

The HaKvest

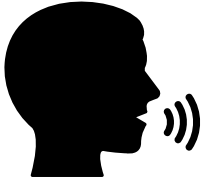
• Shaping Tomorrow's Leaders in HR •



FEBRUARY 2025
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• SOWING THOUGHTS, HARVESTING POSSIBILITIES •

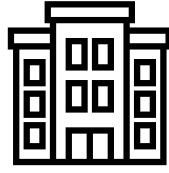
NEWSLETTER SUMMARY



They Speak



HR Quiz



Bremo



HR News



HR Reads

Leadership Appointment

Rekha Gupta has been appointed as Delhi's new Chief Minister, marking a significant shift in regional governance. Her leadership is expected to drive policy reforms with a strong focus on infrastructure development and public welfare.

Union Budget 2025 - Tax Reforms Impacting Salaries

The recently announced Union Budget 2025 introduced impactful changes to the New Tax Regime.

Infosys Clarifies Layoff Concerns

Amid rumors of layoffs at Infosys' Mysuru campus, the company clarified that no coercive measures were imposed on employees. Infosys emphasized its commitment to transparent communication and cooperative dialogue with labor authorities to address workforce concerns.

Infosys

OPG Mobility's HR Leadership Move

Anand Amrit Raj has been appointed as the Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO) at OPG Mobility. With extensive industry experience, he is expected to lead the company's talent acquisition, employee engagement, and organizational growth strategies.



ZEPTO'S STRATEGIC GROWTH PLAN

The newsletter highlights Zepto's rapid growth, driven by its expansion of dark stores to improve delivery efficiency. The launch of Zepto Café in 15% of these stores aims to diversify its offerings, with a projected revenue target of ₹1,000 crore by FY26. Zepto's impactful "Nahi Milega" campaign further strengthened its brand by emphasizing fast and affordable grocery delivery.

zepto

THEY SPEAK

PATTY MCCORD - THE VISIONARY WHO REDEFINED HR NORMS

McCord's career began in a traditional corporate setting, where she worked in recruiting and human resources-based roles for companies such as Borland and Sun Microsystems. This exposure to the rigid structures and bureaucratic tendencies that defined most HR departments at that time made her question the prevailing models. She recognised how these outdated systems hindered innovation rather than facilitating it.



In the late 1990s, McCord joined Pure Software, a fast-growing company, co founded by Reed Hastings. The company later merged with Atria, resulting in the formation of Pure Atria, and in 1997, it was acquired by Rational Software. Her experience of navigating these changes- especially the challenges of managing talent during a dynamic environment, shaped her perspective on corporate culture. She also drew inspiration from Hastings, who questioned conventional workplace management and sought ways to build an efficient and adaptable organisational climate. .

When Hastings founded Netflix in 1998, he appointed McCord as Chief Talent Officer, where she played a significant role in shaping the company's groundbreaking corporate policies. In the early days of Netflix, Hastings sought McCord's assistance to articulate the company's core values. Initially, they considered conventional terms like "excellence" and "respect". However, Patty suggested that they should instead outline their expectations from the company's members. This simple suggestion laid the foundation for the Netflix Culture Deck which has been described as "the most important document ever to come out of Silicon Valley." The talent management strategies introduced in this document were regarded as somewhat unconventional but wielded a significant influence on contemporary practices.

THEY SPEAK

At the core of McCord's philosophy is her belief in maintaining high talent density. She asserts, "The best thing you can do for employees- a perk better than foosball or free sushi- is hire only 'A' players to work alongside them". This conviction drove Netflix's hiring and retention policies, where only top performers were retained and those whose skills were no longer required were offered generous severance packages. Rather than treating employees like family, leadership operated similar to a professional sports team where performance was of supreme importance and only the best stayed. According to her, letting go of underperforming employees has helped Netflix remain innovative, flexible and filled with top-tier talent.

Netflix has cultivated a continuous feedback system rather than depending on annual performance reviews. "It's disrespectful to keep people in the dark about their performance," McCord argued. Expense policies were redefined by a simple guideline: "Act in Netflix's best interest."

This trust-based approach empowered employees to make informed decisions, reinforcing that a workplace thrives when people are treated as accountable adults and not as rule-following subordinates. One of her most impactful breakthroughs was her compensation strategy, which deviated from industry standard pay structures and centred around 3 key questions:

- If an employee leaves, how much would it cost to replace them?
- If an employee says they are leaving, would you beg them to stay?
- What would people somewhere else pay them?



