DECEMBER - 2020

Volume 2, Issue 12

AIMA ALL INDIA MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION | YOUNG LEADERS COUNCIL

YLC News

MONTHLY NEWS LETTER

From the Chairman

It is my pleasure to bring you last edition of the AIMA YLC newsletter for 2020. While the year has put the world through challenging times on the social, health, economic and other fronts; there has been a positive side to it as well. This year has made us all realise importance of small things that were ignored in the frenzied race of everyday life. Working from home has become a norm for many, bringing down operational costs for businesses while having a positive impact on the environment as well.

Throughout the year, despite the restrictions and challenges, AIMA YLC kept the pace going with its online sessions at both National and Chapter levels to engage with members and help them stay updated with management practices and trends that developed during the period. These tough months did not just present a challenge of keeping the wheels of business in motion, but have also taken a toll on the mental and physical health of many. Keeping this in mind AIMA YLC started doing sessions with eminent speakers on the important subjects of mental and physical wellbeing, while also organising stress relieving and joyful sessions. We encourage you all to join these sessions and take benefit from the same.

Vineet Agarwal
National Chairman YLC, AIMA

We are planning to extend our Mentor- Mentee Programme to the personal space as well, so that members can connect with mentors to seek professional and personal guidance thereby making YLC close knit group of likeminded young leaders. We request mentors to activate their account on MyYLC for mentorship role, and encourage members to reach out to mentors to make this programme a success.

As we end 2020 on an optimistic note, with the first COVID-19 vaccines being rolled out in a few countries; we hope the coming year will herald a positive and healthier future for all of us.

Here's hoping we will all be able to meet in person during 2021 at the various AIMA YLC events.

Wishing you a very Merry Christmas and a Safe and Happy New Year!

YLC Office Bearers

Vineet Agarwal
National Chairman YLC, AIMA

Pranav Pai
National Vice Chairman

Ajay Nahar
National Forum Chair

Kartik Sharma
National Events Chair

Santosh Kumar Gopala
National Membership Chair

Published by

AIMA Young Leaders Council,
Management House, 14 Institutional Area,
Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110003
Tel : 01124645100, Fax : 01124626689
E-mail : ryadav@aima.in
Website : http://ylc.aima.in

Inside

YLC ONLINE SESSIONS

Session on: "The Science of Mind Management"
11th December 2020

Speaker: **Swami Mukundananda Ji** - Global spiritual leader.
Authority on mind management.
IIT & IIM alumnus.

Moderator: **Kartik Sharma** - Director Agnitio & YLC Events Chair

Member's Column

Work from home is not working

Contributed by: Tushar Mittal, YLC Member

When the COVID-19 lockdowns started and companies rolled out Work From Home (WFH) initiatives to keep the engines running, many were elated. This was what employees had wished hundreds of times. No pressure of rushing out of home, navigating traffic and punching in. Just don a formal shirt, comb out your hair, and join the zoom call. Five months into the situation, the novelty has worn off. WFH no longer seems to be the idyllic life-work balance everybody was touting it to be. A worldwide JLL research shows, employees are looking forward to returning back to work. Industry expert Anshul Jain, Managing Director (India and Southeast Asia), Cushman and Wakefield, had predicted WFH as a short term trend and said in a webinar conducted by Workplace Trends India Work, "Work From Home will gain strength, but that may be for just 10-15 per cent of the workforce."

So, what's happened in five months that's making employees and companies clamour to get back into the office-going routine? Let's see…

People-to-people contact is sorely missing

One of the biggest crusaders of 'get back to office' is Netflix CEO, Reed Hastings, who, in an interview with the Wall Street Journal, announced that "Twelve hours after a vaccine is approved" he will want his entire workforce back in office. "I don't see any positives," he said in that interview, "Not being able to get together in person, particularly internationally, is a pure negative."

In fact, most companies that had set a minimum of January 2021 to return to office, like Facebook, Amazon, Microsoft, Google, etc, are now expected to change the WFH time-frame to 'back to office' if required.

It's simply not a permanent solution

Just like Hastings, many company honchos have started having misgivings about the current trend

of getting employees to work from home. For one, debating on ideas, the whole motivation of being together with other employees in an office environment, the energy required for productive team work is gone. As is the office as a social hub, especially for the young single employees who were motivated to come in, not only for brainstorming, but also for the coffee hangouts, the after work foosball, table tennis, a carrom games. More than the pandemic itself, it's this new normal that's become a disruption. As Neetish Sarda, founder, Smartworks, told Economic Times, "India is a service-based economy and the WFH can never be a permanent solution. Also, WFH arrangement doesn't work for everyone - there are space constraints, technical glitches, and the overall ecosystem needs to be conducive for an employee to be productive."

