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Here is how this agro commodity company is increasing its overall employee base

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Swastik Sarkar • [ETHRWorld](#) • January 09, 2023, 07:37 IST



Manish Mandan, Head - Human Resources, SLCM Group

SLCM Group, an agro commodity company, has not only maintained its initial talent base, but is also constantly able to increase it year after year. The company currently has 4,000 employees, of whom 75 percent are 'blue collar' workers.

ETHRWorld interacted with [Manish Mandan](#), Head - Human Resources, SLCM Group, to delve into their talent acquisition strategy in the post- pandemic era.

Diversifying business to pool new age talent

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According to Mandan, talent acquisition in the organisation is dependent on the business portfolio that they are handling. Over the years, SLCM Group has not only made an enormous movement in the traditional way of doing business, but has also incorporated IT and ITeS services by using AI and machine learning in the same ecosystem.

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Sourcing talent through direct hiring

Though the company's modus operandi and core business operations are very different for all the verticals, they all cater to the same agroecosystem.

To meet the manpower needs in rural and semi-rural areas, where its warehouses are located, the company hired through 'direct reference' of the existing employees.

For 'white collar' and 'corporate deployments', the hiring depends on internal references, consultancies and job portals.

"The blue-collar incumbents are hired through direct references. When I say direct references, they are all through employee references. We've been hiring people for both Rabi and Kharif seasons separately. So, we have an internal environment that encourages blue-collar work," said Mandan.

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When asked about any plan to further consolidate the hiring cycle, Mandan said, "There is always scope for improvement. I've been targeting an SOP of 45 days, and managing it within 28 days, which is very good. That means it can again come down to maybe 22 days. This number is for an ideal situation."

Talent strategy

The performance management cycle helps SLCM Group to strategize its talent ecosystem through multiple ways. Firstly, it gives the company the turnover rate of the database. Secondly, it helps SLCM to create a talent pool, and finally, with that talent pool, the company can benchmark its skill set year after year.

While discussing their overall talent strategy, Mandan said, "The organisation has been in this ecosystem for many years now. So, we understand what we do at Ground Zero; we understand our business very clearly, and we understand what kind of skill sets we need. One is, to capture our current business requirements and secondly, to match our future business needs, because it is ever evolving and ever growing."

Strategy to reduce hiring bias

There would be certain biases when one is actively hiring talent from across industries, not from the same industry, because there is no assurance whether the skill set of the incumbent would actually commensurate with the industry need or not, said Mandan.

Those biases are overtaken by rigorous interview methodology — one-on-one, face-to-face, technical, non-technical, as the case may be, and then a job orientation. Following the intake, a seven-day rigorous induction helps reduce those biases.

Employee wellbeing

About 75 percent of SLCM Group employees are blue-collar workers. These incumbents are from rural areas, where they are either 10th graders, 12th graders, or maybe graduates.

The company runs a number of social security programmes for its blue-collar workers, such as ESIC and group medical insurance, group term life insurance for all resources where three times the annual salary is the corpus, and group personal accident insurance.

In addition to this, the company has a salary advance policy with zero interest and flexible repayment; uniforms and protective equipment are provided as a precaution; work from home facility, medical help, provisions of food and travel during odd or extended hours, in-house facility for vaccination across India and Myanmar are also available to the employees.

From an HR point of view, SLCM Group runs a programme through which every month, the HR department makes sure that at one point or another, they make a direct call to the blue-collar workers, wherever they are located, said Mandan.

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