HUMAN RESOURCES PRACTICES AT GOOGLE IN TERMS OF SOME MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVES: EXPLORING THE ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT

Stanton Thomas  
*Research Administrator and Research Assistant, Regent Business School, Durban, South Africa*  
Anis Mahomed Karodia  
*Professor, Faculty Member and Senior Researcher, Regent Business School, Durban, South Africa*

Abstract
In an ever changing and robust industry - Google is an ever expanding leader with a Global Footprint. This paper will critically discuss and unpack the effect of its human resource practices, or people practices as Google calls it, and the policies that govern these practices. It is hoped to share some of these insights with human resources practitioners and students pursuing management studies, with the idea of invoking critical thought. The paper does not pretend to capture all of the subtle nuances of human resources development, but makes a case for the entrepreneurial spirit, for successful management practices.

Introduction
The initial step will be to view the extent to which Google’s Human Resource Management practices support its growth and expansion strategy whilst, still maintaining its market share and being named the best employer year after year. Thereafter, Google’s approach to recruitment and selection, and, how this enhances or impedes its success and how these policies help it leverage itself to attract exceptional employees in different geographical areas will be analyzed and briefly explored.

Given Google’s values and culture the paper will attempt to discuss how Google should go about socializing newly recruited employees into the organization; what is the standard best practices against Google’s current process. It will then justify whether the benefits at Google are an unnecessary cost or an effective employee engagement and retention tool and are they getting their return on investment. Lastly the organisational culture and its impact on career management within the organisation will be evaluated.

A Critical discussion on the extent to which Google’s Human Resource Management practices support its growth and expansion strategy

Nel, Werner, Poistat Sano, Du Plesis, Ngalo, Van Hoer(2012:220-225) refer to Standard best practices that ensure that the internal growth strategies are aligned to growth and expansion strategies – the internal growth strategy is described as a focus on new products and market development, innovation and joint ventures.” This is shown by Google introducing a new vertical market based structure across Europe. Further, this is undertaken, in order to attract more business advertises to its search engine and to grow revenue from current advertisers. The impact
on Human Resources (HR) practices within the standard best practices mode and framework, indicates that in order for the company’s internal growth strategy to be successful, it should contain and incorporate the following:

- Companies must constantly hire, transfer and promote individuals;
- Expansion into new markets requires changes in skills or prospective employees;
- Combination of behavior based and results based appraisals;
- Compensation structured as an incentive for achieving growth goals; and
- Training needs on how the company decides to grow internally.

“Google is organized around the ability to attract and leverage the talent of exceptional technologists and business people. They have been fortunate to recruit many creative, principled and hard-working stars” (Nightingale (2008:1). With Google’s growth into new markets in Europe Jeff Levert was appointed the vertical markets director for Europe, and has since moved to Europe, in order to put into place a vertical management structure similar to the United States (US). The move to the European market is of “high importance to Google as part of its growth strategy. In addition looking for heads of the vertical market departments in all the European territories and, it has already promoted the accounts manager to head retail sales, and has also recruited the former Teletextholidays.com manager to the travel sector. Google has already expanded into more than 12 offices across Europe. Google has also expanded into China on the 2/3/2010” (Wauters: 2010:12).

The company is known for its unique culture and Human Resource policies and is acknowledged as an innovator and best employer (Nightingale (2008:1). Google’s people programmes are geared up to the demands, to meet the requirements of the company’s rapid expansion throughout the world, Fortune magazine (2013), has named Google as the best 100 companies to work for. Google’s ability to leverage itself from competitors offers attractive packages, which serves as a pull factor for Google. “Some of its benefits include: flexible working hours, allowing employees to wear casual dress every day, permitting employees to bring their dogs to work every day, on-site physician visits, on site dental care, health benefits, free massage and yoga, employee stock options, free drinks and snacks inside the campus, free meals including breakfast, lunch and dinner. Google also provides its employees with three weeks’ vacation during their first year of employment, free recreation including video gaming, football, volleyball and pool tables, valet parking for its employee’s and onsite carwashes. The other attractive programmes that Google employees benefit from are maternity and parental leave, employee referral bonus programmes, onsite childcare centers, fuel efficiency and onsite dry cleaning. Apart from their innovative benefits, Google has implemented more activities concerning the employee’s health, family and environment which is totally different from other related companies” (Nightingale (2008:6).The stock options serve as a tool and driver for attracting top-level employees, this increased retention, recruitment ratios at Google 1:14 – one recruiter for every 14 employees, and this in-turn helps to concentrate on individuals.

