

Heart Count: Optimizing Performance for Business Sustainability in Digital Era

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ABSTRACT

This paper highlights the importance of human capital development towards optimising performance for business sustainability in digital era. It introduces a new concept called “Heart Count” that is vital to management of employees’ happiness which would be the determinant of performance in digital era. It provides a wholesome human capital development strategy that covers recruitment, retention and separation to empower generation Y and beyond. Heart Count treats employees as human beings and nurture them towards achieving happiness that will empower them to be an entrepreneur either on their own or within an organisation. Heart Count counters the human robotization caused by Industrial Revolution 4.0 via rehumanising the employees.

Keywords: *Heart Count; Head Count; Recruitment; Retention; Separation; Employees*

1. INTRODUCTION

Industrial Revolution 4.0, the fourth wave of technology is revolutionizing the business environment via disruptive innovation like artificial intelligence, augmented reality, additive manufacturing, big data analytics and the internet-of-things (IOT) that leads to higher efficiencies and competitiveness economy. As a result, the human capital development process faces tremendous pressure in preparing the Generation Y and beyond towards meeting the organisational need in optimising its performance. On one hand, the organisation is facing huge task in developing people, while on the other hand it is threatened by the automation process via artificial intelligence that make people irrelevant and could be easily replaced by robots [8]. Thus, this paper introduces a new human capital development concept called “Heart Count” that will provide a balance that will empower the employees, help them to lead a happy working life while optimising their performance.

2. CURRENT SCENARIO

Human Capital Development has been going on for many generations. It started with the relationship between the paymaster and pay receivers evolved from (i) Master versus slave, (ii) Master versus servant and (iii) Employer versus Employee. The power between the paymaster and pay receivers is becoming very close, even to the extent, pay receivers gaining more power than paymaster due to the shortage of skill employees. Substantial money, energy and time are spent on this and the paymasters always like to have a higher power than the pay receivers. As a result, the pay receivers are provided full opportunity to empower themselves to optimise their performance. In many cases, the baby boomers and Generation X were just playing the

follower’s role out of the fear being victimised. This is changing quickly, as Generation Y and beyond started to dominate the workforce. They often demand for a job that fulfil their needs which will lead to happiness.

The issue is getting worse as in the current digital era; instead focusing on the Generation Y and beyond, industrialists are focusing more on robotising them via vast usage of artificial intelligence. This does not only create a lot of unrest in them being not be able utilise the three faculties of physical, mental and spiritual to lead a happy working life [4]. It is also going to dehumanise, turn them to individualist and lead to them to behave like a robot. They will not be able to utilise their spiritual aspects as most of the time they will be working in virtual world interacting with machines and robots. This in long-run, will eventually diminish their ability to interact with fellow human being via the feeling of love, caring and sharing. This delusion will lead to problems like the questions about human existence, depression, suicides and etc. In nutshell, this article addresses how to utilise the “Heart Count” concept to help employees utilise all the three faculties of physical, mental and spiritual to blossom to be a complete human being that leads to happy working life, while optimising the usage of technological advancement and its benefits.

3. HEAD COUNTS – TRADITIONAL TYPE HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Most of the current human capital development strategies related to *Head Count* focus on recruitment and retention, in the view of optimising the employees performance which are measured through their productivity. It completely ignores the intrinsic human needs and treats human being as robots or mere objects that can be utilised to optimise their investment for a fee. It just focuses on hiring and retaining people as long as possible instead of looking at the

separation process, as separation is considered negative and not important towards productivity [1]. Consequently, the human capital development process is incomplete. Most of the organisations recruit employees merely based on Attitude, Skill and Knowledge, while completely ignoring their inner motivation. As long as, the employees have the skill and knowledge to execute the job, they will be hired

with the hope of positive attitude. For a short period, the employees will behave well, as shown in Figure 1, wearing a MASK to please the employer. After sometime, if their inner needs and motivation is not fulfilled, they will go through the feeling of misery and behave negatively (i. low morale, absteensism, truancy and etc), hence the productivity drops.

