

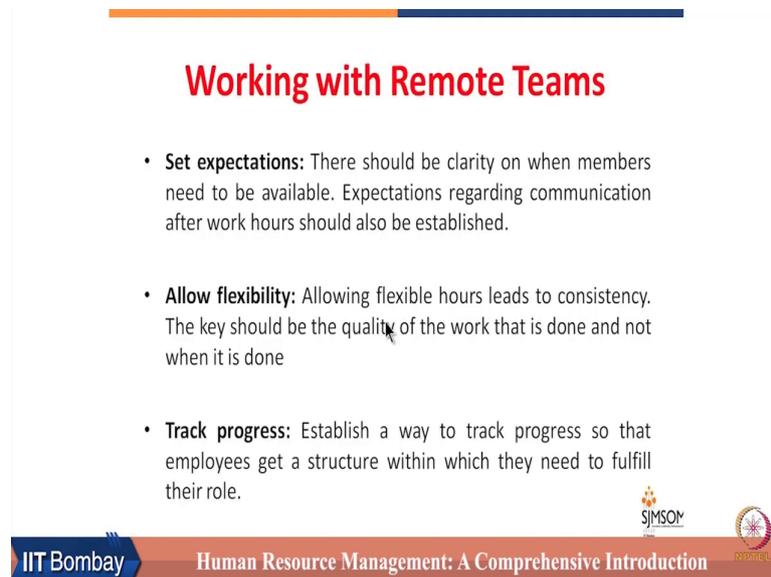
Advances in Strategic Human Resource Management
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Organizational Healing
Lecture - 02 B
Working with Remote Teams

Another aspect of the Organizational Healing which is needed in the current times in the times of in the times of the pandemic caused by a COVID-19 virus, perhaps the most important most prominent thing is Working with the Remote Teams. Many many organizations have shifted their processes or they already had the processes on the IT backbone.

Many of them have to ask people to work from home. When they are not coming to office, when they are working from home, the rules of the work and ways of reporting all that have to be think through in a different manner. Secondly, people, if they are working from the home, they are required to be communicated certain ways and certain expectations from them. They need to acclimatize with the new ways of functioning.

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Working with Remote Teams

- **Set expectations:** There should be clarity on when members need to be available. Expectations regarding communication after work hours should also be established.
- **Allow flexibility:** Allowing flexible hours leads to consistency. The key should be the quality of the work that is done and not when it is done
- **Track progress:** Establish a way to track progress so that employees get a structure within which they need to fulfill their role.

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So, first step for HR is to set the expectations. Since, there is less and less opportunity for face to face interaction in the organization. And so, opportunity to keep on interacting with the people, having people most of the time front of us or with us is not the possibility now with so many organizations and so many people in the organizations are working from home proper expectation setting is the first step in ensuring that remote teams remain on track.

At the same time teams have to be allowed some flexibility in their working. In the time of pandemic, in the time of the current crisis, employees not only have to take care of the organizational work, they have to take care of their own well-being and well-being of their family members.

In this situation, flexibility is the first expectation of the employees from their organization. So, the key should be that expectations are about the quality of the output, not on the quantity

of the time or for which employee remain logged in. We have to have a constant tracking process to look at the productivity and efficiency of the employees.

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Working with Remote Teams Cont...

- **Emphasize communication:** Communication is important so that employees are aware of their deadlines, available resources, work-related challenges and expectations.
- **Communication Tool:** The communication tool should also best fit the culture of the organization, whether it's through text, email, video call or phone call. An easy way to establish that would be ask employees how they would like to be managed when working from home.
- **Provide a way to collaborate:** Providing a shared document that tracks work activities is one way managers can keep track of the work being done and to collaborate on that task.

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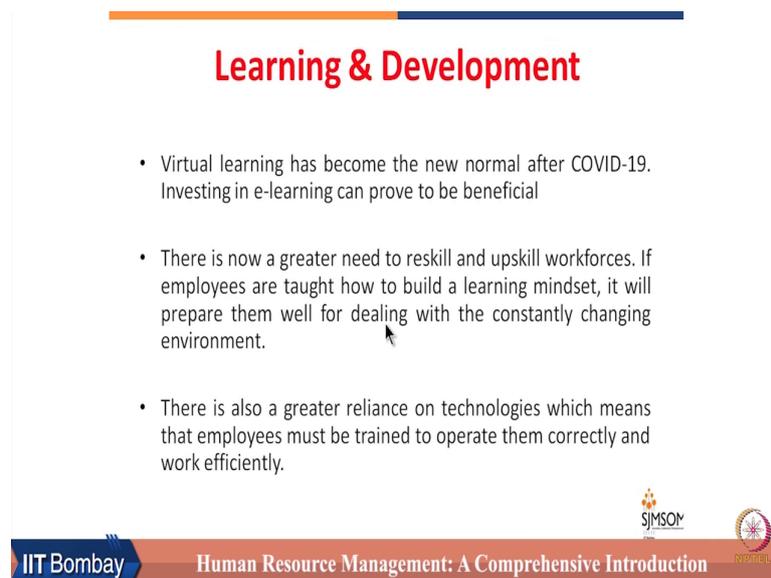
At the time, when large number of people are working from home, communication is the key. Communication is important, so that employees are aware of their timelines, available resources, work related challenges and expectations. HR and the organizations and of course, the team leaders have to figure out what are the best communication tools.

For some groups internet email can be the best tool, for some other groups WhatsApp communication can be the best tool or in some other organization some combination of WhatsApp or Instagram.