THEY SPEAK

PATTY MCCORD - THE VISIONARY WHO REDEFINED HR NORMS



This approach ensured that high performers were compensated at market value, effectively minimising turnover and eliminating the need for retention bonuses. In contrast to other companies that offered performance-related rewards, Netflix chose to provide higher salaries from the beginning to ensure that exceptional talent remained motivated without the distraction of financial incentives.



Patty McCord's perspective has highlighted the significance of transforming the workplace into a space that thrives on innovation and accountability. By breaking down outdated corporate norms, she has exemplified well what it means to lead with clarity and conviction. As businesses continue to exist in an ever-evolving environment, McCord's principles serve as a guiding light for cultivating cultures of trust, freedom and excellence. Her legacy stands as a testament to the power of bold thinking and principled leadership.

THEY SPEAK

NIKHIL KAMATH - REDEFINING SUCCESS AND TRANSFORMING FINANCIAL ECOSYSTEM

"The most important factor in your success is your belief in yourself".

Nikhil Kamath, co-founder of Zerodha, one of India's top stock brokerage companies, demonstrates the path from unusual beginnings to significant business success.

He is a perfect example of the value of unconventional thinking, perseverance, and hard work in today's competitive society, where scholastic achievement is viewed as the only path to one's success. He defied the established rules and transformed our nation's financial ecosystem.



He had an unconventional educational journey as he chose to drop out of school after completing his 10th grade. Despite lacking a formal degree, it was his passion for entrepreneurship and finance along with a supportive family that shaped his remarkable career. He did not achieve success overnight but had to face hardships as well. After leaving school he found himself working at a call center in the evenings and diving deep into the world of trading in the mornings. Nikhil's ambition and entrepreneurial spirit eventually led him to leave his job and team up with his brother Nithin Kamath, to launch Kamath Associates, which later evolved into the highly successful brokerage firm we know today, Zerodha. He revolutionized the Indian stock brokerage industry with Zerodha's discount brokerage model and his innovative approach to financial services. Today, Zerodha proudly stands as one of India's largest stockbrokers, thanks to its innovative pricing models and cutting-edge technology developed in-house.



THEY SPEAK

NIKHIL KAMATH - REDEFINING SUCCESS AND TRANSFORMING FINANCIAL ECOSYSTEM

His entrepreneurial journey is not only limited to Zerodha. In 2020, he co-founded True Beacon, an asset management company that caters to ultra-high-net individuals. His entrepreneurial ventures continued with the establishment of Gruhas in 2021, a real estate investments and prop tech company. In March 2023 he also started hosting his podcast series where he hosted eminent public figures and entrepreneurs.

His journey from a school dropout call center employee to a prominent figure in the financial world is a testament to his unwavering dedication. He is a man of unbreakable spirit and has received numerous awards and accolades highlighting his entrepreneurial success. He was recognized as the "Entrepreneur of the Year" by the Economic Times in 2016 and was also featured in the Forbes "30 Under 30" list in 2017. He is also well known for his philanthropic activities.

He has pledged to donate 50% of his wealth to charitable causes through The Giving Pledge, a global initiative that encourages wealthy individuals to commit to philanthropy. He has given strong advice to today's youth- "Change is the only constant in life. Adapt first, don't fight, all of life is transient, including your belief systems, and your authentic self today."



BREMO: BUSINESS REVENUE MODEL

COMPANY: ZEPTO

INTRODUCTION

Zepto is an Indian quick e-commerce company which was founded in the year 2021 by Stanford Dropouts Aadit Palicha and Kaivalya Vohra. The concept for Zepto sprang from the limitations of their houses during the Covid 19 outbreak. A surge in demand for delivery services meant that groceries and other necessities would arrive in a couple of days, creating a void for quick delivery. As a result, Zepto was created to cater to this issue. The firm, which uses the term "Zepto" to denote "a factor of 10^{-21} , i.e. 0.000000000000000000001," named after a minuscule unit of time, offers a 10-minute grocery delivery service, surpassing numerous well-funded competitors.

The Zepto logo is displayed in a stylized, lowercase font. The letters are a vibrant orange color, set against a dark purple rectangular background with rounded corners.

