

Manikandan Balasubramanian

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HR Strategist | Talent Acquisition & Management | Employer Branding |



Career Summary:

Strategic HR leader with 11+ years of expertise in **Talent Acquisition, Talent Management, and Employer Branding**. Proven ability to drive business growth, optimize HR operations, and enhance employee engagement by aligning **people strategies** with organizational goals.

Experience Snapshot:

iTech India Private Limited, Manager (Head HR, January 2021 - Present)

1. Organizational Change Management

- **Enterprise-Wide Balanced Scorecard Adoption:** Orchestrated 100% implementation across all departments, maintaining consistent adoption for two consecutive years (2022 and 2023), driving alignment with organizational performance metrics.
- **ISMS & PIMS Compliance Deployment:** Directed the comprehensive implementation of ISO-compliant Information Security Management System (ISMS) and Privacy Information Management System (PIMS), encompassing gap analysis, certification, and ongoing surveillance. Collaborated with cross-functional stakeholders, including external consultants and internal business leaders, and successfully managed three external audits since 2022.
- **Strategic Upskilling Framework:** Designed and executed continuous learning and development programs aligned with organizational priorities and ISMS/PIMS regulatory standards, ensuring 15–20 hours of targeted training per employee annually to enhance competency and compliance readiness.
- **Integrated Internal Communication & Engagement Ecosystem:** Led the development and launch of a robust internal communications framework, featuring wellness and engagement platforms. Partnered with technology teams to enhance employee well-being, foster collaboration, and drive engagement across the organization.

2. Organizational Design

- **Role Definition & KPI Framework Design:** Defined over 40 roles and developed comprehensive job descriptions and key performance indicators (KPIs) aligned with the Balanced Scorecard methodology, ensuring strategic alignment and performance measurement.
- **Competency Mapping & Leadership Development:** Designed competency frameworks for critical roles and implemented Individual Development Plans (IDPs) for senior leaders across multiple locations to drive organizational capability and leadership excellence.
- **Employer Branding & Talent Acquisition Strategy:** Articulated the Employer Value Proposition (EVP), launched targeted employee testimonial campaigns, and trained Talent Acquisition (TA) stakeholders, resulting in a fivefold increase in recruitment applications. Represented the organization in over 40 industry forums and academic institutions over four years, strengthening the talent pipeline and organizational visibility.

3. HR Operating and Delivery Model

- **HR Policies & Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs):** Designed and implemented comprehensive HR policies and SOPs, ensuring 100% compliance with legal regulations while promoting consistency across the organization.

- **HRMS Automation & Process Optimization:** Spearheaded the automation of HR operations through the implementation of an HRMS tool, resulting in enhanced operational efficiency, reduced manual effort, and improved employee experience.
- **Leadership & Team Development:** Led and mentored a team of seven HR professionals, fostering a high-performance culture and providing strategic guidance to achieve organizational goals.
- **HR Analytics & Insights:** Leveraged data-driven analytics to identify workforce trends, inform decision-making, and support strategic planning efforts.

4. HR Process Efficiency and Policy and Transactions

- **HR Process Alignment:** Aligned HR practices with business needs and ISMS/PIMS requirements, ensuring 100% compliance.
- **HR Cycle Efficiency:** Reduced HR cycle times, increasing operational efficiency through automation (BI, AI, HRMS). Identified critical TA and HR metrics, presenting key focus areas to top management for decision making.

Vajro, IT Product Startup, Manager (Apr 2019 - Jul 2020)

- **Talent Acquisition Leadership:** Led recruitment for Vajro, a SaaS mobile app platform, driving 90% team growth to a 90-member team within a year. Managed a team of 2 TA professionals, ensuring efficient processes.
- **Mobile Application Development Recruiting:** Recruited Android, iOS, React, and Node developers to strengthen mobile app capabilities.
- **Diverse Sourcing Strategies:** Utilized platforms like AngelJobs, Instahire, Naukri, LinkedIn, and headhunting from top product firms to secure top talent.
- **Strategic Talent Identification:** Headed end-to-end HR operations, focusing on critical roles and scaling the startup efficiently.

Apex Laboratories (R&D), Senior Executive Nov 2016 - Oct 2017

- **HR & Administration Management:** Managed HR lifecycle and administration for the R&D center, ensuring smooth operations.
- **Cross-functional Collaboration:** Led ISO gap analysis with cross-functional teams and presented findings to the CO.
- **Talent Acquisition:** Implemented recruitment strategies to attract top-tier scientific talent, boosting the R&D center's innovation.

Dalmia Cement (B) Ltd Executive Jun 2015 - Aug 2016

- **Regional HR Operations Leadership:** Managed HR operations for the Regional Office, coordinating initiatives across four manufacturing units to ensure seamless execution and alignment. Collaborated with Aon Hewitt on the implementation of multi-rater feedback systems and competency mapping frameworks.
- **Corporate HR Strategy Alignment:** Ensured regional HR practices were fully aligned with corporate directives, driving consistency and supporting organizational objectives.
- **Compliance and Process Standardization:** Maintained adherence to HR policies and regulatory standards across all units, promoting uniformity, operational excellence, and best practices organization wide.

L&T Valves Limited Feb 2013 - Jan 2015 Senior Officer, ER

- **Workforce Management:** Managed recruitment and integration of five workforce categories at L&T Valves, supporting 300 unionized workers and ensuring compliance.
- **Employee Engagement:** Led TEI programs for 600+ shop floor employees, driving training, suggestion schemes, and quality circles.
- **HR Operations:** Handled HR lifecycle processes for 1,000+ employees, streamlining payroll, benefits, and grievance resolution while ensuring ISO and OHSAS compliance.
- **Industrial Relations:** Supported Plant IR Head in 18(1) and 12(3) settlements, contributing to negotiations and conflict resolution.

Education

Year	Qualification	Institution	Result
2012	MSW (HRM)	Madras School of Social Work	78%
2008	B.Sc. Microbiology	Madras Christian College	73%
2005	12th	AVM Group of Schools	84%
2003	10 th	Little Flower Matric Hr. Sec School	81%

Certifications & Other Engagements

- Certified in Talent Management, AI Tools for HR and in Microsoft Power BI, 2024
- Certified in Comprehensive Digital Marketing and Entrepreneurship, 2024
- Certified in Competency Based Management and Training the Trainer (2024)
- Certified in Total Rewards (2016) - Cerberus Consultants, Chennai
- Certified PPA Practitioner (2015) - Thomas Assessments
- Certified OD professional by MMA (Madras Management Association), 2014
- Worked at Sutherland Global Services (2008-2009) before pursuing post-graduation.
- I was engaged in full-time with Gopaldass Jewellers and freelance HR assignments in 2017-2018 for about 16 months.
- Yoga Instructor, Public Speaker, Trustee, Change Agents Foundation and Toastmaster.

Key Achievements and Awards/Recognitions

- **HR Virtuoso Award (2025)** - Recognized by IIMJobs for excellence in HR leadership.
- **National HR Excellence Award (2024)** - Honored by NIPM Mangalore Chapter for impactful HR initiatives.
- **Regional Wellness Innovator Award (2024)** - Awarded by SICCI for pioneering workplace wellness programs.
- **Toastmasters International Best Speaker** - Consistently recognized at Club & Area levels for Public Speaking.
- **Best Outgoing Student (2012)** - Department of Social Work, Madras School of Social Work.