It's costing the companies, too

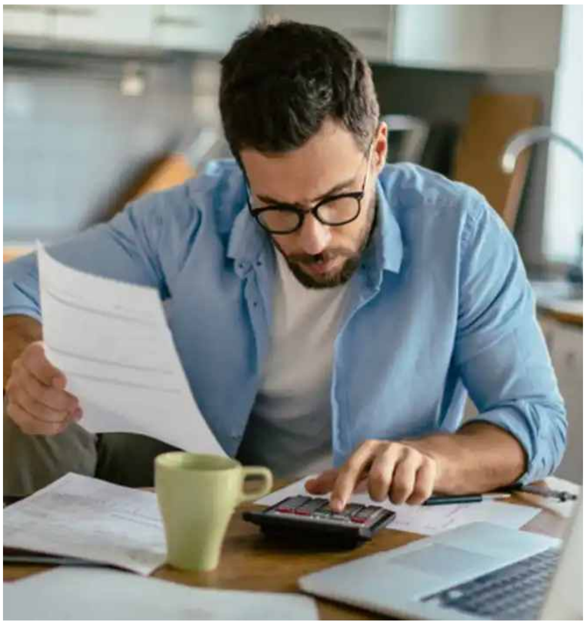
Having to heavily invest in new forms of monitoring remote workers, as well as ensuring data security is costing companies big money. According to 451 Research, almost 80% organizations globally now have remote work policies in place, but only 67% of those are ready to make it a permanent solution. Cyber security is posing a big challenge, and it is predicted that data breaches may become the norm if companies rush into this model of working without an end-point IT security solution at hand. Also, per say, it's almost impossible to secure remotely every worker's cyber space because on an average, every household these days is connected to at least 10 internet-driven appliances. So, apart from the security of company-issued devices and VPNs, organizations also must worry about vector attacks from personal devices such as smart phones, gaming consoles, security cameras, routers, etc.

The well-being of the workforce is compromised

Many employees are unable to accept this new normal. They feel lonely and demotivated, and say they are struggling to set work-life boundaries within their homes. Added to this, is worries about their jobs/career, feeling overworked and overwhelmed with the pandemic situation. Already medical journals report cases of backaches, headaches, and stress-related health issues being on the rise among the WFH employees across the globe. In India, 40% plus youngsters are working in IT /ITES back offices. These are long hour, routine workdays, which doing alone from home are far more tedious and dispiriting.

'WFH may not be impactful on a long-term basis'

In the wake of the current situation, Knight Frank India, a leading international property consultancy,



did a survey ('Work From Home (WFH) and the impact on Corporate Real Estate') that gauged the employee mindset as well as the real-estate cost structure. The survey threw up some startling results: Nearly 90% of the respondents said they miss the office environment, and therefore, WFH was not what they thought it would be like. In the survey results, the NCR (98%) led the table of those missing office, followed by Mumbai (94%), Bangalore (91%), Chennai (90%), Pune (88%) and Hyderabad (81%).

Not only that, 30% of employees opined their productivity has come down due to WFH, whereas 43% missed the office life with colleagues, and 42% said they couldn't concentrate on work in the informal settings of their home. The other thing, as Sugata Sarkar, Senior Director - Consultancy & Market Research, Knight Frank India said, "This unique market research clearly indicates that despite certain conveniences sited for work from home arrangement, most employees miss office environment due to the benefits of communication and collaboration. So, without significant improvement, the real value of Work From Home arrangement may not be impactful on a long-term basis."

New working trends may replace WFH

"If I had to guess, the five-day workweek will become four days in the office while one day is virtual from home. I'd bet that's where a lot of companies end up," opines Netflix's Hastings. "Companies are exploring the 'Work Near Home' policy, and many may consider leasing smaller spaces at different locations instead of absorbing large areas. These trends will benefit the co-working segment," says Neetish.

But whatever be the new solution, WFH seems to have lost its charm, already!