Zepto's tagline says,

“Groceries delivered
in 10 minutes”

Zepto currently operates in major cities across India, including Bengaluru, Mumbai, Delhi, Gurugram, Noida, Ghaziabad, Hyderabad, Chennai, Pune, and Kolkata. The company has ambitious plans to multiply its dark stores and expand its delivery network with profitability in focus.

Zepto also plans to go public in 2025. To prepare for its Initial Public Offer, the company had set up a new entity, Zepto Marketplace Private Limited, in October 2024 to simplify its operations.

A new key driver of Zepto's growth is its food and beverage division, Zepto Café, which is currently in 15% of its dark stores. With an estimated ARR of INR 160 crore, Zepto Café is expanding rapidly, adding over 100 outlets monthly and targeting an INR 1,000 crore revenue run rate by FY26.



BREMO: BUSINESS REVENUE MODEL

COMPANY: ZEPTO

REVENUE STREAMS

↳ COMMISSION FEES FROM STORES

Zepto primarily generates revenue by charging a commission fee from stores, taking a percentage of the total order value for each purchase made through their app. The exact commission rate charged varies on the store's agreement with Zepto.

↳ DELIVERY FEES AND PLATFORM FEES

Depending on the order value, Zepto potentially charges its customers with delivery fees. Additionally, Zepto also charges a platform fee of Rs. 2 per order acting as a small service fee on top of delivery charges.

↳ SUBSCRIPTION AND MEMBERSHIP PLANS

Zepto offers a membership program called Zepto Pass to its customers which provides free deliveries and discounts on orders. The pass also provides exclusive deals on Zepto Cafe products.

ANNUAL REVENUE TREND



BREMO: BUSINESS REVENUE MODEL

COMPANY: ZEPTO

WHAT SETS ZEPTO APART FROM ITS COMPETITORS?

↳ 10-MINUTE GROCERY DELIVERY

Zepto's biggest USP is its ultra-fast 10-minute delivery model, which outpaces competitors like Blinkit, Swiggy Instamart, and BigBasket.

↳ HYPERLOCAL DARK STORE MODEL

Zepto operates a network of dark stores (micro-warehouses) in high-demand areas, ensuring rapid order fulfillment with minimal travel time.

↳ AI-OPTIMIZED OPERATIONS

Advanced AI and data analytics optimize inventory, predict demand, and enhance delivery efficiency, reducing delays and stock shortages.

↳ HIGH PRODUCT AVAILABILITY & FRESHNESS

Zepto focuses on essential groceries, fresh produce, and household staples, ensuring availability and maintaining product quality.

↳ COMPETITIVE PRICING & DISCOUNTS

Despite its speed, Zepto remains price-competitive, offering affordable rates, discounts, and membership programs to retain customers.

↳ SEAMLESS USER EXPERIENCE

A fast, intuitive app experience with minimal checkout friction makes ordering groceries as easy as ordering food online.

↳ ATTRACTIVE PROMOTIONAL STRATEGIES

Zepto's marketing strategy has been a key driver of its rapid growth in the quick-commerce industry. The launch of the "Nahi Milega" campaign in March 2023, featuring the character "Uncle Ji," highlighted unlimited free deliveries, solidifying Zepto's position as the go-to platform for ultra-fast and cost-effective grocery delivery. With an innovative approach and successful marketing initiatives, Zepto has emerged as a leading player in the competitive quick-commerce industry, catering to the needs of time-conscious consumers.



BREMO: BUSINESS REVENUE MODEL

COMPANY: ZEPTO

Zepto uses a dark store model for its operations. Dark stores are basically distribution outlets that are not open to visitors. These micro warehouses quickly and accurately fulfill orders and thus provide shoppers with resources and options like purchasing products online and same day delivery. Dark store models often pick, pack and dispatch goods in under 60 seconds. Such a model has been implemented in developed nations, but the model was never explored in the Indian context. A “dark store model” curbs the trivial challenges any delivery service faces like traffic congestion, navigation and connectivity. Currently Zepto has over 40 dark stores in various locations. Location intelligence and geographic data, such as topography, population, road patterns, traffic dynamics, weather, last-mile supply availability, real estate values, and so on, are said to help Zepto optimize its network.

However, dark stores are meant for instant deliveries and can't handle much sales volume. But Zepto does not compromise with the shortcomings of this model. They have over a thousand products on display: fresh produce, milk, meat, kitchen refills etc at the best bargains. Moreover, their AI powered tools ensure a smooth transition from picking up, packing to delivering the goods in a safe condition.

SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS

- Order Processing Efficiency
- Diverse Distribution options
- User Friendly Interface
- Improved Market Delivery Control

WEAKNESSES

- Impact of low quality product images on customer purchases
- Constraints on Delivery and Expansion Capabilities

OPPORTUNITIES

- Impact of low quality product images on customer purchases
- Constraints on Delivery and Expansion Capabilities

THREATS

- Emerging competitors
- Challenges of Regulatory Compliance and Operating Costs

HR NEWS

First-Time MLA Rekha Gupta Named Delhi's New Chief Minister

The Delhi government will be led by a woman Chief Minister again as the BJP zeroed in Rekha Gupta, its first-time MLA from Shalimar Bagh, for the Chief Minister's post. The decision was taken at a meeting of the party's legislature party this evening. Ms Gupta succeeds Aam Aadmi Party's Atishi after the BJP ended the 10-year-rule of Arvind Kejriwal's party in the recently concluded assembly election.



Companies' intent to hire freshers rise to 74% in India, IT sector rebounds

New Delhi, Several industries in India showcase strong recruitment momentum for the first half of 2025, with their plans to hire freshers rising to 74 per cent, according to a report. The intent for hiring in the e-commerce and technology startups increased from 61 per cent to 70 per cent, 52 per cent to 66 per cent in manufacturing and engineering and infrastructure touched 62 per cent, led to the deeper emerging of deep-tech career paths such as AI & Machine Learning Engineer, Clinical Bioinformatics Associate, Robotics System Engineer and others.

Big boost for Bihar in Budget 2025-26: Infrastructure, agriculture, and education plans unveiled

The recent Union Budget 2025 has made significant strides for Bihar, with the establishment of a Makhana Board and new greenfield airports, alongside an expansion of Patna Airport. Additionally, the budget includes the creation of the National Institute of Food Technology, Entrepreneurship, and Management to enhance food processing in the Eastern region.

The Finance Minister also announced financial support for the Western Kosi Canal ERM project, benefiting farmers across 50,000 hectares in Mithilanchal.

HR NEWS

New Delhi Railway Station stampede

At least 18 people, including five children, were killed and over a dozen were injured in a stampede at New Delhi Railway Station on Saturday night (February 15, 2025), which was caused by a sudden surge of passengers waiting to board trains for Prayagraj, where the Maha Kumbh Mela is underway. The incident took place on foot-over bridges connecting platforms 14 and 15, when some passengers slipped while descending, causing panic and a deadly crush.

Reliance ranks 2nd globally in FutureBrand Index 2024, ahead of Apple

India's largest and most valuable company Reliance Industries Ltd has been ranked the second best brand globally on the Future Brand Index for 2024, ahead of brands like Apple and Nike. The company was ranked at 13th place in 2023 and is ranked at 2nd in the latest ranking. The list is led by Korean brand Samsung. Reliance ranks ahead of well-known global brands like Apple, Nike, Walt Disney, Netflix, Microsoft, Intel and Toyota.

2025 Grammys: Kendrick Lamar wins three awards for 'Not Like Us', hits 20 career wins

Kendrick Lamar had a historic night at the 2025 Grammy Awards as he won a total of five Grammys for his hit song "Not Like Us." The song earned him awards for Record of the Year, Song of the Year, Best Rap Performance, Best Rap Song, and Best Music Video. With these wins, Lamar is now a 22-time Grammy winner, according to Variety. In the record of the year category, Lamar beat out the Beatles for "Now And Then," Beyoncé for "Texas Hold 'Em," Charli XCX for "360," Billie Eilish for "Birds of a Feather," Sabrina Carpenter for "Espresso," Taylor Swift featuring Post Malone for "Fortnight," and Chappell Roan for "Good Luck, Babe!"

JioHotstar merger

Reliance and Disney have launched JioHotstar, merging JioCinema and Disney+ Hotstar content libraries. Existing subscribers of both platforms can retain their plans but must use JioHotstar. This merger brings together India's most valuable sports rights, including the Indian Premier League, International Cricket Council tournaments and the English Premier League as well as content from major international studios like Disney, Warner Bros., HBO, NBCUniversal Peacock, and Paramount, all under one roof.