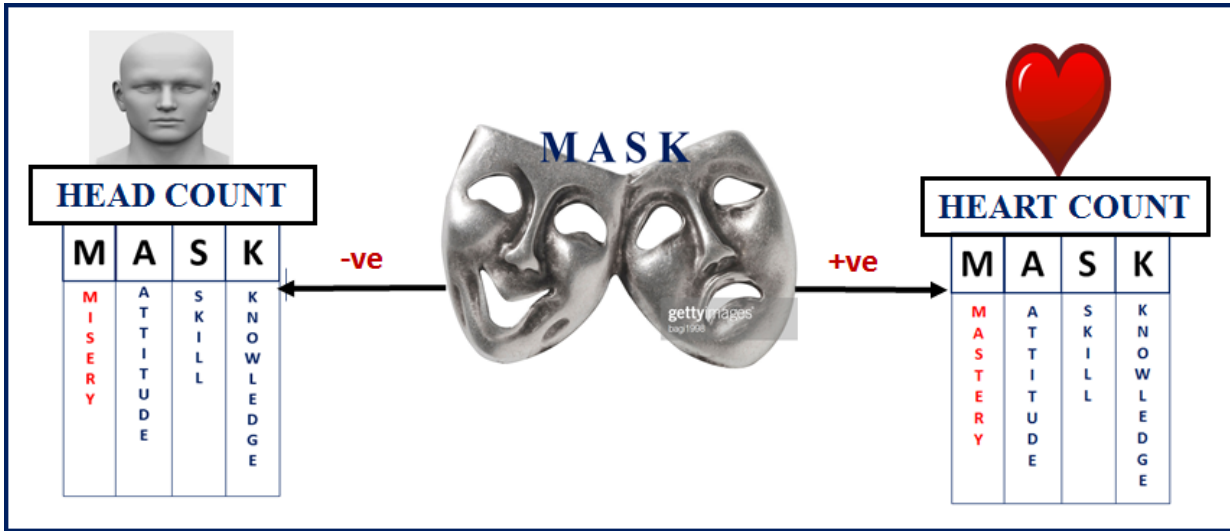


Figure 1 : MASK

The Heart Count concept introduces the futuristic human capital development strategy that covers the full loop consisting of recruitment, retention and separation [10], which will help the employees to reveal and break the MASK from day one. By doing so, they will be able to empower to motivate themselves, optimise their happiness and productivity that is crucial for the business sustainability of their organisation [9] and achieve the nation’s vision for development. In a nutshell, *Head Counts* lead to the *Mask of Misery*, while *Heart Count* leads to the *Mask of Mastery*.

4. HEART COUNT - FUTURISTIC HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The following discussions present the key aspects of (i) What is Heart Count, (ii) How heart counts can be implemented, and (iii) Why it is going to be the futuristic underlying concept of human capital development in the digital era.

4.1 What is Heart Count?

Heart Count is the futuristic underlying concept of human capital development. Based on Heart Count, employees should be treated as human being, instead of either resources or capital that will be used to optimise the return on investment as per Head Count.

Heart Count primarily treats employees as human beings that seek for happiness and empowers them to achieve it through their job via four means [12]. Firstly, it emphasizes on nurturing a sense of happiness with their organisation and job that could lead them to self-fulfilment. Secondly, it elaborates support and care from the organisation to its employees, so that the employees feel that they are valuable, and motivated to continuously be happy and productive. Thirdly; Heart Count nurtures the employee’s sense of belonging to the organisation at every phase in the organisation, from the day of recruitment until the final phase of the employment cycle. Finally, it encourages employees quit the organisation to re-join the organisation when opportunities arise as they felt that the employers cared for them every moment when they were with the organisation, even during the periods of crisis. The above benefits of Heart Count are demonstrated by employees through the sense of belonging of existing employees, willingness of exited employees to return to the same organisation (“boomerang” employees) and encouraging new employees to join the organisation.

