

## Leadership Talk

**Speaker: Vikash Agarwal, HR Business Partner, Amazon**

**Date: 11<sup>th</sup> February 2023**

**Theme: Career Advice and Opportunities in HR**

The first-year students of the School of Human Resource Management, XIM University, attended a Leadership Talk on the theme – *Career Advice and Opportunities in HR* on February 11, 2023, very immaculately delivered by Mr. Vikash Agarwal, HR Business Partner, Amazon. While the theme was extremely relevant to the first-year students, the speaker made it a point to deliver his thoughts using real-time examples from his professional experience and personal experience, which made the session even more interesting and interactive.



### ***About the Speaker***

Mr. Vikash is an electronics and telecommunication engineer and an alumnus of XIMB with almost 15 years industry experience in HR. He has worked with organizations like ITC Infotech, Deutsche Bank, EXL, and Aditya Birla Group before joining Amazon, where he has spent five and a half years.

He has primarily worked in the HR Business Partnering function with exposure towards performance management, compensation and benefits, employee relations, policies and processes, program management, talent management and development, and leadership hiring.



In his free time, he has been involved in mentoring students from XIMB in terms of building a career in HR. He has also conducted functional development programs for students of reputed institutes like IIM Rohtak and Nalsar.

Mr. Vikash likes reading novels, watching movies and web series and spending time with his eight years old daughter.

### ***Talk Summary***

The talk primarily focused on the career options associated with various HR roles. It started with a short Q&A session where sir tried to understand our knowledge about HR as a domain and the various HR roles we were aware of. Human beings are the most important assets of any organization; thus, managing them in a way that helps bring about success in the organization is essential. But this often leads to customer dissatisfaction. This is something most HR teams are driving now. He then spoke about the career options associated with various HR roles, namely: Talent Acquisition, Learning & Development, Compensation and Benefits, Talent Management/ Performance Management, Employer Relations / Industrial Relations / Labour Relations / Labour Welfare / HR Compliance, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, HR Program Management, HR Analytics, HR Information System / HR Tech, HR Generalist, and HR Consulting.

He gave insights about each role citing real-life experiences and examples which helped clear out the apprehensions that students had about the different choices they will have in hand going ahead.

### ***Key Takeaways***

- ✓ Managing Human beings in a way that helps in bringing about success in an organization keeping in mind the interests of the customers, is what HR teams are driving now
- ✓ Organizations look for employees with ownership, the ability to earn trust with peers and stakeholders, the willingness to dive deep into details, agility and speed, curiosity, the drive to innovate through big changes as well as incremental improvements, and the ability to deliver results despite obstacles.
- ✓ Look out for the roles that are gaining a position in the market, be interested in the role assigned, and be updated with the market trends.



### ***Q&A Session***

- 1. What was the most challenging problem that you had faced to solve as an HR business partner, and how did you go about it?*

He had to lay off 100 employees in his first job. His company had asked him to lay off 200 employees, which he brought down to 100 by digging a little deeper and identifying people they thought would be leaving in the next 1-6 months anyway and decided to let them go instead. 30 – 40 people had already left on their own due to this. They also identified the issue that led to this layoff. The skill they were hiring for a certain department was already available in the organization. So, they hired more than required. This situation was mentally draining for the speaker, and he focused on how essential it is to take care of your mental health during such times.



2. *Has the role of an HR Business Partner shifted from a business function to a strategic function? Could you please elaborate more on how this transition is happening?*

The speaker answered along the lines that we need to know the business really well, and only then will we be able to tackle the problems. One needs to know how things are done and understand the business environment really well, and that's how you develop your strategy.

***Compiled by:*** Mr. Boudhayan Sarkar

***Reviewed by:*** Dr. Subhra Pattnaik