

Official launching of the 2022 Annual Magazine of the Association of Human Resource Professionals of Mauritius on Wednesday 14th December 2022 at 19h00 at Intercontinental Hotel, Balaclava.

Mr Areff Salauroo, President of the Association of Human Resource Professionals of Mauritius and Vice President of the World Federation of People Management Associations

Executive Committee Members and Members of the Association

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good evening

I am delighted to be invited as the Chief Guest for the launching of the 2022 Annual Magazine of the Association of Human Resource Professionals of Mauritius and the celebration of the 46th anniversary celebration of the Association.

My pleasure is greater still as I feel myself among colleagues, having spent some years as the Human resources and Administrative Manager at Rogers Food Cluster and I have kept rich memories of my times there as a people manager.

Since its creation in 1976 the Association of Human Resource Professionals of Mauritius has dedicated itself to the human resources field, having as key drivers (1) connecting people, (2) promoting the human resource profession and (3) pursuing excellence in human resources management practices.

I gather that each year you choose a topical issue of particular concern as theme for your magazine and I would like to congratulate you for choosing very aptly this year's theme of **“Building a Stronger HR Community”**

Indeed, following the Covid pandemic, Human Resources has a far more significant role to play today apart from training employees, conducting interviews, explaining benefits, and managing relationships.

Ladies and Gentlemen

HR is a key participant in figuring out how people can function best in their new post-pandemic environment, be it onsite, hybrid or 100 percent remote. That requires flexibility, adaptability and creativity—for HR professionals as well as employees. The COVID-19 pandemic threw employers and employees into chaos and uncertainty, with no clear end in sight.

HR operated in crisis mode for much of 2020 and the first half of 2021, figuring out how employees could work from home, trying to provide extra mental and physical health support, and working more than ever strategies for keeping their organizations functioning. As the dust continues to settle and companies adjust to a new normal, the role of HR has fundamentally changed.

In many ways, the pandemic renewed the emphasis on the people part of HR's job. **“One of the lessons of the pandemic is that we have to put the ‘human’ back into human resources,”** says Brian Kropp, a famous researcher in the HR practice. HR needs to **“understand the life experiences employees are going through, to support them not just in their experience as workers but in their lives,”** he explains.

Although the HR department is still responsible for the performance, productivity and efficiency of the workforce, Kropp added, **“our bigger job is to understand the challenges our employees face, what they are struggling with inside and outside of work.”**

HR has always been important, but in this new world of flexible work and with new opportunities and challenges, there is an opening in front of us where, professionally, you have to define and develop new skills and processes to optimize what is expected of the employees—and that is to make sure the human capital of a corporation is seriously engaged and inspired and believing. You need to find ways to make sure that is happening.

In fact, your role has progressed from a behind-the-scenes function to one that is actively involved in influencing an organization’s policies and goals.

Remote working has become a necessity, and HR departments now have new roles to deal with. They must create a common ground for all employees from various geographical and socioeconomic backgrounds. Now, more than ever, automation and versatile collaboration tools are needed.

Technology has greatly impacted Human Resource Jobs and Skills. The investment in and adoption of technology will increase HR’s efficiency and allow HR to deliver seamless and cutting-edge employee-centric services and experiences more effectively. This will enable HR to pursue more strategic high-value activities and unlock value creation for the business.

Some large international companies have registered around 65%-time savings from automating their manual appraisal processes like data collection and compilation.

Ladies and Gentlemen

In a highly competitive world, companies have no choice but to turn to human capital. Employees are a company's most valuable asset. Their attitude to work can make or break a business. Several studies have shown that when employees are treated with respect, compensated correctly and recognized as collaborators, they offer in return their loyalty and dedication which can be above expectations.

CEOs know that they depend on their company's human resources to achieve success. **Businesses don't create value; people do.**

The HR department is at the heart of all employee-centric needs of any organization. HR professionals are the people-friendly ones, who know how to manage the workflow of the company by ensuring every single person is working seamlessly and the company's policies are regularly updated.

“The hardest challenge being an HR is that sometimes you have to be the LAWYER, the JUDGE, and the HANGMAN.” – quote from Hassan Choughari a Lebanese mentor and Management consultant.

A strong HR industry will put our businesses and workforce in good stead to navigate their respective transformation journeys. I am convinced that HR leaders and professionals will embrace the opportunities and challenges as they refresh and rethink workforce and workplace strategies to better support their businesses. In this

journey of change, the role of HR itself will be reimagined, transformed and elevated.

I wish a Happy 46th Anniversary to the Association of Human Resource Professionals of Mauritius and plenty of success in their efforts to “**Build a Stronger HR Community**”

May I seize this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Xmas and good health, wealth, and new blessings to count each day in 2023.

THANK YOU