Heart Count” is one of the most important elements in conscious leadership [4]. A conscious leader will be actively looking to align people’s hearts and minds with the organisation’s vision and values. Heart Count gears the employers to work towards a balanced approach in work and life. It also helps the workforce to be mindful, connects them to spirituality, and personalises work values to align with the company’s vision and mission. This in turn will translate into higher employee commitment and performance, while minimising employee separation.

Simpson [15] linked Heart Count to leadership style that employers show the care for their employees at all times, especially by not laying them off during hard times. It boosts up the team morale and the employee's productivity much better than by laying off the head count. Although, Winston and Creamer originally highlighted that the functions of recruitment and selection, orientation, to position, supervision, performance appraisal, and staff development are important to the staffing process through their Integrated Model for Staffing Practices (IMSP) in student affairs [16] that are crucial,

Conley added on that the concept of integrating separation into Winston & Creamer's Staffing Model are equally important [2]. In the view of this, Ramdianee [14] integrated these ideas into the Join-Stay-Leave Model, which traces the factors motivating employees to join, stay and leave an organisation, as well as the separation practices for exiting employees. The Heart Count practices attract employees to join an organisation and nurture a stronger sense of belonging. Efficient separation practices also look into nurturing a positive feeling into exiting employees, helping them feel that they are still wanted [11].