Google’s innovative work culture model emphasizes on ‘20% work’ – employee’s are allowed 20% of their work time to think innovatively and, this model excites new employees and existing employees in Google and serves as an attractive tool to retain employees in the organization. The success of Google products and services is mainly because of innovation expected from every employee and 20% time given by the company for this purpose. “It is obvious that the human
resources activities and policies are actually driving Google’s corporate business success. Because of its unique innovation work culture, in 2010, the employee turnover in Google was only 5%” (Wauters, 2010:15). Leveraging research on best practices in employee referrals, Google has also evolved and introduced an employee referrals bonus programme which favored employees and their referrals. The company encourages the employees to recommend candidates and awards the employee $2000 (R22, 000 plus / minus) bonus if the referral accepts and remains employed for at least 60 days. This encourages and motivates employees and helps expansion.

Google’s compensation programme rewards strong performance and its training programmes help overcome weaknesses and underperformance of its employees. Google also emphasizes employment development through on the job learning and training. Indirect decision making is also evident and considered. This helps creativity, morale and esprit de corps.

Sullivan (2007:5) reiterates that this approach helped increase employee productivity and revenue. Google’s human resources policies and work culture are unique in the way that staff and managers are allowed to try new approaches and learn from their mistakes. This in itself epitomizes Google’s contemporary approach to human resources as opposed to traditional practices. This also indicates that Google’s strategic role to human resources management is where talent management plays a significant role in its success. Google’s worldwide offices ensures a balanced representation of the best talent from diverse backgrounds and, this leads to the creation of better products and services, it also forms the foundation through which Google serves its diverse customer bases throughout the world.

Whilst Google is a great employer there are inherent challenges and pitfalls in its human resource practices as Voster (2007:118-119) points out:

- Although Google’s recruitment and selection function is innovative there are employees and analysts who state that there is no formal recruitment strategy. Applicants comment negatively on Google’s slow screening, recruitment, interview and placement processes.
- Additionally Google’s willingness to limit permanent jobs reduces its ability to attract and retain experienced staff.
- The insistence of one of the cofounders to look through each applicant and give final offers is also an indication of how this practice impedes its human resource policy, as this slows down placement which in turn could have a negative impact on the growth and expansion, as candidates take up other job offers in the same related industry.
- Brewster (2008:15) cites that Google’s continuous employment of knowledge workers due to its current growth may negatively affect the ability and productivity of current knowledge workers and makes them feel less motivated to perform on a big stage. With these current practices in meeting the needs of the current market may impede future growth expansion.
- Google’s Human resource policies can be affected through international business regulations and taxes as the firm needs to increase its investment in different countries and further there is no guarantee on the skill sets and ability of staff in different geographical locations.
- Google’s extremely high bar impedes growth
Google’s stock profits scheme has aided its increasing early retirements where young employees retire early due to the wealth accumulated from the stock options programmes. This threatens long term productivity and employee longevity and thus increasing the risk of growth and expansion.

With the increase in retirement due to the stock option programme, this increases the chances of organisation intelligence being lost- to new entrants in the market and new rivals; many may want to start their own businesses.

Liane Hornsey (in Sullivan, 2007), human resources director at Google stated that “whilst Google had busied itself in employee work, in respect to life balance, it is becoming extremely difficult to maintain Google’s entrepreneurial spirit and employee strength amidst Google’s growth curve” (Sullivan, 2007:9)

In conclusion, Google’s human resource policies and practices are contradictory to efficiency and productivity which could affect business effectiveness growth and expansion, however whilst this is so and, however, much zany it may be, it has worked in Google’s favor.

