

# THE HUMAN FACTOR

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**Biswarup Goswami** (President-HR of WTTIL+QTIL & Chief People Officer in Quippo Telecom Infrastructure) asserts that the onus for driving talent management lies on the business leaders, especially in the high-growth industry of telecom infrastructure



**H**is father wanted him to become a Chemistry professor. Instead, Biswarup Goswami (BG, as he likes to be called) opted for Xavier's and gained core HR experience with organisations like Tata Steel (his boss was Dr. Yasho Verma), Tata Timken, Philips, and Bharti Airtel; and he is presently the President-HR of the combined entity of WTTIL+QTIL & Chief People Officer in Quippo Telecom Infrastructure Ltd. (QTIL). BG has managed to bring in science into his working style, as he explains, "Just like a formula, the chemistry of a person should match that of the organisation. One needs to look at the EC<sup>2</sup> - work environment, conditions and culture."

Goswami is a core member of the QTIL team that is in the process of inking a merger with the Tata Group (only legal formalities are being worked out). QTIL+WTTIL's vision is to become the most admired independent shared telecom infrastructure solution provider globally, without losing Quippo's entrepreneurial might and Tata's process orientation, while looking at 60,000 towers in the next one year. To achieve this, they are working with McKinsey (as long-term consulting partners and taking their help in Capex Optimisation Plan), KPMG (as short-term execution consulting partners, for organisational construct and architecture with focus on innovation and delivery models), and Thomas International (for HR – 360-degree, assessment center, psychometric testing of new hires, and existing capability testing). Explains Goswami, "The 4 factors important in the high-growth telecom infrastructure industry are: managing the cost of capital; scalability; capex and opex optimisation; and, maximisation of tenancies – on a shared infrastructure model, anything above a 1.7 tenancy ratio is profitable, and the organisation

## PERSONAL FAVOURITES



**BOOK:** The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, Our Iceberg is Melting, Bhagavad Gita.

**MOVIE:** Roman Holiday, Anand, and Pather Panchali.

**CUISINE:** Prawn malai curry and non-veg sizzlers.

**INDOORS:** Yoga, playing carrom or cards, and watching TV.

**OUTDOOR:** Cricket, badminton, travelling, and twenty minutes of brisk walking daily.

**HOLIDAY SPOT:** Niagara Falls; cruise on the River Thames; Taj Mahal; Rohtang Pass; and Great Wall of China.

COVER STORY

Biswarup Goswami, President-HR of WTTIL+QTIL & CPO of QTIL

Photo: Sujan Singh

"THE 4 FACTORS IMPORTANT IN THE HIGH-GROWTH TELECOM INFRASTRUCTURE INDUSTRY ARE: MANAGING THE COST OF CAPITAL; SCALABILITY; CAPEX AND OPEX OPTIMISATION; AND, MAXIMISATION OF TENANCIES – ON A SHARED INFRASTRUCTURE MODEL, ANYTHING ABOVE A 1.7 TENANCY RATIO IS PROFITABLE, AND THE ORGANISATION IS AIMING AT 2+ IN THIS YEAR'S AOP."

# Towering Over Competitors



**BG encourages his homemaker wife and two sons to grab opportunities and remain optimistic; even then, he admits that his wife makes a lot of better HR decisions than him!**

another project. Getting talent at junior- and mid-levels, BG says, is not a big challenge since the real estate and infrastructure industry offers a good pool. However, they are very selective about leaders for key positions, and have a strong filtration process, which includes thorough reference checking and application of psychometrics. They also look to the youth as a source

of proaction, passion and attitude, to be groomed adequately. The HR team, has a special theme for every day. For example, Mission Mondays for sending emails with a motivating article to all employees, Thought for Tuesday, Wisdom for Wednesday, Tranquil Thursday and Freaky Fridays for fun training sessions. The company is also encouraging employees to participate in the brand building of the new company, with sessions on suggestions for the new name, logo, etc., that help hype the merger momentum. Adds Goswami, "Quippo is already in the top 75 list of Great Places to Work, but our 2012 vision is to break into the top ten."

This merger momentum is coming from the Tata side as well, says Goswami. "The crux to success in the new organisational construct will be on how to make a customer-centric and an employee-innovation centric organisation together, and this is what both parties are working on," he tells us. QTIL is very proud of the feather in its cap on the

Active business through the in-building solution by bagging the recent order of Delhi & Mumbai International Airport. "QTIL & WTTIL is not just 'a tower company' - it is a real infrastructure solutions provider," he adds with pride.

Goswami believes in the 5Cs of care, compassion, conviction, commitment and courage. A good HR person, Goswami shares, should be a good listener, with a flair for empathy. To ensure practice of this, Goswami does a lot of yoga and pranayam every morning, which helps him listen better, and has helped him since his school days.

Learning from his corporate experience, he encourages his homemaker wife and two sons to grab opportunities and remain optimistic. Even then, he admits

that his wife makes a lot of better HR decisions than him! Says he about the time spent at home, "Why do we work? For our family. Spending time with my wife and kids refreshes me and removes fatigue from my mind." Goswami carries the Seven Habits Card with him and says that it helps him differentiate the urgents from the not-so-urgents. He reveals that he would have become a doctor if his career in HR had not worked out. Going forward, he is looking forward to making his "dream project", the Tower University, a big success. ■

is aiming at 2+ in this year's AOP."

Goswami is clear that the business model after the merger will be very simple and that the leadership will drive "the four pillars of HR transformation" – employee engagement, training and development; breakthrough improvements, and talent management. He reaffirms, "Tata and Quippo will build a great place to work. The company has recently launched 'Tower University' – with various schools of excellence in the areas of leadership, customer service, projects, and operations. To impart the education, QTIL and WTTIL have tied up with organisations like Holden, Centum Learning, TMTTC and the Franklin Covey Group. Despite the slowdown, the company has not retrenched a single employee, and has, in fact, been recruiting, keeping in mind the growth projected for the merged entity.

The current strength of the workforce at QTIL & WTTIL is about 2300, which includes 50 per cent employees off-the-rolls. Having off-the-rolls workers has two benefits – it helps create a pipeline for the future wherein the company can make the top performers permanent, and secondly, this enables those working in projects to move into roles of O&M or move to

## QUIPPO IS IN THE TOP 75 LIST OF GREAT PLACES TO WORK, BUT OUR 2012 VISION IS TO BREAK INTO THE TOP TEN