

A STUDY ON HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (HRM) PRACTICES IN INDIGO AIRLINES IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Airlines, it has recognized the critical importance of effective Human Resource Management in sustaining its operational excellence and competitive edge. The airline has adopted a comprehensive HRM strategy that encompasses various key practices aimed at attracting, developing, and retaining top talent while fostering a positive and productive work environment. Recruitment at IndiGo is meticulously structured to ensure a seamless alignment between the company's operational needs and the skill sets of its employees. Leveraging technology, the airline has streamlined its hiring processes through AI-driven screening and competency-based interviews, ensuring an unbiased and efficient selection process.

Keywords: HRM, Diversity Equity and Inclusion, Ifly Program, Capacity Building Program.

Introduction

At IndiGo employees undergo rigorous and ongoing training programs that not only cover technical and operational skills but also emphasize leadership and soft skills. This commitment to continuous learning is evident in IndiGo's investment in online courses and workshops, which help employees stay abreast of industry standards and advancements. The airline places a strong emphasis on open communication and employee engagement, regularly conducting town hall meetings and feedback sessions to ensure that staff members feel heard and valued. Regular employee engagement surveys, which offer management actionable information, further enhance this transparent culture.

Materials and Methods

For the purpose of depth study the contents have been taken from interview, relevant books and articles from journals and websites. The method used in analytical and descriptive. Both primary as well as secondary sources of information have been taken.

Result and Discussion

IndiGo also prioritizes career development by offering clear progression paths and internal mobility opportunities, ensuring that high performers are recognized and rewarded with promotions and professional development opportunities. The airline's approach to work-life balance includes flexible working hours and remote work options, coupled with wellness programs that address both physical and mental health.

Diversity and inclusion are fundamental pillars of IndiGo's HRM practices. The airline has implemented policies to promote an inclusive workplace and provides training on unconscious bias and cultural sensitivity. Employee resource groups offer support to underrepresented demographics, fostering a more inclusive corporate culture. Compensation at IndiGo is competitive, with regular reviews to align with market trends and performance-based incentives to reward excellence. Additionally, the airline's investment in modern HR management systems has optimized data management and process automation, allowing for more informed and strategic HR decisions.

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Empowering Employees

The 32,000+ team members at IndiGo are company's greatest asset and the main forces behind its success. They are able to provide the best customer service because of their highly motivated and engaged personnel. They provide a fair and transparent work environment where individuals feel empowered to fulfil their goals and give their all to support the expansion of our company. Its staff members have what it takes to succeed in the fiercely competitive business world of today and maintain our position as the industry leader. The core values of our company are safety, trust, and teamwork, which create an atmosphere where employees may grow and succeed.

Attracting Talent

Its hiring program are designed to help us strengthen our value proposition as an employer of choice in the industry to attract and retain the talent we need to achieve our business goals.

- **Hub Hiring:** Hiring from the communities surrounding our stations is the main focus for roles like Airport Operations and In-flight Services. This enables us to take advantage of their understanding of regional realities, customs, and consumer preferences. Hub Hiring creates jobs locally and supports workers' employment continuity with IndiGo.
- **Cadet Hiring Program:** The incessant need for competent and experienced pilots in the aviation industry prompted the creation of this programme in 2011. This extensive two-year programme prepares aspirants who have never flown before to become professional pilots. The training's goal is to grant cadets an initial Commercial Pilot License (CPL) and an Airbus A320 Type Rating, giving them the credentials they need to fly this kind of aircraft.

To effectively oversee the Cadet Programme, IndiGo has formed strategic alliances with seven of the top flight training institutions. These training facilities have been carefully selected based on their knowledge, resources, and capacity to fulfil IndiGo's exacting requirements. Strict screening procedures assess eligible cadets and guarantee admission to these Flight Training Schools only to those who fulfil the highest standards.

- **Inclusive Hiring:** IndiGo places a strong emphasis on objective hiring procedures and makes sure that selection is free from gender prejudice. Hiring worthy LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer) and Persons with Disabilities people for all roles is the goal. A whole section of our recruiting manager training programme is dedicated to inclusive hiring.

Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI)

The workforce at IndiGo is dynamic, diverse, and inclusive, which offers them a competitive advantage and enables them to cater to a wide range of consumer needs. A work environment that embraces talent regardless of gender, race, colour, religion, caste, creed, ethnicity, language, social and economic status, sexual orientation, handicap, nationality, age, marital status, or maternity status is the foundation of their dedication to DEI.

