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India, China focus on skilled manpower

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At a time when multinational companies in bioscience industry are opting for job cuts, the lure of international markets is making companies in India and China strengthen the quality of their manpower base. Many companies in these two countries revisited their human resource strategy in 2011 to enhance the quality of their manpower to meet the quality of output that is required by the US and the European market. Some of them even had to modify their plans to erect knowledge-based manpower support and implement new initiatives.

China's pharmaceutical major Sinopharm built a strong team of 35,394 employees. To meet the development needs and support the implementation of strategic objectives, the company adopted professional management system and reorganized its current human resources.

The strategy of strengthening quality manpower is now an integrated part of the agenda of Asian life science companies, as is the development of new and innovative drugs. North China Pharmaceutical Company, one of the top pharmaceutical companies in China, has on board more than 300 experts and talented researchers, equipped with new drugs research, development and commercialization tools.

One of the ways to develop skilled human resource for the future is to train them during the budding stage, at the time when they are being imparted education. Yunnan Baiyo has made a structure for rapid and healthy development of human resources management mechanism in its organization. The company started developing a reserve talents team with the University of Hong Kong and also organized a Reserve Talents Training Camp.

China Pharmaceutical Group witnessed a challenging period in 2011. However, the company continued to exhibit its potential by building its human resources. As a new market initiative, the company is building its market in Eastern Europe, South America and South East Asia and is further enhancing its product portfolio to meet the demand. It, therefore, strengthened its team of 10,475 employees.

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Plans involving foreign direct investment are compelling Indian companies to build a team of internationally qualified manpower. Ranbaxy is planning to set up a manufacturing facility in Malaysia and is also eyeing Australia with the launch of Atorvastatin. The company is also looking to invest in Africa, a region where the firm has witnessed substantial growth. It is setting up a manufacturing facility in Nigeria to supplement manufacturing capability and is also looking to explore significant opportunities in Morocco.

The company, with its ambition in different geographies, is concentrating on a multicultural human resource skills. It initiated a talent exchange program with Daiichi Sankyo to create cultural synergies and skill enhancement. As a part of this initiative, 13 expatriates from Daiichi Sankyo also joined the Ranbaxy fraternity in 2011.

"Development of human capital is one of the most critical components of Ranbaxy's growth. We re-structured our management training program to develop a highly motivated, innovative, alert, forward looking and ethically committed team to play a key role in ensuring the company's future progress. Developing global leaders for a new global market place is an area of importance for Ranbaxy," says Mr Arun Sawhney, CEO, Ranbaxy.

Ranbaxy has over 14,000 employees worldwide, of which 1,300 are in R&D and quality, 3,000 are in manufacturing and 9,000 employees are in the global pharmaceutical business.

Apart from establishing their footprint outside the regional market, Asian companies have proven to be potential partners for world's leading companies. This has helped them polish the skills of human resources, thus elevating them to international standards. India-based Dr Reddy's Laboratories formed strategic partnership with GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) and is developing and marketing key products for GSK across emerging markets outside India. For supporting its international exposure, Dr Reddy's has continued to strengthen and build a strong work force. Dr Reddy's global employee strength surpassed 14,900 in 2010-11, of which over 2,400 were based at international locations.

Similarly, Lupin, which is also based in India, emerged as a fast growing company in the generics business with a strong presence in the US, India, Japan and Philippines. In order to achieve consistent growth, Lupin adopted a clear strategy of investing in research and technology. In order to achieve the planned growth in 2011, Lupin strengthened its human resources and its R&D focus. Today, Lupin has established its manpower base in international markets, with 11 percent of its workforce being based outside India across over 26 nations.

As a strategy to build a robust manpower structure, companies have also gone ahead to nurture young talent and trained them in their respective areas of specialization. This has helped them in gaining knowledge in diverse fields and handle business challenges of tomorrow.