HR NEWS

Union Budget 2025: Middle class-friendly Budget focuses on consumption boost, no income tax payable up to income of ₹12 lakh in New Tax regime

In a significant relief for middle-class taxpayers, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman unveiled new tax slabs under the New Tax Regime in the Union Budget 2025-26. The revised structure aims to ease the tax burden, particularly for individuals earning up to Rs 12 lakh annually, with salaried individuals benefiting from an exemption limit of Rs 12.75 lakh, including standard deductions. The Finance Minister highlighted that under the new regime, taxpayers will save Rs 80,000 on an income of Rs 12 lakh, Rs 70,000 on Rs 18 lakh, and Rs 1,10,000 on Rs 25 lakh.

Mysuru layoffs: Infosys denies using force, intimidation tactics; says cooperating with labour dept.

New Delhi, IT services company Infosys said it did not use force or intimidation tactics when it laid off trainees at Mysuru campus over performance-related issues, and that it was explaining the circumstances to the labour department authorities. In an interview to PTI, Shaji Mathew, Chief Human Resources Officer at Infosys, however, conceded that assessment failure percentages this time around have been "slightly higher" than in the past but dismissed charges that the tests had been designed for failure.

OPG Mobility appoints Anand Amrit Raj as CHRO

OPG Mobility (formerly known as Okaya EV) announced the appointment of Anand Amrit Raj as its Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO). Raj will lead the company's comprehensive human resources strategy encompassing talent acquisition, employee development, compensation and benefits, diversity and inclusion, and organizational design, according to a statement. With over 24 years of industry experience, Raj previously worked at Wipro, HCL, Finserv, Escorts, Okaya, SAR Group, PARAS Group, and Best Group, where he most recently served as Group CHRO (SVP-HR).

HR QUIZ



1. MATCH THE FOLLOWING

COLUMN A

- A. Flexible Work Hours
- B. Performance-based Compensation
- C. Job Enrichment
- D. Job Rotation
- E. Onboarding

COLUMN B

- 1. The process of moving an employee to a new job within the same company, usually to broaden their experience.
- 2. A method of managing work by allowing employees to adjust their schedule within certain guidelines, providing flexibility.
- 3. A formal agreement in which employees commit to certain tasks or goals to earn incentives or rewards.
- 4. The training given to new hires to help them understand their role and integrate into the organization.
- 5. A motivational tool used to increase job satisfaction and productivity by redesigning a job to make it more meaningful.

HR QUIZ

ACRONYMS

2. In HR management, the acronym “PMS” stands for the system that evaluates employee performance. What does it stand for?
3. The acronym “HRIS” refers to a system used to manage human resource activities electronically. What does “HRIS” stand for?

ONE WORD

4. What term refers to the process of recruiting employees for positions that are vacant due to retirement, resignation, or promotions within a company?

ODD ONE OUT

5. I. Orientation II. Induction III. Job Satisfaction IV. Training
6. I. Employee Development II. Career Counseling III. Recruitment IV. Job Rotation

RIDDLES

7. I am a way of measuring your work, I define how well you perform tasks, but I don't always show your worth. What am I?
8. I am not a place to rest, but a space to grow. I help employees learn and develop for the future. What am I?
9. You look for me when you're lost or in need, I give you guidance on your career's speed. What am I?
10. I'm a form of incentive, often money or perks, and I reward your hard work. What am I?

ANSWERS: Performance Management System, Human Resource Information System, Succession Planning, III. Job Satisfaction, III. Recruitment, Performance Appraisal, Training and Development, Career Counseling, Bonus

HR QUIZ

ODD ONE OUT

- 2) What term is used for the process through which a dispute between two people is resolved by a neutral third party?
- 3) Name the HR strategy that uses game-like elements to motivate and engage employees.
- 4) _____ turnover is when a company loses its top-performing employees at a higher rate than its low-performing employees.
- 5) Name the practice where a senior employee is offered a lower-level position to avoid being laid off during a downsize or restructuring.
- 6) What term is used to describe the process of recruiting an employee for a role similar to their current position on a similar level from outside of the organization?
- 7) _____ describes when companies keep employees during tough economic times, such as a recession, instead of laying them off because they feel it will save money in the long term.

RIDDLES

- 8) I'm the ladder to help you rise, With new knowledge as your prize. In a world that's changing fast, I ensure your skills will last. What am I?
- 9) I'm the extra job that you pursue, Outside your main work, something new. I bring in cash, or skills to grow, While your full-time work continues to flow. What am I?
- 10) Not all paths go through college doors, I focus on skills, not classroom lore. I thrive in tech, trades, and the modern sphere, Where experience and training bring me near. What am I?
- 11) I'm the job that lets you glide, No hustle, no grind, no race to ride. I offer freedom, ease, and space, A slower pace in a busy place. Work from home, set your own tone, No pressure, just comfort to call your own. What am I? A job that's light, Where work and rest feel just right.

