

MMR 2024 Unveils Key Insights on Enhancing Workforce Skills Amid Technological Disruption

The 18th edition of the Manning Modern Retail (MMR) 2024 HR Conclave, hosted by the Retailers Association of India (RAI), successfully took place on September 19, 2024. This highly anticipated gathering brought together an impressive roster of CEOs, CPOs/CHROs, academic experts, and industry thought leaders to explore the theme: Evolve, Engage, and Elevate - Shaping the Future of Talent.

In an era where businesses steer through the fast-paced landscape of technological advancements and automation, the spotlight is increasingly shifting to a more critical investment: human potential. While technology continues to reshape industries, the real differentiator is the ability to rapidly upskill the workforce. The key challenge now isn't merely adopting new technologies, but how swiftly organizations can equip their teams with the skills required for the future.

Speaking about MMR 2024, **Kumar Rajagopalan, CEO, Retailers Association of India (RAI)**, said, *"In an era defined by rapid technological change, our greatest asset remains our people. The future belongs to organizations that hire the right talent, and train its existing talent to stay up-to-date with the latest skills and trends. At Manning Modern Retail 2024, we are committed to creating a platform to exchange ideas on continuous learning and fostering an environment where talent thrives. By engaging and elevating our teams, we build a workforce that is not just prepared for the future but is actively shaping it."*

The key highlight of the conclave was the Keynote address delivered by **C K Venkataraman, MD, Titan Company Ltd.**

Speaking about defining HRs role in digital transformation of an organisation, C K Venkataraman, said, *"HR's role extends beyond simply implementing new technologies; it is pivotal in transforming the organizational culture and mindset. HR must champion a culture of continuous learning and agility, equipping employees with the skills needed to navigate future challenges. By aligning talent strategies with business goals and fostering an environment of innovation, HR becomes a crucial partner in steering the company toward sustainable growth and success in the digital age."*

Notable speakers at MMR 2024 included retail stalwarts such as Adhir Mane, CHRO-Corporate, Raymond Ltd; Arun Mathews, CHRO, Max Landmark Group; Asim Jagdale, CHRO, Arvind Fashions Ltd; Anjali Goel, Head HR, V-Mart Retail Ltd; Chitra D. Ram, CHRO, Yum Restaurants International; Deepali Bhardwaj, CHRO- Business Growth Partner, IHG Hotels & Resorts (InterContinental Hotels Group); Harsh Aparanji, CHRO, Landmark Group India; Nandini Mehta, CHRO, Metro Brands Ltd; Nirav Jagad, Chief People Officer, SUGAR Cosmetics; Parineeta Cecil Lakra, Country People & Culture Manager, IKEA India;

Priya M Pillai, Head - People Function, Titan Company Ltd.; Robin Sharma, Head- HRBP, Croma; Rohith Kumar, Chief Human Resources Officer, Westlife Foodworld (McDonalds India West & South); Tanuja Tewari, Head HR, bigbasket; Varadharaju Janardhanan, Vice President Human Resources, Flipkart among many more.

Asim Jagdale - CHRO, Arvind Fashions Ltd., said, *"We have the responsibility to develop and equip our teams for this rapidly changing and highly competitive business landscape. The business needs teams that are skilled to face the ambiguity and complexity relentlessly and deliver results that exceed standards consistently. Our employees look at the organization as a place where they will get the opportunity to learn, create and fulfil their aspirations. The organization has to meet the expectations of our employees who are eager to excel and grow."*

Adhir Mane - CHRO- Corporate, Raymond Ltd., said, *"In today's dynamic business environment, the most valuable investment an organization can make is in the development of its people. By cultivating a culture of continuous learning and personalized career development, we not only empower our employees but also set the stage for sustained growth and innovation. It's about aligning individual aspirations with organizational goals to create a win-win proposition."*

Anjali Goel - Head HR, V-Mart Retail Ltd., said, *"Employee growth is at the heart of organizational success. In an age where adaptability is crucial, it's important that we create opportunities for our employees to learn, unlearn, and relearn. By fostering a supportive environment that values continuous development, we enable our teams to unlock their full potential, leading to increased engagement, productivity, and ultimately, positive business impact. We must create opportunities for our employees to continuously acquire new skills, refine existing knowledge and embrace evolving perspectives."*

The conclave concluded with the 8th edition of the Retail HR Awards, recognising Emerging Young Leader in HR, Employee Retention Champion: Leading Innovation (Small Team Category) and Employee Retention Champion: Leading Innovation (Large Team Category)

A) Emerging Young Leader in HR

- **Winner:** Rahul Roy, Reliance Retail
- **First Runner Up:** Apeksha Garse, bigbasket
- **Second Runner Up:** Geetanjali Menon, Reliance Retail (Fashion & Lifestyle)

B) Employee Retention Champion: Leading Innovation (Small Team Category)

- **Winner:** NMP Readymades Pvt. Ltd.
- **First Runner Up:** Celio Retail Pvt. Ltd.
- **Second Runner Up:** Nykaa

C) Employee Retention Champion: Leading Innovation (Large Team Category)

- **Winner:** Reliance Retail (Grocery), & Shoppers Stop Ltd.
- **First Runner Up:** Bigbasket
- **Second Runner Up:** Titan Company Ltd.

The Manning Modern Retail (MMR) HR Conclave has firmly established itself as the leading platform for tackling the most critical issues in retail HR. With its continued emphasis on driving forward-thinking discussions, MMR has become an indispensable gathering for retail HR professionals. It serves as a key venue for collaboration, exchanging insights, and developing strategies to foster sustainable growth in a dynamic industry landscape.