Critically analyzing whether Google’s approach to recruitment and selection enhances or impedes it success

Amos, Ristow (2004:86) ”defines recruitment as the process of encouraging people to apply for jobs in an organization and its objective is to have a pool of suitably qualified and experienced applicants from which one or more applicant can be selected.”

Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart, Wright (2012:150) “refer to selection as the process of determining which individuals will best match particular jobs in the organizational context, taking into account individual differences, the requirements of the job and the organizations internal and external environments, selection is the decision making process in which it is determined which individual will get the job.”

It is imperative to note that Google prides itself in its recruitment and selection of only the best talent available globally, in order to achieve the benefits of a highly innovative and productive team.

Sullivan (2007:10) states that Google’s approach to recruitment and selection employs a host of innovative tools as outlined below:

- Employee referrals: the firm’s strong brand coupled with its highly enthusiastic workforce provides a basis for which employees refer colleagues and other professionals. There is a referral bonus of $2000 (R22 000 plus / minus) for current employees and, this helps motivation and, also increases the current database of potential candidates, which inevitably increases the talent pool;
- College recruitment: Google has established direct relationships with a large number of universities and hire a large number of PhD’s on the premise that they enjoy exploring areas that no one else has explored;
- Professional networking: Google uses social media sites and live professional events to discover and recruit top performers;
• Contest and brainteasers: one of Google’s recruiting strategies is the use of content and brainteasers to attract the brightest and best potential candidates; and
• Recruiter training: Google is amongst a few companies that require their newly hired recruiters to go through extensive recruiter training prior to starting work.

Google’s stock option also serves as a tool and driver for attracting and retaining the best talent. Google made a significant shift from the traditional approach to a new approach to recruiting and selection through innovative ideas and attractive benefits. This helps preventing the pressure of lawsuits, trade unions and business losses. The transition from the intuition approach to recruitment and selection to a scientific database approach for recruitment had a significant effect on recruiting the best candidate.

The above mentioned contemporary approaches to recruitment and selection by Google positively impacts its success and growth which is evident through the rapid expansion of the brand both in the U.S and abroad. It also has the lead to lower staff turnovers by recruiting and retaining top talent.

As mentioned Google’s employee benefits packages also serve as a recruitment and retention tool where the top talent is attracted. Sullivan (2007:12) states that although Google is well known as a great employer and its recruitment function is innovative, there is no formal well communicated recruitment and selection strategy. Many candidates comment negatively on its extensive and slow screening, recruitment and interview process.

Google’s recruitment and selection has had the effect of both enhancing success and impeding success. The focus would be on short term versus long term planning. In the short term the recruiters were very successful in attracting the right caliber of talent into the business. The innovative initiatives that were launched together with the global ratings, for being one of the best employers to work for all supported the great financial success that was enjoyed. There appears to be no shortages of the right fit and attraction of talent to the business. The example referred to in the article support this reality. However when it came to cross-border recruitment, this is and was not as effective as in the U.S, due to lack of appreciation of diversity, particularly in the East. The latter can have dire consequences to Google’s success by virtue of lack of delivery to local network needs, with a potential of loss to users to new competitive and available platforms. In this case recruitment has a serious consequence of impeding Google’s success in foreign countries. However the quick expansion of the business had not been a key focus, hence human resource processes became lethargic and ineffective. Job candidates had to go through dozens or more of in-person interviews. Candidates with great experience often got turned down if their college grades were average. This was due to Google’s standards being extremely high, and this was holding back Google’s expansion. One of Google’s Co-founders interviews almost every candidate, before they can be hired and given the final offer, whilst this may have a personal touch and a small business feel for which it may be ideally suited, this impedes the offer and placement process given the large number of applications and candidates. The selection process is long and often candidates take up other job offers in related companies.

Sullivan (2007:32) states “most of the candidates at Google comment on its slow screening, recruiting and interview process”. With its rapid growth and expansion Google needs to hire thousands of people a year and probably the biggest challenge Google faces is gearing its
employee selection system, to one that is more robust and efficient. If it wants to remain a strong employer in a scarce talent pool and not lose candidates to similar companies.