For more on the subject, read

1. Netflix CEO Reed Hastings says employees will return to offices when majority are vaccinated https://www.theverge.com/2020/9/8/21426956/netflix-ceo-reed-hastings-return-to-office-vaccine-working-from-home-negative

2. Netflix CEO on working from home I don't see any positives

   https://in.pcmag.com/news/137878/netflix-ceo-on-working-from-home-i-dont-see-any-positives

3. Work From Home can never be a permanent solution: Neetish Sarda, founder, Smartworks

   https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/small-biz/startups/newsbuzz/work-from-home-can-never-be-a-permanent-solution-neetish-sarda-founder-smartworks/articleshow/77612620.cms

4. Work From Home Is Not Without Security Costs

   https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbestechcouncil/2020/09/08/work-from-home-is-not-without-security-costs/#4fcd6a52610a

5. Working from home isn't for everyone

   https://edition.cnn.com/2020/09/10/success/remote-from-home-improve-work-transformed/index.html

6. JLL: Indian employees want to get back to office for this one reason

   https://www.jll.co.in/en/newsroom/indian-employees-want-to-get-back-to-office-for-this-one-reason#:~:text=As%20per%20a%20recent%20JLL,are%20fine%20working%20from%20home.

7. JLL Survey: Workplace experience survey highlights

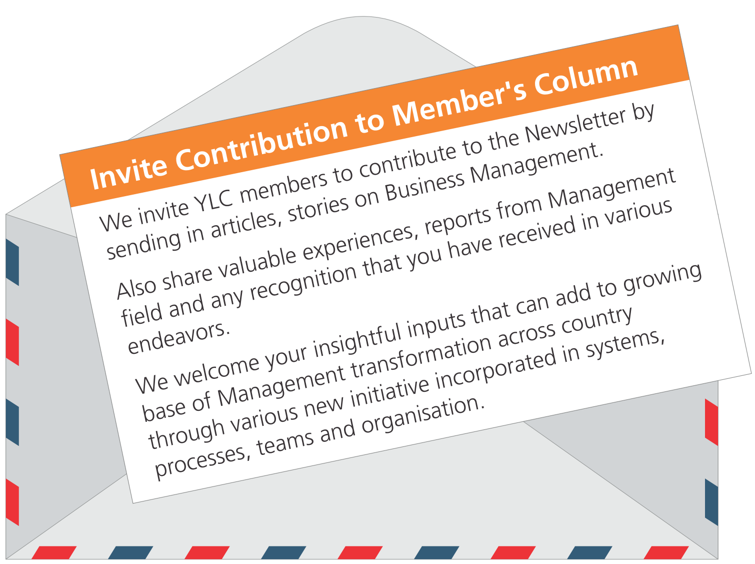
   https://www.us.jll.com/en/views/workplace-experience-survey

Contributed by:

