Introduction:

The buzz-word of the present decade is “performance”, but the question managers ask themselves is the same old “what can be done to ensure that every employee achieves maximum performance?” as well as “what can be done so that the employees’ performance should lead to competitiveness?” The foundation of the answer should primarily rely on respect for people – the human resource of an organization, which translates actually in the most important asset of an organization – a fact which most managers acknowledge. In addition, what has already been accounted for as motivators of the workforce, still applies today: people respond to recognition, freedom to contribute, opportunity to grow, and to fair compensation.

The principle of “zero defects” is involved when striving for excellence; simply put, the workforce have to improve their performance so as to minimize and eventually eliminate defects. Quality improvement involves processes and sub-processes to reduce the variation of a certain degree of performance compared to a standard in order to get a better result. Key data are reflected from the ability to identify this variation. The process involves increasing the results’ control. Secondly, the focus on continually improving the organization’s activity is the direction towards performance and competitiveness. Performance development and improvement in the long run is provided also by modern methods such as Six Sigma, this representing a solution to improvement processes within an organization, in all its stages, from beginning to end, but its implementation is greatly influenced by and depends on the organization’s culture.

In the messy real world of business, people communicate, research, think, consult, negotiate, and ultimately commit to the next steps that are unknowable at the outset. As new commitments are made, the process continues, often involving new participants playing new roles as the process expands. The participants usually cross organization and company boundaries – functional departments, customers, regulatory agencies, suppliers, suppliers’ suppliers,
design firms, market research firms, channel partners, and so on. Unlike the internal command and control within a single company, one company cannot command another company to do this or do that. Instead, the parties must negotiate and commit to next steps, and track the many agreements made along the way. Such human collaboration shifts the requirements for IT support from “information processing” where data are tracked, to “commitment processing” where agreements are tracked.

For an organization to do well and earn profits it is essential that the high potential employees stick to it for a longer duration and contribute effectively. The employees who spend a considerable amount of time tend to be loyal and committed towards the management and always decide in favour of the organization. When you meet someone, there is hardly any attachment in the beginning, but as the friendship matures, a sense of loyalty and trust develops. In the same way, when an individual spends a good amount of time in an organization, he gets emotionally bonded to it and strives hard for furthering the brand image of the organization.
The management can't completely put a full stop to the process of employees quitting their jobs but can control it to a large extent.

Let us go through some strategies to retain an individual:

An employee looks for a change when his job becomes monotonous and does not offer anything new. It is essential for everyone to enjoy whatever he does. The responsibilities must be delegated according to the individual's specialization and interests. It is the responsibility of the team leader to assign challenging work to his team members for them to enjoy work and do not treat it as a burden. Performance reviews are important to find out whether the employees are really happy with their work or not.

Constant disputes among employees encourage them to go for a change. Conflicts must be avoided to maintain the decorum of the place and avoid spreading negativity around. Promote activities which bring the employees closer. Organize outdoor picnics, informal get together for the employees to know each other better and strengthen the bond among themselves. Let them make friends at the workplace whom they can really trust. Friendship among employees is one strong factor which helps to retain employees. Individuals who have reliable friends at the workplace are reluctant to move on for the sake of friendship. No one likes to leave an organization where he gets mental peace. It is essential to have a cordial environment at the workplace.

The human resource department must ensure that it is hiring the right candidate. Frustration crops up whenever there is a mismatch. A finance professional if is hired for a marketing profile would definitely end up being frustrated and look for a change. The right candidate must be hired for the right profile. While recruiting a new candidate, one should also check his track record. An individual who has changed his previous jobs frequently would also not stick to the present one and thus should not be hired.

Employee recognition is one of the most important factors which go a long way in retaining employees. Nothing works better than appreciating the
employees. Their hard work must be acknowledged. Monetary benefits such as incentives, perks, cash prize also motivate the employees to a large extent and they prefer sticking to the organization. The performers must have an upper edge and should get a special treatment from the management.

Performance appraisals are also important for an employee to stay motivated and avoid looking for a change. The salary hike should be directly proportional to the hard work put by the employees. Partiality must be avoided as it demotivates the talented ones and prompt them to look for a better opportunity.

The salary of the employees must be discussed at the time of the interview. The components of the salary must be transparent and thoroughly discussed with the individuals at the time of joining to avoid confusions later. The individuals should be made to join only when the salary as well as other terms and conditions are acceptable to them.

The company’s rules and regulations should be made to benefit the employees. They should be employee friendly. Allow them to take a leave on their birthdays or come a little late once or twice in a month. It is important for the management to understand the employees to gain their trust and confidence. The consistent performers must also have a say in the company’s decisions for them to feel important.

**Role of Motivation in Employee Retention**

Employee retention involves various steps taken to retain an employee who wishes to move on. An employee must find his job challenging and as per his interest to excel at work and stay with the organization for a longer period of time. The management plays an important role in retaining the talented employees who are familiar with the working conditions of the organization and thus perform better than the employees who just come and go.