Under the Group CHRO, a designated DEI leader is in charge of programme management, internal communications, and the lifecycle of DEI-related activities. Champions of IndiGo DEI act as a bellwether for our inclusive culture. Every month, the DEI team updates HR vertical leaders on inclusion issues that need to be addressed and strategies for making improvements.

DEI Strategic Framework

Two main principles underlying IndiGo's DEI approach, which aims to increase inclusion throughout the entire organisation:

- **Diverse Recruiting:** A framework for inclusive recruiting that guarantees everyone has equal opportunity.
- **Inclusive Culture:** We actively work to promote inclusivity and positive change at every level of the employee life cycle by implementing effective interventions.

Human Resource Management at IndiGo Airlines

Equal Opportunity Policy at IndiGo

At IndiGo, they recognize the value of a diverse workforce. They are committed to providing equal opportunities in employment and creating an inclusive workplace and work culture in which all employees are treated with respect and dignity.

They see diversity in the workforce as essential to their business. They will make an effort to guarantee that our staff is inclusive of all societal groups. They think that by doing this, they would be more prepared to create and provide inclusive and accessible goods and services. By doing this, they aspire to produce business excellence by better meeting the needs of their clients and customers. The provisions of the 2016 Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act are adhered to by this Equal Opportunity Policy.

Policy Statement regarding HRM at IndiGo including PWD Candidate

At IndiGo, they continuously strive to ensure that all our facilities, technologies, information, and privileges are accessible to persons with disabilities.

Candidates with various disabilities are encouraged to apply. They only consider merit when making judgements about hiring, promoting careers, providing training, or awarding other rewards. In order to ensure that a person with a disability receives the appropriate flexibility and accommodations needed to be evaluated fairly, they adhere to an inclusive evaluation process. Employee disclosures of any medical conditions or disabilities will be kept private.

All disabled people are covered under the aforementioned policy. They could be candidates for jobs, full- or part-time workers, trainees or interns, employees on a contract, including temporary workers. It also includes workers who become disabled while they are employed. Every facet of employment is covered by this policy, including hiring, training, pay, benefits, transfers, working conditions, and career growth.

Facilities and Amenities by IndiGo for Employees

IndiGo seeks to provide its workers with all the tools they need to establish a positive work environment, including assistive technology, amenities, and trainings (such as post-hire programmes and additional trainings that guarantee the worker can perform their job well). During the training period, outside the employee's home base, IndiGo ensures reasonable accommodation, including all required facilities to ensure that the employee has a hassle-free learning experience without discrimination. Its leave policy is crafted as per governing laws and employees are provided leave without discrimination. An employee facing accessibility, leave or any other work-related issue should report the same to their reporting manager and HR partner at their location or write to the Liaison Officer.

At IndiGo, recruiting decisions are made solely on the basis of merit, with candidates' qualifications and abilities taken into consideration. Flexibility will be provided to persons with disabilities on an individual basis as detailed in the subsequent section. Applicants can contact our HR team or the Liaison Officer for specific assistance with respect to suitable positions in compliance with applicable regulations.

Findings

Process of Selection in IndiGo Airlines

- **Vacancy Advertisement and Application**

Wherever possible, all vacancies will be advertised internally and externally.

The employee specification and job description will serve as the selection criteria, and they will be continuously reviewed to make sure they are not biased and only pertain to the abilities required for the position.

- **Selection Process**

Our job openings and requirements are mentioned on our career page for all employees to apply.

All candidates are hired through a fair and transparent selection process (as laid down by the regulatory authorities).

If a person with disability needs any specific reasonable accommodation for the interview, they should write to the recruiter or the Liaison Officer.

Each interviewer is mandated to record their comments on the candidate's role fitment in the Interview Evaluation Form. Reasons for rejection should be objective and not related to the person's disability, unless/otherwise directed by the regulatory authorities.

Wherever possible, more than one person would be involved in the selection interview and recruitment process, and all should have received appropriate training on the topic of equal opportunities for PWD.