ANSWERS:

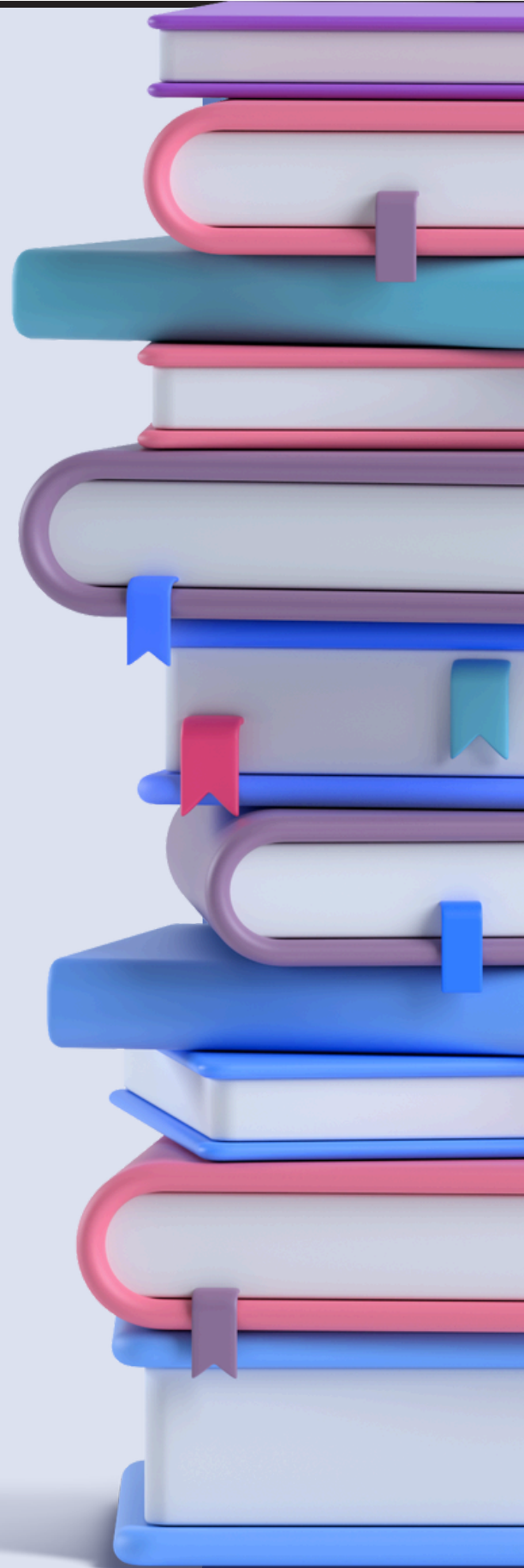
Arbitration, Gamification, Dysfunctional, Bumping, Lateral Hiring, Labor Hoarding, Upskilling, SideGig/ Side Hustle, New Collar Jobs, Lazy Girl Jobs

HR Reads

As we conclude this month, we're excited to bring to you "HR Reads," where we highlight essential books for our readers. After having a see through into the latest HR updates, comprehensive business analysis and thoughtful info, it's now time to shift the focus towards self-growth!

Books are a man's best companions, providing the inspiration and knowledge to make tomorrow's bright leaders. Regardless of your level of experience — whether you're a seasoned HR professional, a student, or simply someone who's keen to learn and explore, this curated list has something for all!

