

# The Dawn of a New Day



## TRAINING FOR SUCCESS

With globalization gently creeping into the corporate world, the need to upgrade employee skills and enhance performance levels to meet global standards, is prime on the agenda of every company today.

BPL Mobile too, has been gearing up with a newly formed Training & Development team to kick in and provide its employees the desired inputs to make the organization even more successful. The Training team looks forward to its role ahead in the organization and takes pride in unveiling with this article, the logo it developed for itself.

**TeamBuzz invited first-hand inputs from Indu Kohli, Director with Change Works and a consultant to BPL Mobile, who was instrumental in putting together a Training of Trainers programme for our "Winning Trainers" team. Indu has been associated with BPL Mobile as a consultant over the last four years and has created interventions to suit the organization needs, which have been part of her learning experience - Editor**

### Indu Kohli

External HR Consultant

BPL Mobile and I have known each other for the past four years and much has happened in this time. I have been part of their joys and also a part (in every sense) of the rocking boat. I am not sure what to call myself - a friend to every employee? An associate perhaps? Or maybe consultant to the company? Whatever title I choose to give myself, I believe this to be one organization that lives and works with a heart and which is perhaps key reason why it survived some of its stormiest times in industry recently.

Last year saw BPL Mobile making headlines with consistent regularity. Newspaper headlines screamed, SOLD, MERGED, CLOSURE, NEW OWNERS, NEW CEO? One never knew how to react to all the stories.

Each new day brought with it new anxieties to the individual working in the organization. From gossip to reality, no one knew or understood what was actual truth. Uncertainty, chaos, sadness, de-motivation, confusion; would generally describe the mood within the organisation. The gossip-mill fuelled more stories followed by the exodus of competent staff. At an individual level, every employee felt need to know more and with the ensuing confusion, every employee felt the urge to leave. Faced with the many resignations, HR department was in a dilemma, because with the exodus, came new stories. The truth was, right from the CEO to the security guard and newspapers to the gossip-mongers, the situation was equally ambiguous to all.

For some who were sole bread-winners in a family, the gloom of uncertainty was of bigger concern and, for others loyal to the organisation, they questioned "was the time appropriate to stick around or quit?" Given the situation, how were we to change the mood and pump up morale of every single individual who was going through his own struggle? We all got cracking and right from the CEO, to HR, to every loyal employee, decided on a plan of action.

### Through Chaos Came Order

The journey began at the Dealers' Meet in Goa. "Together We Can Do It," brought forth all the chaos that existed between senior management and Dealers: where they were headed and what the future of the company had to offer. What was clearly understood was, chaos may exist, but there can be order through that.

Did it really matter to the general employee if the company had merged?

Yes it did; because he was then part of another organization; one that he did not choose.

Did it matter if there were changes with the leadership?

Yes it would; if it meant adjusting to a new boss, and having new deliverables.

Would it matter if there was a merger?

Yes it would; the ambiguity of whether one would be absorbed at the same level or would it change the way we do business?

The TRUTH was shared. The CEO and his team were always available to clarify any doubts.

What came through in Goa very clearly, was that every one was keen to continue working with high energy at BPL Mobile. They were willing to go to any extent to prove they could do it and this, when articulated by each and everyone in the room, created a new bond and energy that brought much hope.

### What next?

Back from Goa, 'What next?', was the question. The HR Head was not at peace. The work had just begun. There was hope and rays of light seemed to filter through the clouds. There still was a lot of work yet to be done to spread the energy that was generated in Goa.

### WHAT'S THE STORY?

A large group process design called 'WHAT'S THE STORY?' which addressed the whole organization over seven days in small groups of 50, was the chosen path; a way to get people to voice their concerns and make them part of the plan for the way ahead.

The sessions were soaked with energy. Music and dance were part of the therapeutic design, which injected new life into the large group of devoted, loyal employees.

Soon, the transfer of this energy could be observed in everyone's day-to-day performance, which impacted overall company performance. Wow - we knew we were moving ahead and, on the right path!

### How To Sustain This Energy?

To keep up and maintain the tempo, could not be the work of one associate like myself. We had to reach critical mass and thus sustain this energy.

### Training Of Trainers

There was no real need to depend wholly on me. The organization did have very competent people within the system. They just needed to be identified and trained to participate at a level that could filter across the organization. A stringent selection process, based on a high competency description turned up 15 high performers for this specialized task. We have not looked back since.

A *Training of Trainers* five-day event in December '06, got this group of stars together. The rigour of an intense working environment, brought together moments of fun and fear. They had embarked on a journey of change and individually and collectively, they made a decision to work towards change. Change that would help improve service standards, change that would help ensure

every employee is equipped to do his job better, change that would help teach and develop people to steer them to their highest potential.

Now five months into the process, so much has changed. Statistics bear witness to this. People are enthusiastic, numbers have changed - we have hurdled the barriers. We still have a long way to go, but what better way to salute the management who supported this initiative, the staff that soaked in the learning and, most of all, the trainers who continue to work unendingly, putting hours of additional work time to enjoy "The new day".

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