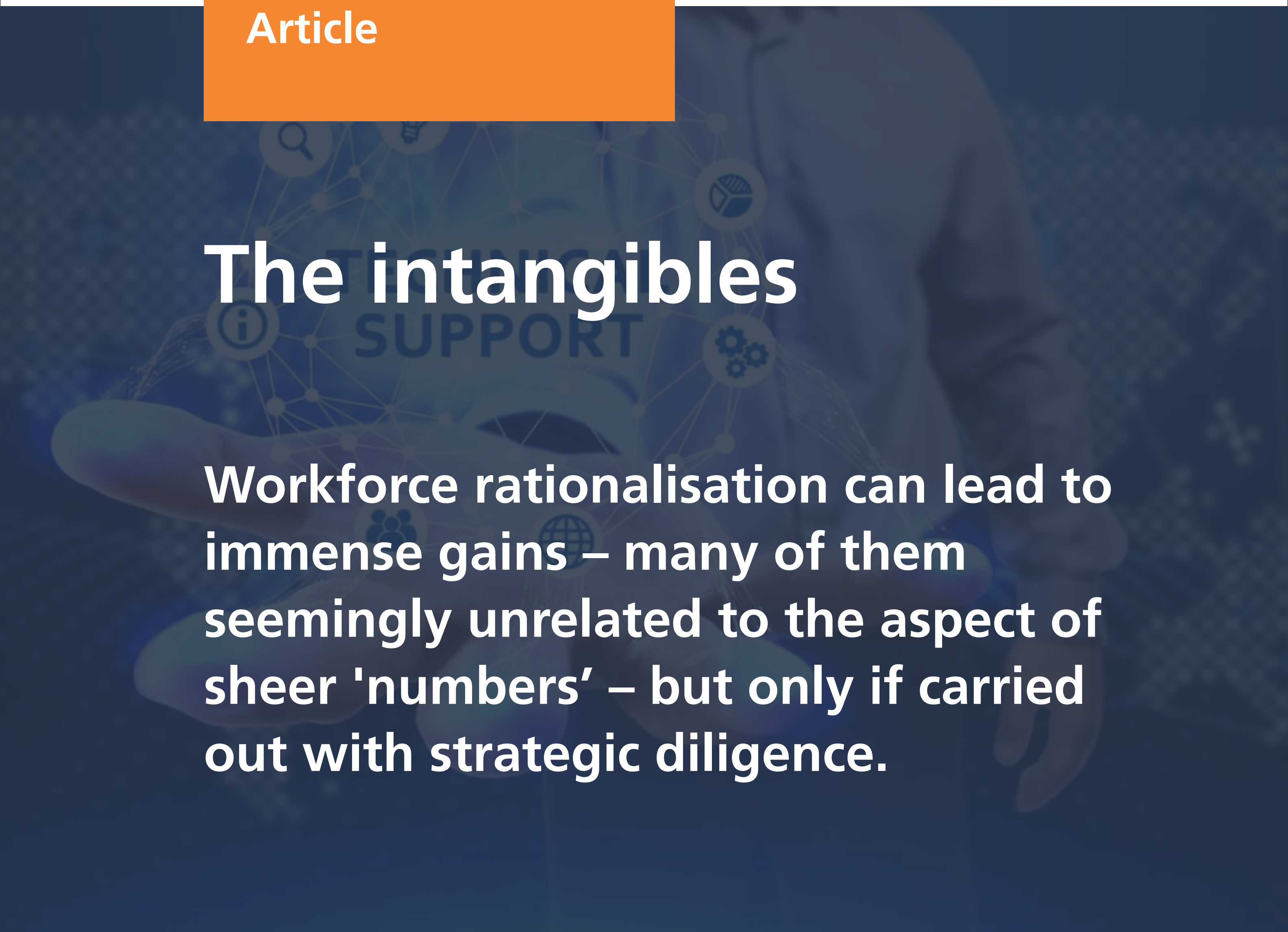
Tushar Mittal- Founder & MD at SKV (Studiokon Ventures Private Limited)

Diclaimer:

The article was originally published in www.linkedin.com on September 18, 2020



Management Article



The intangibles

Workforce rationalisation can lead to immense gains – many of them seemingly unrelated to the aspect of sheer 'numbers' – but only if carried out with strategic diligence.

The ongoing COVID-19 crisis has left economies across the world faltering and has also led to a scenario of unprecedented uncertainty on the human resources front. Indian IT services companies may have to resort to job cuts to rationalise costs in the short term if the global economy does not improve in the next three quarters, industry body NASSCOM has said. IBM has undertaken a major layoff exercise globally. This includes a few hundred jobs in India, where IBM has about a third of its global strength of 350,000. Many of those impacted are said to be mid-level executives, including project managers and above, some of whom have spent over a decade in the company. Similarly, as per media reports, around 400 executives would be asked to leave Cognizant Technologies very soon.

Amazon India is looking to hire 50,000 people for seasonal or temporary roles. Cab aggregator Ola has decided to lay off 1,400 employees, Uber 600 employees, Swiggy 1,100 employees, Zomato 520 employees—the list goes on. A major workforce rationalization initiative is under way in India Inc owing to the uncertainty triggered by the pandemic.

However, every crisis presents both imminent threats and potential benefits. The same holds true

of COVID-19 too, a reality every company embarking upon workforce rationalization should keep in mind. When managed effectively, this exercise can yield significant economic and organisational benefits—reducing manpower costs has an immediate, positive impact on the bottom line. Additionally, as its proponents point out, there are the longer-term benefits of delayering and reducing administrative overhead, such as leaner organizational structure, faster decision-making, better entrepreneurial behaviour, smoother communication, and improved operations. But unfortunately, workforce rationalisation is most of the time not managed effectively. Studies worldwide indicate that only less than half have met their cost-reduction goals through the exercise. When poorly managed, it may result in severe decrement in employee engagement and morale, an environment characterized by lack of trust in management, and reduced loyalty, all of which would ultimately lead to decreased company performance.