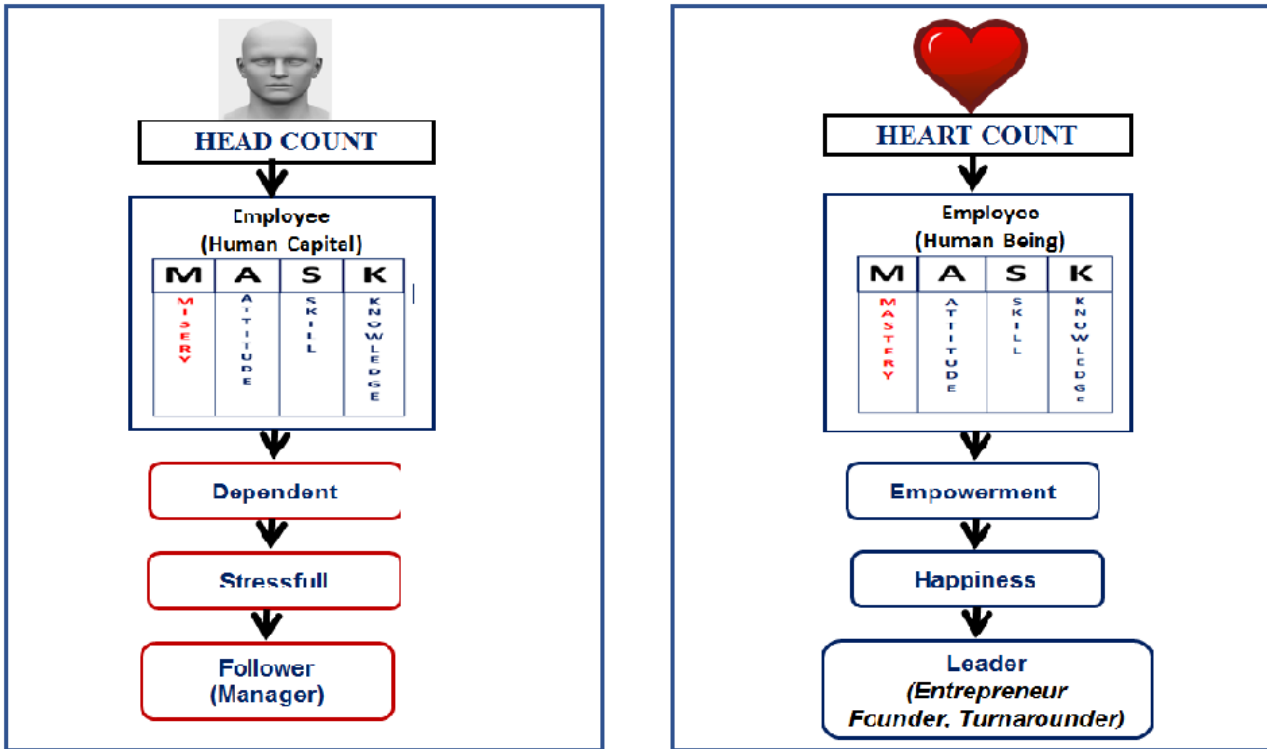


Figure 2: Head vs Heart Count

As depicted in Figure 2, Head Count develops followers, while Heart Count creates Leaders. Heart Count is about caring for people, and not seeing them as just a number or statistic. It is also about bringing a more humanistic and holistic approach to the forefront in the way in which leaders work with their team to achieve a common goal.

4.2 Why Heart Count Would be the Futuristic Underlying Concept of Human Capital Development?

Business dynamism has created a very competitive situation whereas every investment in an organisation has to be measurable and manageable effectively. In the view of this, organisations are forced to move from human resources management to human capital development, whereby the organisation's human capital is considered as an investment by the organisation. By treating human capital as

investment, the effectiveness of the human capital can be measured through the Return on Investment (ROI). This idea was developed from the I-TOP Strategic Agility Model [9] that is supported by the Resource Based View theory.[6] In addition, the consequence of ineffective human capital strategy is very high, as the number of employees going to minimum and everyone hired will be very crucial to the organisational performance.

The cost of employee turnover will be very serious, as it will lead to higher business opportunity loss due to low stakeholders confidence and happiness resulted from the organisation incapability to meet the customers' happiness. It will take lot of money, energy and time for the employer to optimise an unhappy employee, compared to the contribution of the happy employee to the works independently [12]. The differences between Head Count (Traditional Human Capital Development Strategy) and Heart Count (Futuristic Human Capital Development Strategy) are shown in Figure 3 and Figure 4 respectively.

4.2.1. Traditional Type of Human Capital Development Strategy

As shown in Figure 3, the traditional human capital development strategy will begin with a job description, commonly known as JD. Upon drafting the JD, the employer will try their best to find the employees who have the skill and knowledge that could fulfil the requirement of the JD. In some cases, they will also conduct some altitude and attitude to ensure that the employees could fit into their organisational culture. After this process, they will hire the

best-suited person as the employee. Once the employee joins the organisation; the superior will plan a retention plan for them. At this point of time, the employees will be with a mask and will try his/her best to please the superior via good behaviour such as shown eagerness on the job and etc. The M stands for Misery as they are not sure whether the job suits them. In the case after some period when they find that the job does not suit them, they will start to misbehave that will be expressed in the form of low morale, absenteeism truancy and low productivity. As the performances degrade, the employee will start the separation process.