In conclusion whilst Google looks to improve its recruitment and selection strategies, the rapid growth and expansion has left Google’s human resource department struggling to keep abreast with the demands. This has been acknowledged by Google leadership which has led to the revision of their Human resource department’s policies, since there has been a greater analysis of its people practices from recruitment and selection, to development and to retention.

**Google’s values and culture and, socializing newly recruited employees into the organisation**

Nel, Werner, Poistat, Sano, Du Plessis, Ngalo and Van Hoek (2011:209) state “that socialization means to adapt to life in society. In the organization, socializing is the process of instilling in all employees the prevailing attitudes, standards, values and patterns of behaviour expected by the organization.”

After effective recruitment and selection, one of the most important ways that organisations can improve the effectiveness of their talent management system is through strategic use of onboarding, or organisational socialization. It is the process of helping the newly hired to adjust, to social and performance aspects of the new jobs quickly and smoothly. Carrell, Elbert, Grobler, Hatfield, Marx, van der Schyf (2000:207) points out that “there are “three basic approaches that can be adopted throughout the induction/onboarding stage:

- **Verbal:** where the induction can be conducted in person or in small groups. Although it is costly and time consuming, it provides relevant feedback and promotes a high level of understanding;
- **Written:** Continuous reference can be made to the material used. The main benefit it has, is that, it is on record; and
- **Audiovisual:** The approach combines both verbal and written approaches and once developed it can be used frequently, if it is kept up to date.

Integration of employees must take place on a personalized level and to this end should ideally not be detached from a face-to-face orientation or onboarding process, keeping in tandem with Google’s collegiate atmosphere. The benefits of such an approach is that any company that personalizes its employee orientation programme promotes the image and culture of what the company brand, seeks to project as far as its people practices are concerned.

Google’s approach to focus on embracing diversity because of its global footprint will certainly find that, their onboarding programmes will need to incorporate as much cross-pollination of understanding so that, its philosophy of ‘team based’ function can continue albeit on a virtual realm. Given the ever-growing and ever-changing environment Google’s socialization or onboarding programme should foster the team spirit required.

In conjunction with the three basic approaches, Google needs to take cognizance that when socializing new recruits that, onboarding has four definitive levels, this is called the four ‘C’s. Bauer (2010:4) points this out as:
• “Compliance: this is the lowest level and it includes teaching employees basic legal and policy – related rules and regulation;
• Clarification: this refers to ensuring that the employees understand their new jobs and all related expectations;
• Culture: this is a broad category line that indicates providing employees with a sense of organizational norms, both formal and informal; and
• Connection: this refers to the vital interpersonal relationships and information networks that the new employees must establish.

These are the building blocks of a successful onboarding plan. The degree at which the organization uses the four building blocks determines the organization’s onboarding strategy. Given Google’s ‘team based’ employee traits a ‘buddy’ or co-worker can be carefully selected and trained to carry out the responsibility; sometimes this can be coupled with a handbook or the policy manual that contains its statements of intent. This should be updated regularly.

A successful onboarding programme helps new employees adjust to their jobs by establishing better relationships to:

• Increase satisfaction: this in turn helps jumpstart relationships;
• Clarifying delivery expectations and objectives: helps increase productivity;
• Providing support: through feedback coaching and follow up helps reduce unwanted turnover.

The feedback and support measure is important to differentiate the organisation as many organisations practice the ‘Place them and forget them’ approach which then leads to high employee turnovers.

The use of checklists or feedback tools can help keep record. The ‘100 year old Kellogg company uses the 30/60/90 day checklist’ – 90 days are used as this is due to new employees taking around 90 days to settle in to their new jobs. The checklist allows for the analysis of employee strengths and weaknesses of past onboarding activities; this makes it easier to pinpoint areas for improvement. Google could adopt the same stance towards tracking performance of their new employees.

