

Leadership 101 from GE Crotonville by Raghu Krishnamoorthy

On October 20, 2015, Yoshito Hori, President of GLOBIS University, was joined by Raghu Krishnamoorthy, Vice President of Executive Development and Chief Learning Officer of GE, to discuss the critical leadership qualities for global leaders at the 2015 World Knowledge Forum.

GE Crotonville is a global leadership institute, the first of its kind, which focuses on leadership, strategy and innovation for global executives.

“Everybody has to evolve. For us, there’s no such thing as a 130-year plan,” said Mr. Krishnamoorthy. In a vastly changing world, no organization can stay the same.

GE’s company history is separated into three phases that shifted from an emphasis on operations excellence, to growth, and then to simplification in order to adapt for our fast paced society. Changes occurred in several areas of GE after recognizing the importance of adapting to change: its culture, its beliefs, and its performance development strategies.

“In the new world of digital technology,” Mr. Krishnamoorthy said, “we have to think like a startup but execute like an incumbent.”

GE projects that in the year 2020, GE will look more like a software company than a products and services company.

“Customers want solutions, not just your equipment. So we offer appropriate solutions that meet their needs,” Mr. Krishnamoorthy said. Changing the structure of GE’s business has forced a shift in the leadership structure to suit the needs of the consumer landscape. Whereas decisions used to be made by HQ or wherever the power lies, current trends are outcome-focused and highly dependent upon consumer demand. Thus, the development goal of the leadership institute is to “empower those to make the right calls.” GE prides itself on understanding the importance of meeting the customers’ needs.

GE Crotonville creates a culture of performance development to produce more impactful change. Mr. Krishnamoorthy explained GE’s definition of performance, saying, “[It’s] an ongoing, expectations, feedback, coaching and development between employee and manager.”

Real time ‘insight’ as he coined, makes more of an impact upon an employee’s performance, rather than ordinarily implemented ‘feedback.’

The motivation behind GE’s performance philosophy of continuous communication between management and workforce is to shape performance that is collaborative and to prevent future mishaps.

Another pillar of GE’s philosophy is this: Leaders drive culture. Culture drives longevity. GE leaders are groomed to believe that their own individual growth is valuable to the growth of the culture and the growth of the company. Mr. Krishnamoorthy accentuated the company’s \$1 billion investment in the GE Crotonville program.

“Our leaders are our best leaders. In order for you to be relevant, you must constantly learn,” he said. This amount of investment demonstrates GE’s commitment to education and equipping leaders with the tools to navigate and deliver results through an age of uncertainty.

Technology also plays a crucial role in providing the appropriate tools for educating leaders. According to Mr. Krishnamoorthy, “Technology is an enabler of passion, but the passion itself comes up from others who can ignite that passion. Leaders must use the technology to foster curiosity.”

To GE, learning is a necessity, wherein technology provides quick and real-time access for transferring knowledge. Leaders are required to have core traits including the hunger to win, the ability to make

judgment calls, take risks, and the ability to contribute to, rather than take away from, society. However, Mr. Krishnamoorthy emphasized the need for leaders to be more technologically oriented in order to make a global impact.

Mr. Krishnamoorthy stressed that the greatest obstacle to achieving one's leadership potential is one's self.

"Oftentimes, it's your own mind that shackles you," he said. Through GE Crotonville's dynamic and functional approach to learning, leaders shape their education to be self-directed and to provoke their own discovery.

GE Crotonville has coached more than 40,000 participants, servicing 4,200 customers at 200 different locations. GE Leaders can enroll in more than 10 different leadership courses, ensuring a successful industry of tomorrow.