Liaison Officer

IndiGo appoints a Liaison Officer, who will be responsible for taking initiative and providing the requisite support needed to realize the goals of an inclusive and accessible workplace and reasonable accommodation to address the perveances of PWD. The Liaison Officer is responsible for:

- Ensuring that all concerned employees are made aware through the HR partners of their duties and rights in relation to the Equal Employment Opportunity policy.
- Creating proactive plans to stop harassment and discrimination.
- Every employee is accountable for adhering to the Equal Opportunity Policy.
- Managers and team members need to monitor the work environment to ensure that it is free from discrimination and harassment and encourages inclusion and respect for others.
- All employees are encouraged to report any incidents of violation of this policy to their reporting manager and the reporting manager must notify in writing to the Liaison Officer.

Maintenance of Records

IndiGo will collect and maintain data regarding employees with disabilities in relation to their employment, facilities provided and other necessary information as per The RPWD Act.

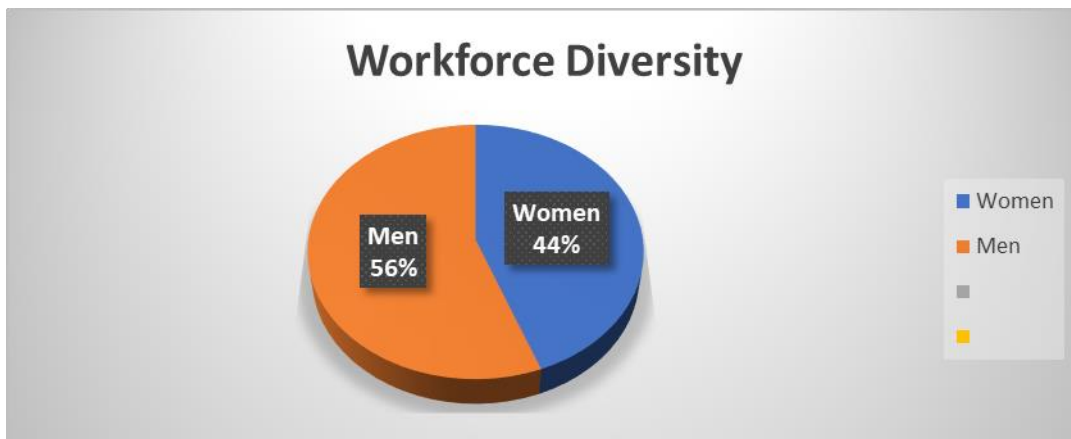
The 25 by 2025 IATA Program

Along with other airlines and industry partners, IndiGo joined this programme in 2022 to become one of the change agents in the aviation sector to make it truly diverse and inclusive. They have pledged to support IATA's 25 by 2025 campaign, which aims to achieve the following:

- 1/2 - 50% representation of women overall;
- 1/3 - 33% representation of women in non-crew
- 1/4 - 25% of women hold leadership roles.

All operational and corporate teams are working very hard towards achieving these targets.

Workforce Composition: FY 2023



Sources: ESG Report 2023, IndiGo

Note: In workforce diversity approx. 45 % are women employees.

The aviation sector has historically been dominated by men, with a notable gender gap in pilot roles. IndiGo identified this disparity and made it a goal to close it by enticing female pilots to work with us through supportive laws and programmes. As of right now in 2024, IndiGo employs more female pilots than any other airline worldwide.

IndiGo gives its female pilots the freedom to select their own flight schedule, enabling them to successfully manage their personal and professional obligations. Mothers who have young children can work fewer hours and days per month, depending on their availability. Due to regulatory restrictions on flying during pregnancy, pilots who are pregnant are given the opportunity to do ground tasks.

Diversity Hiring

- Tailored recruiting tool to support PWD hiring for agencies.
- Assisting in the employment of PWD and LGBTQ individuals by collaborating with NGOs.
- Between April 2022 and March 2023, the number of PWD team members increased by eight times.

