

## HRM AWARDS 2012 ACCOLADING THE NATION'S BEST HR PRACTICES

The Association of Human Resource Professionals will organize the HRM Awards, the recognized benchmark for industry best practices in Human Resources, for the 5th time in 2012. The HRM Awards aim to provide a platform for public and private sector companies in Sri Lanka to evaluate the effectiveness of their HRM practices against internationally accepted guidelines. Widely considered a prestigious accolade that honours the passion and commitment of organizations whose innovative thinking and strategies have broken new ground in human resource management, being ranked as one of the HR 'Super 10' organizations is considered one of the top honours in the corporate world.

The HRM Awards has a track record for recognizing and celebrating the very best in HR, every biennium since 2002. Initially launched by the Association of Human Resource Professionals to benchmark the 'Best HRM Practices' in Sri Lanka, the Awards have since then evolved into a competitive arena in which corporate giants and small enterprises alike compete for recognition and ranking as one of the 'Super 10' practitioners of HRM in the country.

To keep up with the rapidly changing world of business the evaluation processes have been constantly fine tuned since its inception and a comprehensive range of awards criteria has now been developed for the HRM Awards 2012 to more effectively assess the success of internal HRM processes of local companies, in a modern business setting that throws



unexpected challenges at both organizations and HR professionals on a daily basis. The HRM Awards this year will feature 10 Gold Awards, 10 Silver Awards and 6 special category awards to the private sector. A new addition to this year's Awards is the participation of the public sector with three special gold and silver awards.

The eminent panel of judges, comprising of prominent local and international HR professionals and industrialists, will pay special attention to processes that enhance productivity, promote employee growth and give organisations a competitive, long term advantage in their respective fields of business. The scientifically designed evaluation tool which is in the form of a comprehensive questionnaire will first evaluate the best practices of participants against established norms and benchmarks facilitated by AON Hewitt. Short list-

ed organizations will then be ranked and assessed according to a set process by a panel of independent auditors from AON Hewitt. Points will be given accordingly and the 'Super 10' Gold & Silver winners will be announced at a formal ceremony. The HRM Awards Night, in July 2012. A key feature of the independent judging process is that strict confidentiality is maintained throughout the evaluation, with organizations being identified by a code number based on points/merit and the names of the participants being released, to judges, committee members and the public, only after the winners have been confirmed.

The Awards Ceremony will also coincide with a Learning Conference that will focus on the best practices advocated in the HRM Awards, as well as other topics of relevance with regard to human talent management in the present local

and global context. The Learning Conference 2012 will create a platform for business leaders, CEOs, CFOs and Human Resource professionals to deliberate and discuss how HR creates sustainable growth for organizations. Thought provoking sessions on multiplying value through employee brand equity, ROI through high employee engagement, creating the workplace of the future etc., together with power packed technical sessions on HR metrics for efficiency and effectiveness will also be discussed. The HRM Awards Learning Conference will feature international and local speakers of repute and will be held as a precursor to the HRM Awards.

The HRM Awards 2012 too, will be partnered by AON Hewitt Associates India - the largest human resources consulting and outsourcing solutions provider in the world. With over 330 offices in 90 countries, approximately US\$ 4.3 billion in combined annual revenue and 80% of global Fortune 500 companies on its client portfolio, AON Hewitt is renowned for resolving the talent, profit and financial problems of corporations. As the content partner of the HRM Awards 2012, AON Hewitt will use its experience and expertise to add value to the Awards in a manner that will benefit participants across the board. The HRM Awards 2012 will feature Diesel & Motor Engineering PLC (DIMO) as Platinum Sponsor, CIC as Bronze Sponsor and DAV Technologies as the Official Audio Visual Partner.

**The Association of HR Professionals**

## The Culture Audit: Building the Successful Company Culture

A company's culture can help ensure the success of its business objectives. However, company culture is about more than having free Coca Cola in the fridge and allowing employees to take their dogs to the office. Culture is how employees describe where they work, understand the business, and see themselves as part of the organization. Building a strong company culture will not itself guarantee business success, but culture is a key determinant in attracting talent--and it is that talent that carry a company forward.

A "culture audit" can help assess the culture that currently exists in a company. It also offers insights into the means to strengthen it. This process is more commonly referred to as an "employee survey," - it helps companies learn what *raison d'être* keeps employees at the company.

An effective corporate culture audit describes the overall working environment, identifies the unwritten "norms" and rules governing employee interactions and workplace practices, determines possible barriers to effective work practices and communication, and makes recommendations for addressing identified problems. Not only will it help retain top performers, it provides a blueprint of what attributes to look for in applicants.

Sample questions might be:

- Are you being compensated fairly?
- Are your benefits comparable to those of the company's competitors?
- Does the company value your work?
- Are you getting the training you need?
- Does open communication exist in the company?
- Do you feel challenged?



■ Do your values match those of the company?

You might notice that a culture audit asks questions typically asked during an exit interview! Why wait to ask these important questions after the company has already lost its investment in an employee. Audits uncover potential friction points as well as sources of synergy, and generate possibilities for internal process improvements within the organization. By uncovering trouble spots in advance, the audit encourages fun and creative ways for improving the already-existing culture.

Such creativity can be as boundless. Growth oriented companies are notorious for coming up with notably unusual ways to improve the work environment--off-site retreats, impromptu recognition programs, and the creative use of office space are all examples of how companies implement creative ideas to build their culture. These are just a few of the ideas often generated from the insights gleaned in a culture audit.

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