

## HR Download - Training & Development

**Topic:** Beat the monotony at work

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*Drudgery at work is something most of us grapple with on a daily basis. However, there is no reason why one should accept the monotony as inevitable. It is definitely possible to keep the interest alive with a little effort and support from HR*

Nothing is as interesting once the newness erodes but these days, monotony seems to set in too quickly. "Jobs have become repetitive in nature. Also, monotony is a state of mind. There can be learning on the job every day if one thinks it that way. If the attitude to learn is there, monotony does not set in at the workplace," opines Subhashish Dasgupta, Head HR, VLCC. Hanuman Tripathi, Managing Director & CEO, Infrasoftware Technologies Limited, Mumbai, seconds this, "A work environment which does not foster inter-communication and does not build sufficient breaks that are meant to freshen up people, will create monotony. All job roles on a standalone basis, in the strictest terms are monotonous. In every role there is an opportunity to improvise or to stagnate." Stressing on the age and experience factor, he adds, "By nature, youngsters easily get bored if they have to do the same thing over a longer period of time and older people learn to believe that set form of working builds expertise."

Infrasoftware undertakes many initiatives to enable employees to feel enthused at work. "We focus on employee engagement in a holistic manner. This may include providing opportunities to everyone to do buddy-ship, mentoring, deliver short training, contribute to design and architecture discussions and generally push everyone to have some or other client facing opportunities. We have large quantum of HR-induced people engagement events to break monotony. These include birthday celebrations, contests, festival celebrations, parties, get-togethers, picnics. We also do not mind people taking breaks from their seats for a short while from time-to-time, unlike in many companies," says Tripathi.

There is a lot that employees can do from their side as well. "Bringing in innovation and creativity into their core function and giving due importance to learning-oriented and capability building initiatives are two key drivers for keeping monotony at bay. There are always better ways of doing any task, constant desire to find these mechanisms is what employees should strive at," offers Nikul Shah, Senior VP, Commercial and HR, Omnitech InfoSolutions Ltd.

Jayendra Banerji, Vice President Operations, Satyam Cineplexes, believes that recognition and incentives are the best ways to keep monotony at bay. "We have a monthly agenda of employee of the month, wherein the employees are recognised on their monthly performance. We quite often change our employee's job profile, so that he/she can excel in multi-tasking. Every small achievement is celebrated and therefore gives an incentive to the employee to perform better," he says. Commenting on what employees can do to revive interest, he suggests, "Employees need to set up short term goals for themselves in order to shy away the monotony. Competing on a healthy level with their peers can boost up their

enthusiasm. Employees need to take work as a challenge and not a job, once they identify the root of their problem, they can easily get out of the boredom.”

Another way to dispel monotony is to prevent work from getting too serious. “‘Work has to be fun’ is the motto we adopt. We try and keep the atmosphere light and keep employees engaged. We have month end parties to celebrate the birthdays and celebrate achievements. This helps us in keeping the employees engaged and does not let boredom set in at work,” says Dasgupta.

Aspect India employs a number of methods to deal with monotony. “We have partnered with SkillSoft to offer our employees a multitude of courses related to both Business Skills and Technical Skills. These courses are offered at No Charge to all Aspect employees and can be accessed 24x7 from any computer. Further, we have also put in place Aspect Excellence Award that provides all employees with the opportunity to recognise a peer who has demonstrated a level of performance that goes beyond the responsibilities of their position. We also have in place our annual ‘Instrumental awards’ to recognise contributions that proved instrumental to the overall quarterly success of the organisation,” says Rajeev Soni, General Manager India, Mid-East, Aspect , India.

Thus, a combination of proactive behaviour and an open environment at work can help convert monotony into enthusiasm