So, different groups have to figure out what are the best ways of communication for them. It can be video call, phone call, WhatsApp, email chat etcetera. So, easy way must be established, that would ask employee how they would like to be managed. So, in based on the responses, teams have to figure out the best communication tool.

Organizations also have to find the different ways of collaboration. Google, we know has provided many tools for collaboration. Similarly, they can be many other softwares. There are softwares which can help the collaboration amongst different teams. Teams spanning from the functions like HR too, functions like operations or quality, there is a possibility of collaboration on various softwares. Organizations have to identify the most appropriate softwares to facilitate the collaboration process.

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Learning & Development

- Virtual learning has become the new normal after COVID-19. Investing in e-learning can prove to be beneficial
- There is now a greater need to reskill and upskill workforces. If employees are taught how to build a learning mindset, it will prepare them well for dealing with the constantly changing environment.
- There is also a greater reliance on technologies which means that employees must be trained to operate them correctly and work efficiently.

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Learning and development has gone through a major change in the current times. And learning and development is also a very important lever in the hands of HRM to help organizational healing. First and foremost is the virtual learning that has become new normal. So, investment in the e-learning is proving to be beneficial. Organizations which were already having some experience, some technological wherewithal and the repositories for e-learning are being benefited immensely in the current times.

Most of the organizations are now building the capability and the repositories for e-learning in their organization. There is now a greater need to rescale and upskill the workforce. Many technologies are becoming redundant. Many technologies are becoming important. They were there, but now they are being recognized as the most important technologies of the current times or going to be most important in the near future.

So, if employees are taught how to build a learning mindset, it will prepare them well for dealing with the constantly changing environment. So, LNOD function has to be more proactive in helping employees to identify their learning needs, also updating them what will be desirable for them to learn in the near future.

And of course, LNOD departments have to force the alliances with the many other external agencies to impart those learnings to roll out those programs, roll out those kind of the instruction design, and the certificate programs which can be helpful for the employees to perform with the best of their capacity in the near future.

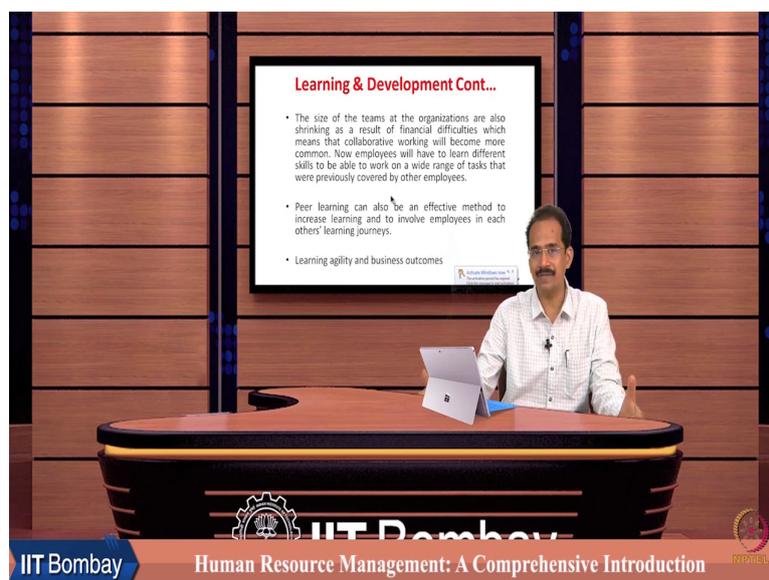
There is also a greater reliance on the technologies which mean that employee must be trained to operate them correctly and work efficiently. So, it is the responsibility of the LNOD function to identify to connect with the operations and identify which are the eminent technological changes or which are the eminent operational changes.

Accordingly, they need to develop the learning resources and communicate the availability of those resources to the employees. And ensure that the critical mass goes through that

technological training, and also ensure the people who are supposed to be the most important in terms of their capability to use those technology.

HR and L&D function has to reach out to those employee groups and specifically communicate and ensure that they get excited and become interested in learning those technologies. Most of the time people are interested for the self-development. They are interested for learning, but that comes only when they see the importance of it, when they see the relevance of that learning in the current times or in the future, in the near future rather. So, HR has important role to convey these thoughts, convey these points to the workforce.

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The size of the teams at the organizations are also shrinking. Now, we are seeing that lesser number of people are entrusted with bigger responsibility. More complex jobs are now becoming a responsibility of the ever shrinking teams. At the time of pandemic, many

organizations are going through the financial crisis. Because of the financial crisis they have to work with the lesser, they have to work with the team with the lesser size.

As a result of that, one person in a team is now responsible for multiple tasks and multiple jobs. So, multitasking and capability to handle the multiple jobs is becoming more and more common in the organizations. As a result of that, there is a greater expectation from the LNOD function to identify these aspects of multitasking and these aspects of the multiple jobs.

And creating the program or identifying the resources for people to quickly learn or relearn the new tricks of trade, so that they can take up more complex task within the team. So, now employees will have to learn different skills to be able to work on wide range of task that were previously covered by other employees. And it is the role of HRM; it is the role of LNOD to facilitate this change process.

Peer learning can also be an effective method to increase learning and to involve employees in each other's learning journey. But peer learning is possible only at the right platform when most of the people are working from home. HR need to take care of that as well. And HR need to look at the feedback of the employees, they need to be in touch with the operations to identify the most suitable ways of collaboration and they need to teach those tools of collaboration to the employees.

We all know that learning agility and business outcomes are having very strong connection. Even before the pandemic changing the business model or ability to revise or ability to recreate the business model were identified as the most important challenges. The current pandemic situation has only strengthened that demand and has made this capability even more relevant.