy, every enterprise will be software led and that will require tremendous transformation of workforce. A recent research from the McKinsey Global Institute (MGI) predicts that the developing economies may face a shortfall of 45 million workers by 2020 owing to a shortage of college-educated workers. Further, in advanced economies, up to 95 million workers could lack the skills needed for employment. While these are just projections, several developed economies today are already facing the effects of labor crunch where there are simply not enough



BUSINESS PROCESS SERVICES ARE TURNING TO TECHNOLOGY TO ACHIEVE BOTH COST AND EFFICIENCY BY ELIMINATING HUMAN ERROR.



skilled people to provide required services. While the reasons for this are many – ranging from ageing population to low representation of women workers to cultural barriers restricting labor movement – it puts significant pressure on companies to find means to increase productivity.

Bridging the gap between the on-demand economy and deficit in high-skill labor lies at the core of any productivity initiative. The drivers of knowledge economy – lawyers, doctors, managers, scientists, researchers, software or technology developers, etc. – are vital to the competitive success of not just companies but countries as well. The Human Capital Report-2015 published by the World Economic Forum states that talent, and not capital, will be the key factor linking innovation, competitiveness and growth in the 21st century. In fact, a nation's human capital singularly determines its long term economic success more than any other resource.

Today, global competition is being shaped by several factors – geopolitics, demographics and technology – all of which trains spotlight on how to leverage highly skilled talent more effectively for productive gains. Also, as markets rapidly evolve, it demands new skill sets to stay ahead of the curve. Global companies are taking note and investing heavily in up-skilling their employees as they realize that it is not easy to recruit all the talent they want. Several companies are also hiring employees at entry level and providing them with on-the-job as well as vocational training. Integrating talent management into a company's growth strategy



has become the new mantra for success. However, this strategy puts the onus on HR teams to reinvent themselves from a recruitment model to driver for talent transformation by adopting bolder, more agile and innovative solutions. Additionally, companies need to work along with governments to bring about a social change in education. In many countries, especially in Asia, the skill deficit can be attributed to the archaic system of

education that is based on outdated theories. Typically, the focus is on generic curriculum which further impedes development of domain knowledge. The answer to overcoming this hurdle may lie in companies collaborating with educational institutions to build this critical talent pool and prepare future demands of the ever-changing economy. The dire need for this is further underscored by the rapidly evolving technology that is hard to keep pace with. However, technology cannot replace human skills. Sure, cognitive computing technologies and robotic process automations are usurping tasks once considered the sole domain of humans. As eerie as it is exciting, machines today can talk, see, listen and learn to perform tasks using artificial intelligence, sensor technology and speech recognition. As these machines take over the mundane tasks, the human workforce is moving on to smarter jobs – where they are applying thought to solve the most complex business problems. As The Economist rightly points out, the top layer of the labor market will continue to be dominated by individuals with high abstract reasoning, creativity and interpersonal skills. With this, work spaces are being reimagined to enable better human-machine collaboration that create sublime customer experiences, ushering in a futuristic dimension to the era of productivity.