In conclusion the challenge faced by most businesses is with their new recruits, where they need to get the individual to quickly connect with that employee on various levels – physical/emotional/spiritual. This can only be achieved by a business demonstrating this ethos by ‘walking the talk’ and thus putting a personal touch to the brand. This is how the psychological contract, that talks to retention of an employee, should be initiated and developed through personal contact. The latter once again also re-enforces the whole human dimension to entrenching team based functioning, where interpersonal skills are foundational to team success.

**Question 4: Speech Benefits at Google: An Unnecessary Cost or an Effective Employee Engagement and Retention Tool?**

Good day to all present I’m Doctor Thomas Google’s Human Resource Director, my task today is to enlighten you in respect to the benefits at Google: The issue at hand is it an unnecessary cost or an effective employee engagement and retention Tool?”
“Google is a great company to work for and I am very proud to be a part of it, the perks are extraordinary and this is the most unique working environment I have ever been in. The products, ideas, creative meals that we have continue to amaze and inspire me”. Unknown (2007). This is the words voiced by a very valued employee.

We have done a very remarkable job in growing from a small company to a 15,000 person organisation in just a few years- we definitely are doing something right! So here again are the benefits at Google, an unnecessary cost or an effective employee engagement and retention tool?

Our benefits structure was and still is a great attraction to new recruits into the business. However like any business to an employee, there is an investment cost to the employer that must be justified, well we went from zero to billions. The net effect on the return on investment (ROI) should be assessed on an ongoing basis and our investment is in our people. Come work for us and we will take care of everything else that gets in the way, and that’s what, we do. Our innovative benefits help us achieve several goals such as attracting the best knowledge workers the world has to offer, from feeding them gourmet meals to handling other time consuming personal chores to allow them to remain with us for the longest period of time. By doing so our benefits by and large helps us recruit people who are willing to spend most of their time at work. This in turn means a higher return on investment via our productivity outputs keeping in mind that a happy employee is a productive employee. Dessler (2013:225) “Several trends have changed the benefits landscape. There are more households where both adults work, more one-parent households, more women workforce, and more workers older than age 55. And there’s the time blind – people working more, without the time to do all they’d like to do, these pressures have led many employees to bolster their family-friendly benefits”, and we have taken cognisence of this so we have busied ourselves creating a work-life balance from our day care centres to the recreation areas all in one working environment and it echoes “come work for us and we will take care of you.”

Our employees have a wide range of interests both inside and outside Google, we strive to design a unique benefits package the helps Googlers balance their busy lives and allowing them to focus on the things that they love to do. Our benefits team develops programs like our top-tier health plans and a generous 401K matching program, in addition to the onsite services our U.S headquarters which include wellness centers with on-site physicians, cafes with gourmet meals, four full service fitness centers and massage services. Compensation is the department that set eth parameters for each major element, salaries, and bonus and stock awards. The team ensures that we pay in total and meet our goal of being highly competitive with other companies. It is by providing benefits like these – just to mention a few that allowed us to, in the year 2007 to have an employee turn-over of just 5 percent.

Our benefits package may have enjoyed huge success, which contributed to us being a number one employer for many years running, however the relevance of benefits must be assessed against the evolving employee profile and changing business environment. Not so long ago, remuneration and benefits (RemBen) was a key driver in ensuring employee satisfaction, this was a direct link to employee retention, however of recent studies indicate that work-life balance and socially responsible employment practices are aspects that appear to be underpinning employee commitment and thereby employee retention. So not to tip the scales in either favor we have successfully merged the two to provide a package that ensures the employee benefits either
which way and in-turn we reap the rewards of high quality, contemporary products—this way we both happy! We have further developed a mathematical algorithm to proactively and successfully predict which employees are most likely to become a retention problem. This approach allows us to act before it is too late and it further allows retention solutions to be personalized. Sullivan (2007) points out that whilst managing ‘fun’ may be superfluous to some but the data indicates that it is a major factor in attraction, retention and collaborations.