A well-implemented rationalisation initiative demands that top management addresses the needs of those who are asked to leave as well as those who stay with the organisation. Survivors' concerns would include worries about job security, uncertainty regarding how to succeed in the new environment, and concern for colleagues who are asked to leave. So, it is critical that top management communicates with clarity, treats individuals with dignity and respect, and ensures management accessibility. Even as they search for ways to make their numbers during a downturn, leaders should keep in mind the fact that rationalization done badly would expose organisations to enormous risks and leave them without any of the anticipated benefits. Organisational tension arising out of indiscriminate, across-the-board job reduction – and inflicted by a blunt-edged management decision – can be massive and long-lasting. Even when executed well, it could disrupt the normal flow of business, divert attention from the marketplace, and undermine employee loyalty. It also consumes huge amounts of time and attention, and makes even the most talented nervous about the future and vulnerable to headhunting by competitors. During the 2001-2002 recession, one study found that only 47 per cent of the large companies who engaged in major workforce rationalisation actually met their cost reduction goals.1 Another showed that 54 per cent of the companies surveyed hired back many of those who were laid off.2 According to a

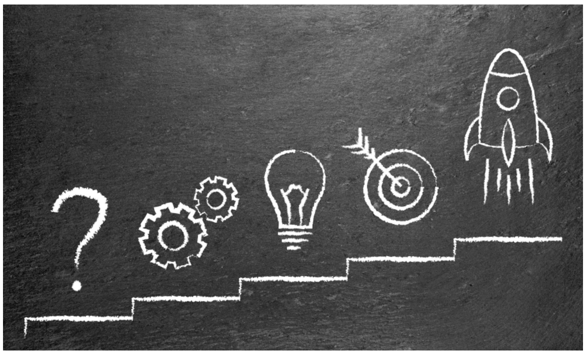
study quoted in Harvard Business Review (Vol. 80, 2002), shareholders punished rather than rewarded companies involved in workforce reduction during that period.3 During the Great Recession of 2008, companies around the world reduced their workforce strength.4 American companies alone laid off more than 8 million employees from the end of 2008 to the middle of 2010. Even in healthier financial times, companies have often rationalised their workforce because it is seen as a way to reduce costs, adjust structures, and create leaner, more efficient workplaces. However, researchers and businesspeople continue to disagree on its viability. There are two related, but distinctly different, aspects of workforce rationalisation: the strategic and the tactical. The initiative can be used strategically to enhance performance and improve the overall level of competency. But if we are not careful in our approach, the whole exercise becomes very tactical, activity-driven, and cost- and savings-focused. That is not necessarily a bad thing, but then we may miss the opportunity to achieve so much more. Here is why. Over the years, it has become something of a cliché to talk about 'the burning platform'—the disaster scenario leaders have to create as a pre-condition to readying the organisation for major change. Workforce rationalisation dispenses with the need to paint any theoretical picture; people can smell the smoke and see the flames, and the change imperative becomes real, imminent, and intensely personal. The result is one of those rare moments when leaders have the full attention of everyone in the company, at both an intellectual and a visceral level. This is not an opportunity to be wasted—it is an opportunity for top management to convert 'nervous energy' into 'constructive energy'. This combination of energy and attention can be channelised, to the company's great benefit, into a heightened sense of urgency, clear focus, and shared purpose. The ultimate goal of rationalisation is not to shrink the company, but rather to improve it. And to maximise the benefits involved, managers must be explicit about the rationale behind the initiative and then implement cost rationalisation in ways consistent with the

rationale. It is important to maintain clarity, at the top, about why such a step is being taken.

Rationalisation in the context of strategic expense management rather than immediate cost reduction can improve performance in a number of important ways. It provides an opportunity to streamline the company's structures and processes in order to promote speed, simplicity, and customer focus. Rather than focusing on the number of employees, smart companies use it to re-evaluate how work gets done, and search for ways to eliminate cost centres, processes, and entire layers of management that do not create sufficient value. More often than not, rationalization requires restructuring too in order to simplify the process; it gives us the licence to think creatively. Removal of management layers and simplified reporting structures create functional excellence because of a clearer line of sight and better degree of accountability.

A strategic approach can help bring about manpower reduction—consistent with the applicable legal and contractual limitations of course—to remove underperforming cost centres, teams, or individuals. It must be ensured that the focus of those who are left with the organisation is not on concerns regarding job security—whether they are next in the line of fire— but on how to take their game to a higher level to help the organisation perform better and preclude future rationalisation. In terms of motivating high performance, this is an unbeatable scenario: with unusual clarity, people perceive the close alignment of their personal interest in remaining employed with the company's interest of staying in business. Further, a strategic approach—rather than an exclusive focus on eliminating jobs and reducing expenses—also provides an opportunity to bring in higher performers and people with fresh perspectives and capabilities more suited to the future direction of the company. This leads to a rare opportunity to dramatically accelerate the development of a new, high-performance culture.