Inclusive Culture

- Bias module added to hiring manager education.
- Language used in all policies is gender-neutral.
- Updates to HIV/AIDS policies in accordance with the Establishment Act

Effective Communication

- Master course for champions of DEI.
- An anti-bias initiative that includes IndiGo staff.
- Workshops on Indian sign language for everyone

Training Highlights at IndiGo in 2023

- 1,864 Average number of employees trained per day
- 230+ Number of trainers
- 3.9 million+ Total training hours delivered during FY 2023
- 118 Average training hours per employee

Talent Development

To recruit, train, inspire, and maintain engaged and productive staff, IndiGo has incorporated systems, initiatives, and organisational procedures. To produce the next generation of aviation industry leaders, they have made investments in cutting-edge training facilities, ifly, and extensive learning and development programmes.

ifly - The spirit of IndiGo

One of India's leading aviation training institutions is ifly. It has played a significant role in forming IndiGo's outstanding culture. It has 74 specially designed training halls that are used in three shifts to accommodate various learning sessions. These training halls are outfitted with the newest technology to enable hands-on classroom experiences. To create focused learning programmes, they consider input from customers and staff, evaluate the skills needed, and match them with organizational objectives and workers' desired career paths. Our trainings cover everything from safety protocols to providing excellent customer service, going above and beyond the bare minimum to stress the value of professionalism and empathy in every interaction. IndiGo is still collaborating with regulatory bodies to enable compliance education via the 6E LMS, a learning management system.

Every new hire goes through the "You're Onboard" induction programme, which can last anywhere from 24 to 90 days, depending on the employment type and the regulations that apply to it. With the aid of this programme, new hires can better comprehend IndiGo's brand promise, values, culture, safety procedures, and legal compliance. Every new hire who interacts with customers must present their learning in real time at the airport. The cabin crew is brought aboard the aircraft for hands-on, practical training.

The pilots and cabin crew of IndiGo travel through a series of drills designed to guarantee the safety of our passengers. Regular online learning sessions are held by ifly in addition to its in-person training courses. Employee education regarding corporate aims and future leadership behavior is given a lot of attention.

Through a variety of leadership development programmes catered to distinct cadres, IndiGo invests in educating staff members for increasingly significant roles. These initiatives are essential to ensure that we have a pool of qualified executives available to guide our company's growth and expansion and support effective succession planning. We also launched training programmes for new applicants and upskilled our staff on competences to meet changing company needs and remain current throughout the year. These include:

IndiGo Aviation Applied Analytics (IAAA), an eight-month analytics training programme, focuses on projects in the Network Planning and Revenue Management departments while developing important skills needed in aviation.

DigiStar, a two-year activity-driven programme designed to improve leadership and capability in the digital vertical.

A monthly series of Aviation Masterclasses led by our senior professionals, providing in-depth understanding of the latest developments in the aviation sector.

Compensation and Benefits

At IndiGo, our pay policy is in line with our organizational complexity, internal policies, market dynamics, and business goals. It is intended to offer an equitable and transparent framework, fostering brand equity and competitive advantage. To achieve equitable compensation, its "Pay for Performance" culture takes into account aspects such as distinct positions, experience, skills/competence, and grade/seniority.

For both crew and non-crew personnel, a thorough Total Rewards Statement that includes Gross and Variable Pay, retiral payments (such as provident fund, gratuity, and National Pension Scheme), as well as other allowances and benefits, has been created. The crew members' career roadmap and the specified remuneration amounts for each level are disclosed as part of the employment contract in order to uphold transparency.

Insurance Policy at IndiGo for Employees

When difficult circumstances arise, IndiGo supports its workers and their families by making sure they have access to the care and support they need thanks to extensive insurance coverage. Benefits from our insurance include the following:

- Full medical insurance with the option to add coverage for parents or in-laws, covering the employee, their spouse, and dependent children.
- A life insurance policy that protects every employee of the business.
- A group accident policy that protects workers in the case of a mishap.

Voluntary Benevolent Schemes

Its charitable programmes provide much-needed assistance to families in the sad event that an employee passes away while on the job. These plans also include coverage in the event that an employee develops a medical condition that prevents them from performing their job as a pilot. They abide by the rules governing retirement benefits, which include the National Pension Plan, Gratuity, and Provident Fund.

Employee Stock Option Scheme

On June 25, 2015, IndiGo launched the Employee Stock Option Scheme. On September 07, 2016, the scheme was modified to provide eligible employees with share-based benefits. This programme was created to draw in and keep talent while motivating staff members to match their own efforts to the company's overarching expansion goals. The programme remains unchanged for FY 2023, and we will be adhering to the modified SEBI (Share Based Employee Benefits and Sweat Equity) Regulations, 2021 ("SEBI SBEB Regulations").

Employee Well-Being

IndiGo believes that the success of our organisation as a whole depends on the well-being of our employees, and we take various steps to promote this belief.

