

THIS ARTICLE WAS BROUGHT TO YOU BY LI &amp; FUNG

# A LOOK INSIDE LI & FUNG'S THREE-YEAR DIGITALISATION REFORM



From right to left: Dwight Szeto, Eva Wong, Roger Young, Annie Suen

With 22,000 people working in more than 250 locations in over 40 different markets, Li & Fung (LF) is well aware of the impact technology can bring to the 111-year-old global supply chain management services provider.

Technology is revolutionising the sector and to keep abreast with market trends, it is of paramount importance to develop the company's digital capability internally and externally.

"Our CEO is well aware of the challenges and opportunities that technology is bringing to our business. Digitalisation is one of the three prime objectives of the company's three-year strategy plan. To support the company's strategic goals, the priority of the HR team is to develop our people asset to align with the CEO's digitalisation reforms," said Roger Young, LF's chief human resources officer.

## Kick-starting a digital journey

To reinvent the organisation through the use of digital technology, the HR team has established three main goals – develop a new digital working culture (organisation); build a digitally competent workforce for the future (people); and support people to contribute to the company's bottom line (business).

This transformation journey is no easy task – fear of change, lack of experience and data accuracy, talent gaps and insufficient training are all major obstacles the HR team has to overcome.

The HR team has mapped out a series of strategies to build a digital talent pool, to improve colleagues' digital capabilities and to shape the future of the learning and development function.

"The digital learning team strives to promote a new way of working and has created comprehensive learning processes, training and applications to improve our workforce's digital competency, while retaining digital-ready colleagues as an integral part of the company to meet the organisation's operational goals," said Dwight Szeto, LF's director of digital learning.

Grooming digital talent is another part of the path forward. The company has a digital ambassador programme to recruit digital-literates from different business units to share knowledge. These tech-savvy colleagues act as role models, act as direct points of contact, advocating the new digital culture to meet specific business needs.

"Our projects include technical events and the development of mobile apps, online games, websites, virtual reality (VR) simulation and innovation experiments," Szeto said.

In November, the digital learning team hosted a digital learning exhibition, a one week event showcasing how technology can help accelerate learning in the company. "I'm really excited at the opportunity that we have right now to begin accelerating digital learning in the company. We're moving into a new transformation



The HR team created the "Culture Journey" board game to reinforce the company's values through the power of gamification.



in the company and in the entire retail industry, so with that, digital learning is something that is absolutely important in how we bring along 22,000 colleagues in this journey," Young said.

## How technology and gamification are driving engagement at LF Logistics

Collaborating with the corporate digital learning team, LF Logistics, the fast-growing business unit under LF is able to drive its "people first" strategy with technology and innovation.

A mobile responsive website was built to heighten awareness of the company's core values and communicates the "INSPIRE Greatness" campaign, designed to promote internal communication among colleagues at the company.

The INSPIRE Greatness internally accessible website contains short games and quizzes to reinforce an understanding of the company's core values, and a platform for colleagues to submit stories to share practices that work for them.

Having a social media presence is an integral part of its journey towards digitalisation. Annie Suen, general manager of learning and organisational development, LF Logistics, said the company had taken advantage of social media channels such as WeChat, LinkedIn and Facebook to reach out to potential new talent.

"We know Millennials love to do things on their phones, including job hunting. It makes a lot of sense for us to reach out to them on social media," she said.

The HR team has worked to engage potential candidates with games and activities for them to learn about the company's culture. An interactive online game was developed in-house to help applicants understand who our customers and brands we serve are.

"I think social media is a great tool to build our employer brand. Potential candidates are able to learn about our culture and values and decide whether the organisation suits them," said Eva Wong, vice-president of human resources, LF Logistics.

The result of the social media recruitment strategy has been encouraging. This

year LF Logistics China attracted more than 6000 applicants through social media.

"With social media, we are able to reach out to quality overseas talent as well, who we were not able to reach out to as effectively before," Wong said.

Using gamification to engage employees is another one of the company's HR initiatives - creating a "Culture Journey" board game to reinforce the company's values through the power of gamification.

Players of the game are able to strengthen their understanding of the company's values by answering questions in their passport as they undertake their journey.

"The game is such a huge success, our colleagues just love this board game so much. They enjoy learning through playing games and it is also good for team building. One of our colleagues in China has even volunteered to translate it into Chinese for other colleagues," Suen said.

With support from the digital learning team, LF Logistics has also built the company's first-ever digital learning game mobile app - "The Lean Game". The app has helped the operations team quickly understand the 'eight wastes' - a lean concept for undertaking process improvement in a fun way.

"Through maximising the impact of our strategic initiatives, we have proven that HR can play a strategic business partner role in engaging and retaining our talents, and having an extraordinary impact on business success," said Wong.

The innovation of the company's HR strategies earned it five awards at the HR Innovation Awards 2017, organised by *Human Resources*. The company was recognised in the following categories: Excellence in Social Media – Gold; Excellence in Graduate Recruitment/Development – Bronze; Excellence in HR Strategic Plan – Bronze; and Excellence in Organisation Development – Bronze; Excellence in Learning & Development-Bronze.