Finally, rationalisation makes top as well as senior management more disciplined about documenting information and processes so that there is not too much reliance on just a few individuals. It will also serve as a catalyst for organisations to become better at succession planning and ensure they have solid back-up plans to rely on in the event of a crisis.



References

1 Ng, M. 'Cutting costs failed, says survey', The Standard, March 23, 2002.

2 'Rehiring of laid off employees increasing', Philadelphia Business Journal, February 1, 2005.

3 Rigby, D. 'Look before you lay off', Harvard Business Review, Vol. 80, 2002.

4 Candy, M. 'Workforce downsizing during tough time', The New York Times, March 3, 2011

Contributed By:

Joydip Dey is a management consultant and former Vice President-Human Resources, Bharti Tele-Ventures Limited, New Delhi. He also runs Swavimann, an NGO working in the area of poverty alleviation, livelihood, and capacity building.

Disclaimer:
This article was originally published in Indian Management (Issue 8 Vol 59) an AIMA & Spent Multimedia Pvt Ltd

YLC Wall of Fame

YLC Mentor

Mr Vidyadhar Prabhudesai

Co founder and Board Member, LeadCap Ventures was listed among the Top 40 leaders from Europe India who are under 40 years for furthering Eu-India & UK-India ties by Europe India Centre for Business and Industry.

YLC Mentor

Dr Parag Agarwal

Founder & CEO, JanaJal JanaJal WOW selected by Government of India for implementation of $50 BN drinking water scheme by 2024 under Jal Jeevan Mission.

YLC Member

Niyati Khanna's

Diplomathon Global has been appointed as Core Committee Member in Australia New Zealand Singapore India Business Chamber, Special Committee for Education, Skill & Entrepreneurship

Meet YLC New Members

Mr. Saket Agarwal
Founder and Managing Partner
Onnivation Ventures Pvt. Ltd.
Mumbai

Mr. Chandrasekar Kandasamy
Managing Partner
Stakeboat Capital
Bengaluru

Mr. Rahul Puri
Head of Employer Relations
Association of Chartered Certified Accountants
Delhi NCR

Mr. Abheek Dutta
SVP
Henson Group
Jammu & Kashmir

Mr. Lalit Kumar Agarwalla
SVP
Citicorp Services India Pvt Ltd
Bengaluru

Mr. Dattatreya Biswas
Senior Data Scientist
Play Games24x7
Bengaluru

Mr. Souradip Sarkar
Account Manager
Rockwell Automation
Mumbai

Mr. George Koshy Plammoottil
Founder and CEO
LetsSolv
Mumbai

Mr. Sudhanshu Chaturvedi
Group Leader Business Analytics
Novartis Healthcare
Hyderabad

To see all members

CLICK HERE

Above list is as updated on 22 December, 2020

Dear Members,

Request you all to join YLC LinkedIn Group on https://www.linkedin.com/groups/10488166/

We have sent you a request kindly accept to join the group, in case you have missed that, please send in a request on link above to join.

Upcoming Events

YLC Session on the theme: **"Stress, Anxiety and Depression- Current Mental Issues"; Preparing for a healthier tomorrow!**

Date: **Friday, 8th January 2021**

Time: **5 pm to 6 pm**

Speakers:

- **Dr. Priyanka Behrani** - Psychologist, TeamLease Skills UniversityI Putting India to Work
- **Dr. Nivedita Srivastava** - Founder and Business Psychologist at 9LINKS-The Assessment Company
- **Mr Ashish Pant** - Psychotherapist, Dream Worker, Facilitator, OD consultant I Co-founder at Pathways to Self

Moderator:

- **Mr Kartik Sharma** - Director Agnitio & YLC Events Chair

ZOOM link to join the session will be given on receiving your confirmation.
Please send in your confirmation on ylc@aima.in

YLC Membership

The membership of Young Leaders Council (YLC) of the AIMA shall comprise of young people, with maximum cut off age limit of 40 years. The members could be Young Promoters, Founders of Startups, Young Professionals, Leaders in Art & Culture/Music, NGOs, Politicians. Bureaucrats, Diplomats. The membership will be at National level (Mandatory) and at Chapter level (currently there are six chapters).

For More Information Contact:

Rajni Yadav, Assistant Director
AIMA Young Leaders Council

14 Institutional Area, Lodhi Road
New Delhi -110003
Tel. 011-43128100, Ext: 157
Email. ryadav@aima.in

Visit Us @ https://ylc.aima.in

Become a YLC Member

CLICK HERE