Parental Leaves

All expectant moms are eligible for a 26-week paid leave as part of our maternity benefits package. Male workers are entitled to four days of paternity leave. Furthermore, they offer adaptable work schedules and responsibility redistribution for cockpit and cabin crew members both before and after pregnancy.

Employee Assistance Program

To provide our employees with access to psychological therapy and comprehensive wellness solutions, IndiGo has teamed with 1to1help.net, a provider of Employee Assistance Programmes (EAP). Strict confidentiality is maintained throughout in order to support staff members as they deal with work-life balance, parenthood, stress, anxiety, and relationships.

Supporting Educational Pursuits and Special Circumstances

IndiGo offers sabbaticals to staff members who choose to follow their dream of becoming pilots or take a prolonged leave of absence for unique reasons.

Employee Engagement

High standards for customer service are a result of a highly motivated and engaged workforce at IndiGo. Their engagement programmes are tailored to match our people with our sustainability goals and expansion strategies, compliance, health and safety obligations, and build relationships based on trust and empathy, even though they hire a wide range of personnel, from novices to experts.

Effective Communication

Its awareness and sensitization programmes spread this message to all employees, and its organizational communications are thoughtfully crafted to ensure that they are considerate of all employee groups. All aboard, one of IndiGo's internal magazines, is a positive step towards developing a more inclusive culture.

Suggestions

Improving Human Resource Management can greatly benefit IndiGo, enhancing employee satisfaction, retention, and overall performance. Here are several suggestions in by working in those areas, IndiGo can improve its Human Resource Practices in the company:

Enhance Recruitment Processes

- Implement structured and competency-based interviews.
- Use technology and AI for efficient and unbiased candidate screening.
- Develop a strong employer brand to attract top talent.

Comprehensive Training Programs

- Regularly update training modules to align with industry standards and new technologies.
- Provide leadership and soft skills training alongside technical training.
- Encourage continuous learning through online courses and workshops.

Employee Engagement and Communication

- Foster an open communication culture where employees feel heard and valued.
- Conduct regular town hall meetings and feedback sessions.
- Utilize employee engagement surveys to gather insights and make informed decisions.

Career Development and Growth Opportunities

- Create clear career progression paths and promote internal mobility.
- Offer mentorship programs and support for further education and certifications.
- Recognize and reward high performers with promotions and opportunities for skill enhancement.

Work-Life Balance

- Introduce flexible working hours and remote work options where possible.
- Ensure adequate rest periods and manage workload to prevent burnout.
- Provide wellness programs focusing on physical and mental health.

Diversity and Inclusion

- Implement policies that promote a diverse and inclusive workplace.
- Conduct regular training on unconscious bias and cultural sensitivity.
- Establish employee resource groups to support underrepresented employees.

Compensation and Benefits

- Ensure competitive salaries and comprehensive benefits packages.
- Regularly review and adjust compensation based on market trends.
- Introduce performance-based incentives and bonuses.

Technology and Tools

- Invest in modern HR management systems for efficient data management and process automation.
- Use analytics to make data-driven HR decisions.
- Provide employees with the tools they need to perform their jobs effectively.

Employee Well-being and Support

- Offer support programs such as counseling services and stress management workshops.
- Encourage a healthy work environment with initiatives like fitness challenges and healthy eating programs.
- Create a supportive environment where employees can voice concerns without fear of retaliation.

Compliance and Ethics

- Ensure all HR practices comply with local labor laws and regulations.
- Foster a culture of ethics and integrity through regular training and transparent policies.
- Implement a robust system for reporting and addressing grievances.

By focusing on these areas, IndiGo can enhance its HRM practices, leading to a more motivated, productive, and loyal workforce.

Conclusion

IndiGo's commitment to employee well-being is evident through its various support programs, including counseling services and stress management workshops. The airline promotes a healthy work environment through initiatives like fitness challenges and healthy eating programs. Moreover, adherence to compliance and ethical standards is a priority, with robust systems in place for addressing grievances and ensuring all HR practices comply with local labor laws and regulations. IndiGo Airlines has developed a robust HRM framework that not only supports its operational requirements but also enhances employee satisfaction and engagement. This holistic approach to HRM helps IndiGo maintain a motivated and productive workforce, which is crucial for sustaining its position as a leading airline in a competitive market.

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