Much of our company’s success has been based on the fact that we have more flexible and forward thinking then our competitors. Clearly we have successfully honed in on the key drivers for employee commitment and engagement. To this end the investment on initiatives that drive the quality of life and ultimately employee retention is a necessary cost to any business. Globalisation of companies like ourselves (Google) are presenting dynamics unique to cultures across the globe, hence human resources focus on valuing diversity is crucial to employee engagement and satisfaction and ultimately retention.

So in closing I, will like to state; seeing that we have enjoyed huge success on our return on investment thus far and given our ever-changing environment, so too will our benefits conform and as proven will be an effective attraction, satisfaction and retention tool. So come work with us and we will take care of everything else that may get in your way.

**How the organisational culture impacts on career management within Google**

Nel et al. (2011:531) points out that “organization culture can be defined as the value and behaviors that contribute to the unique social and psychological environment of an organisation. It includes as organizations expectations, experiences, philosophy and values that hold it together and it is expressed in its self image, inner workings interactions with the outside world and future expectation. It is based on shared attitudes, beliefs customs and written and unwritten rules that have been developed over time and, are considered valid; it is also called corporate culture and it can be displayed in the following ways:

1. The way the organisation conducts its business, treats employees, customers and wider community;
2. The extent in which freedom is allowed in decision making, developing new ideas and personal expressions;
3. How power and information flows through its hierarchy; and
4. How committed employees are towards collective objectives.

Google’s culture of high innovation is driven by rewards and recognition. Employees are quick to be acknowledged for their contributions to the business and appreciate the rewards associated with these contributions. Part of the rewards entails speedy promotions, provided the potential to meet the future needs of the business are given. The culture drives and supports very successful careers; this which is adopted in the organization is healthy and transparent to all employees.

Google’s compensation programme ‘pay –for-performance’s focused on rewards for good performances, as well as training for overcoming areas of weaknesses for underperformers. This structure is applied to all Google’s employees, and there is an increase in the proportion of compensation parallel to the levels of leadership and responsibility. It has emphasized employee development through on the job learning, training through classes and lectures by famous people.
The innovation mechanisms adapted involve rapid decision making and an atmosphere that encourages ambitious ideas and high productivity. Employee ideas are taken into consideration and implemented. This enhances employee creativity and boosts morale, their work cultures are unique and their managers are allowed to try new approaches, to make mistakes and learn from failure.

Unknown (2013) - “please fail very quickly- so that you can try again- I want to run a company where we are moving too quickly and doing too much, not being too cautious and doing too little, if we don’t make any mistakes ,we’re just not taking enough risks”. This is an indication of Google’s culture to grow individuals and manage talent to allow for career growth.

Google’s culture is fast paced, challenging and at the best of times highly stressful. As mentioned, it is not uncommon for employees to work around the clock to complete projects; an illustration of the highly pressurized, demanding environment and the personal commitment required. However Google tempers this pressure with a keen conscious focus on driving work-life balance by providing attractive benefits.

The cultural fit in keeping with its ‘zany’ philosophy also requires young mentally agile and innovative intellects – the geeks of the industry. Research shows that in order to keep employees motivated a culture that talks to the needs of employees must be nurtured, where open, transparent communication is the norm. In Google’s case a culture that continuously strives to challenge the status quo is what would be a given. The latter directly talks to the level of engagement of these enquiring minds, ensuring ongoing stimulation within such a dynamic and highly innovative environment; and a motivation to pursue even higher goals and aspirations. In this regard, Google has successfully articulated the need for superior intellects with the potential for speedy career advancement. Whilst the benefit of belonging to such a corporate is transparent the attainment of such promotions are entirely subject to the individual’s performance and achievements. Clearly this is an illustration of a win-win scenario where it is incumbent on the individual to deliver the outputs so that, the just rewards may be reaped. Google’s culture clearly supports and promotes career management. This is further borne out by the practices evident within the business and successes enjoyed by employees.