Motivation plays an important role in employee satisfaction and eventually employee retention.
Nothing works better than motivation. Motivation acts as a catalyst to an individual’s success. The team leaders and the managers must constantly motivate the employees to extract the best out of them. If an employee has performed exceptionally well, do appreciate him. Simple words like “Well done”, “Bravo”, “Good”, “Keep it up” actually go a long way in motivating the employees. The top performers must be in the limelight. The employees must feel indispensable for the organization. It is essential for the employees to be loyal towards their organization to deliver their level best.

Does anyone spoil his personal belongings? No. The reason being we are concerned about our own stuff. In the same way a sense of belonging at workplace is important for better output. Ownership of work only comes through motivation. Ask the team members to buck up so that they perform well every time and meet the expectations of the management.

The superiors should send motivational emails to their team once in a week. Display inspirational posters, photographs on the notice board for the employees to read and stay motivated. It is natural for an individual to feel low sometimes, but the superiors must ensure to boost their morale and bring them back on track. No individual should be neglected or criticized. This demotivates them. If they fail to perform once, motivate them and give them another opportunity.

Organize various activities and events at the workplace. Ask each one to take charge of something or the other. Engage the employees in productive tasks necessary for their overall development. The management must show its care and concern for all the staff members. The employees must feel secure at the workplace for them to stay motivated.

Whenever any company policy is to be formulated, the opinion of each and every employee should be taken into consideration.
Invite all of them on a common platform and ask for their suggestions as well. Freedom of expression is must. Every employee must have a say in the organization’s guidelines as they are made only to benefit them.

Incentives, perks, cash prizes are a good way to motivate the employees. The employees who have performed well consistently should be felicitated in front of all the staff members as well as the management. Give them trophies or badges to flaunt. Ask the audience to give a loud applause to the employees who have performed well. This is a good way to motivate the employees for them to remain happy and work with dedication for a longer duration. Others who have not performed up to the mark also gear up for future. The names of the top performers must be put on the company’s main notice board or bulletin board for everyone to see.

Appraisals are also an important way to motivate the employees. The salaries of the performers must be appraised at regular intervals - an effective way to retain the employees. Career growth is an important way to retain the talented employees. Give them power to take some decisions on their own but the management must have a close watch on them so that they do not misuse their power.

Without motivation, it is not fair to expect the best out of the employees. No individual likes to leave an organization where he is being treated well.

**Role of HR in Employee Retention**

An organization can’t survive if the top performers quit. It needs employees who are loyal and work hard with full dedication to achieve the organization’s objective. It is essential for the management to retain its valuable employees who think in favour of the organization and contribute their level best. An employee who spends a longer duration at any particular organization is familiar with the rules, guidelines and policies of the organization and thus can adjust better.
The Human Resource team plays an important role in employee retention. Let us find out their role in the same:

Whenever an employee resigns from his current assignments, it is the responsibility of the HR to intervene immediately to find out the reasons which prompted the employee to resign. No one leaves an organization without a reason. There has to be one and the human resource team must probe into it. There can be innumerable reasons for an employee to leave his current job. The major ones being conflict with the superiors, lesser salary, lack of growth, negative ambience and so on.

It is the duty of the HR to sit with the employee and discuss the various issues face to face. Understand his problems and listen to his side of the story as well. Remember the HR should not focus on conducting exit interviews, rather more emphasis should be laid on retaining the employees.

Try to provide a solution to his problem. Hiring is a tedious process and it is really very difficult to recruit the right candidate and train him once again. Do check the track record of the employee who wishes to move on. It is really essential for the management to retain those employees who have the potential and are really indispensable for the organization. If they leave and join the competitors; the organization would be at loss. If one feels that the employee is not very happy with his team leader, try to shift him to a new team. If the employee feels his salary is not justified, try to give him a hike but make sure he is worth it and you don’t end up upsetting others.

The HR person must ensure that he is recruiting the right employee who actually fits into the role. A right person doing the wrong job would never find his job interesting and certainly look for a change. Make sure every individual has been assigned responsibilities according to his specialization and interest. The employees must be clear with their KRAs from the very beginning. Every individual works for money and the HR must quote a justified salary acceptable to the other person. Don’t compel anyone to join at a lesser salary. He might join at that moment but would most likely quit after sometime. The hike should
be on the present salary and must match the market trends and the expectations of the individual.

The human resource department must conduct motivational activities at the workplace. Organize various internal as well as external trainings which help the employees to learn something extra apart from their routine work. Make them participate in extracurricular activities important for their overall development. Encourage them to interact with each other so that the comfort level increases.

The HR must launch various incentive schemes for the top performers to motivate them. This way the employees feel important for the organization and strive hard to perform even better the next time. The employees who show promise should be awarded with cash prizes, lucrative perks and certificates to make the individual stand apart from the crowd. Send a mail wishing the employees on their birthdays or congratulating them when they perform exceptionally well or come out with something innovative. Arrange a small bouquet for them as a gift from the organization’s side. This way the employees feel attached to the organization and are reluctant to look for a change. A friendly atmosphere is essential for the employees to feel safe and secure. Make them participate in various management decision making.

Performance reviews are a must. The HR along with the respective team leaders must monitor their team member’s performance to ensure whether they are enjoying the work or not. The employees look for a change only when their job becomes monotonous and does not offer any growth or learning. Job rotation can be one of the effective ways to retain employees.

The HR professional must try his level best to motivate the employees, make them feel special in the organization so that they do not look for a change.