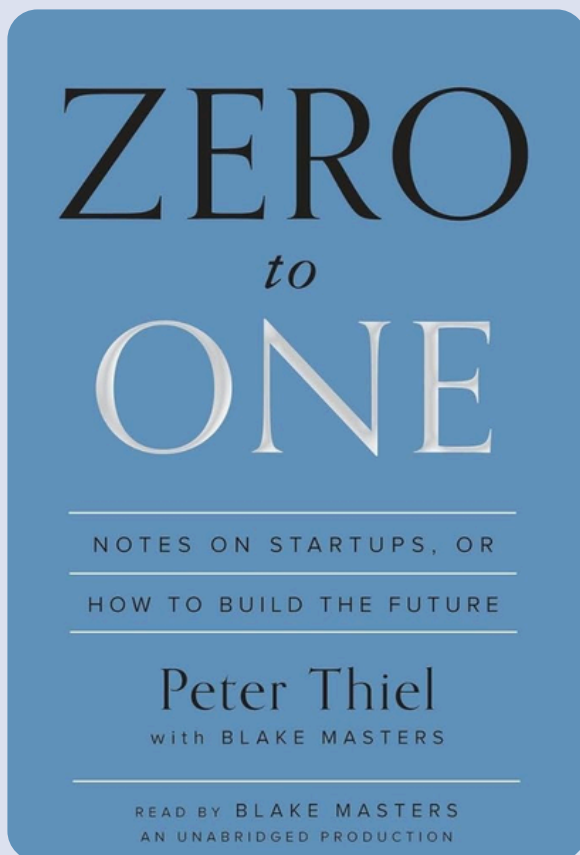
Be a part of these reflective reads to shape your perspectives, deepen your understanding, and gain significant insights...



HR Reads

BUSINESS AND INNOVATION

ZERO TO ONE: NOTES ON STARTUPS, OR HOW TO BUILD THE FUTURE



Zero to One: Notes on Startups, or How to Build the Future

Publisher: Ebury Publishing

Have you ever wondered what it takes to create something truly unique, something that transforms the world rather than just competes in it? In *Zero to One*, Peter Thiel, co-founder of PayPal and one of Silicon Valley's most influential entrepreneurs, challenges conventional thinking and encourages readers to build innovative businesses that move from 'zero to one' by creating entirely new value rather than simply improving on existing ideas.

This book isn't just about startups, it's about a mindset. Thiel argues that monopolies drive true innovation, and that businesses should focus on carving out their own niches rather than chasing competition. He breaks down key principles, from the importance of unconventional thinking to the necessity of having a strong, long-term vision.

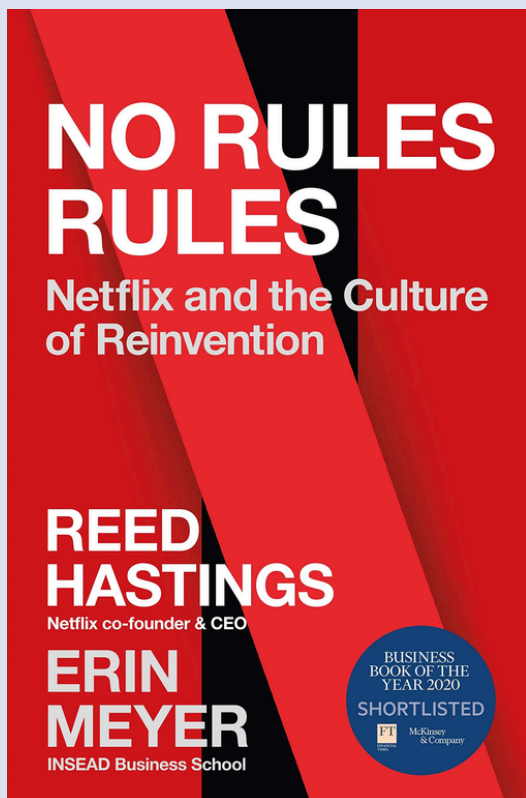
Are you ready to rethink the way you approach innovation, leadership, and business growth? *Zero to One* is your gateway to understanding how bold ideas can shape the future. Dive into this book and discover how you can create something truly new!



HR Reads

BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT

NO RULES RULES: NETFLIX AND THE CULTURE OF REINVENTION



No Rules Rules: Netflix and the Culture of Reinvention

Publisher: Penguin Random House

What if the solution to success was not control, but freedom blended with responsibility? In No Rules Rules, Netflix co-founder Reed Hastings, together with corporate consultant Erin Meyer, analyses the culture behind Netflix - one of the most innovative firms in the world.

Netflix took the unprecedented step of throwing out routine business practices like formal vacation policies, annual performance reviews, and expense approvals. Instead, they focused on the employment of extreme candour, high talent density, and decentralised decision making. What did this achieve? A culture of innovation is fostered that results in constant re-invention of the company.

This is not merely a book meant for executives and... This is for anyone interested in how daring thoughts and ideas can change practices of organisations, leadership, and work in the future. Highly interested in transforming the status quo? No Rules Rules gives deep insight to how the company forges ahead by abandoning rules that restrict other companies.



With this, we wrap up. We'll catch up with you next month!!