Google’s culture of high innovation is driven by ‘Rewards and Recognition’. This clearly is a key component as far as brand endorsement is concerned. Google as an employee brand has undoubtedly attracted and continues to attract the best from tertiary institutions; an acknowledgement of prospects in joining such a dynamic organization. Employees are quick to be acknowledged for their contributions to the business and appreciate the rewards associated with those contributions. Whilst an aspect of the rewards entails speedy promotions, the performance and attainment of excellence is a given on the part of an employee. Successes are incredible as evidenced by the ongoing growth and status enjoyed as a No1 employer brand. The latter bares testimony to the opportunities that exist to employees within a culture that promotes excellence.

Although Google has a ‘collegiate’ atmosphere, were employees are allowed to dress casually and encouraged to have fun at work all the perks provided means business. Its goal is to achieve and attract the best workers, help its employees work long hours by feeding them good meals on site, and handling other time consuming personal chores and to remain at Google for a longer period of time. These benefits help Google to employ people who are willing to spend all their
time at work. Google is also mindful of work-life balance in particular family – friendly policies, the daycare for employees with children. The challenge with continuous growth is how to maintain the entrepreneurial spirit while expanding the workers strength. Whilst the culture of pay for performance and founder’s rewards creates motivation, Google also runs the risk of losing employees due to early retirement in turn running the risk of organisational intelligence being lost, due to some starting similar businesses.

Whilst Google’s nature of work undergoes constant changes, hence few employees are able to achieve the task that they were initially hired for; this also hampers or hinders performance management. In an article it is stated “all employees have high potential and if someone fails, Google managers take the attitude that they are to blame, not the employee” Sullivan (2007:20). This could lead to major problems in Google’s business processes.

Google should be careful in balancing business with pleasure activities, although providing to employees, for example, to engineers may draw talent and encourage innovation, Google should not deviate from its core business strategy. This will directly affect revenue. With a fast paced working environment and constant changes Google should be wary of risk to the brand.

Due to Google’s forward thinking and flexibility it has enjoyed more success than its competitors, managing a collegiate atmosphere together with rapid growth is essential for its success in the future, this is the culture that drives and supports successful careers is also evident by the staff turnover stats of 5%. The Google culture albeit one of high pressure and stress is a culture that enjoys low staff turnover. This talks to the dynamic culture that talks to what employees are attracted to, a win-win approach in the healthy and transparent initiatives available to all employees. Taking all of these into consideration the question remains can Google sustain its innovative work culture in light of the rapid growth and expansion remains to be seen?

Conclusion

In conclusion we see that in some instances Google’s human resource policies and practices were contradictive to efficiency and productivity which could affect business effectiveness growth and expansion, however whilst this is so and however much zany it may be, it has worked in Google’s favor.

Against their rapid growth and expansion Google’s human resource department was falling behind in the recruitment and selection area, it was pointed out that, to keep abreast with the demand, they would have to revise their human resources policies and placement time.

Once new recruits are placed Google should quickly connect with that employee on various levels – physical/emotional/spiritual. It was suggested that this can only be achieved by them demonstrating this ethos by ‘walking the talk’ by this, it is meant, putting a personal touch to the brand. It also re-enforces the whole human dimension to entrenching team based functioning where interpersonal skills are foundational to team success.

It has also looked at whether the Benefits at Google were just and expenditure or an effective pull function. It all means business to Google. They have to pay the highest to attract the best and
with their extensive benefits including work-life balance to retain the employee to have a good return on investment, which they have rightly enjoyed.

And due to Google’s forward thinking and flexibility they have enjoyed more success than their competitors, managing their collegiate atmosphere together with rapid growth. Their culture drives and supports successful careers which is evident by their low staff turnover

When all comes together from the point of recruitment all the way to its benefits and to Google’s dynamic culture, is what individuals are attracted to, one of the top ten organizations’ to work for.

It is hoped that management students and indeed entrepreneurs can emulate and learn from the Google experience, in order to make businesses more savvier and people friendly, for purposes of success and necessary emulation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

The principal author wishes to place on record, his immense gratitude to Professor Anis Mahomed Karodia (PhD) for his most valuable insights, thoughts and criticisms of the manuscript; also for his contribution in assisting me to galvanize my thoughts for purposes of refining and improving the paper.

Bibliography