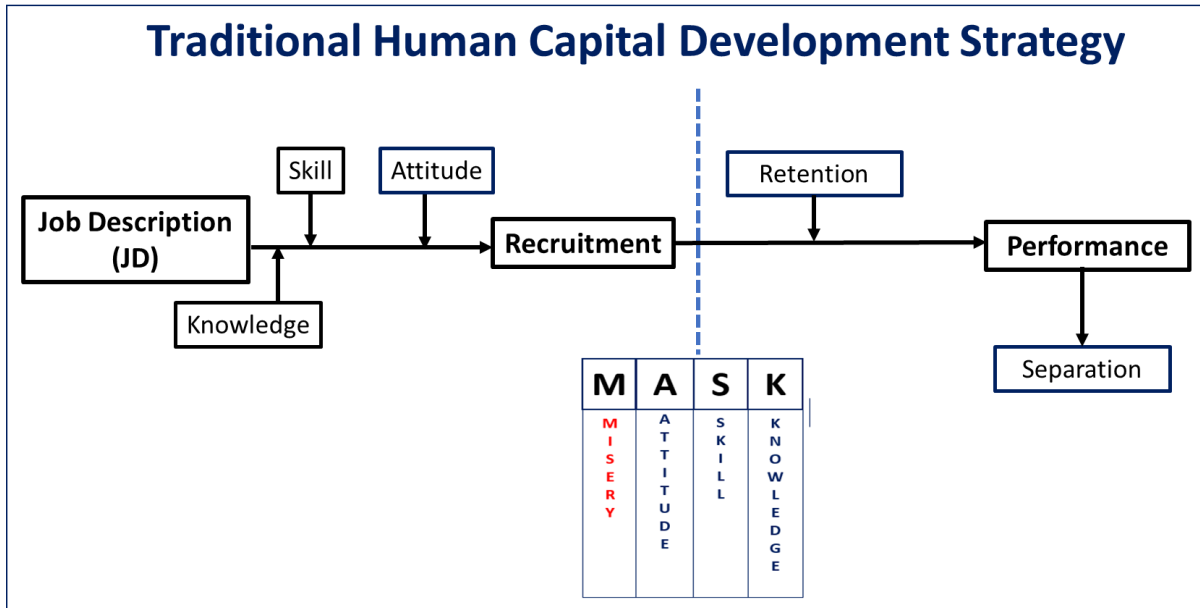


Figure 3: Traditional Type of Human Capital Development Strategy

This process will create lots of unpleasantness among the three parties who involve directly and indirectly consisting of employee, employee going to be separated and employees staying back watching what is happening to their fellow colleague. This in turn will affect the morale of the whole organisation and performance; as well as the perception of the shareholders and customers. In nutshell, the chances of the money, energy and time spent by the organisation on *Traditional Human Capital Development Strategy* will erode the organisational performance instead of optimising it, especially when dealing with future employees that will mainly consist of millennials.

4.2.2 Futuristic Type of Human Capital Development Strategy

Heart count strategy can be implemented in three stages as shown in Figure 4. First is the need to move away from the Head Count concept to the Heart Count, whereas employees should be treated as human beings, instead of being either resources or capital that will be used to optimise the return on investment. Secondly, to embed the whole human capital

development process that includes the recruitment, retention and separation. The human capital development process loop should include recruitment, retention and separation. Employees would be informed clearly about the purpose of recruitment, the retention plan for them and how they will be separated in case the things doesn't work as planned. On one hand, this will help the employer to think thoroughly about what it takes and who will be the right person that can help them to achieve their target. On the other hand, the employees will be clearly informed about their role, what support will be rendered to achieve the goals and how they will be separated in case they do not achieve the goals. The employers understand and feel certain about their investments, while the employees clearly understand what is offered to them. It would help both the employers and employees to make a very conscious decision to enter a contract of employment. Thirdly, instead of just selecting the employees for respective job not merely based on knowledge, skill and attitude, the job fit will be based on their characteristics. The employees will be classified into three (3) categories called Performer, Transactor, and Transformer. Upon hiring, they will be allocated jobs that fit their characteristics and all the following human capital strategy will be carried out accordingly to suit their

characteristics. By doing so, it will align the employees need and the job need, which in turn will empower them to work towards fulfilling their inner needs. Organisation should empower employees from the beginning to be an entrepreneur/transformer within the organisation as they will be responsible for their existence in it, while working towards attaining the organisation goals. By fulfilling their inner needs, they will be happy and work independently like an entrepreneur. In addition, as mentioned by David Hanson, Sophia Human Robotic, Performer and Transactor job could be easily replaced, while Transformer job cannot be replaced as it has no

human feeling and intellectual capability. According to Hanson Robotics [3], Sophia would ultimately be a good fit to serve in healthcare, customer service, therapy and education as she is faster and more accurate in carrying out the routine or repeatable jobs. As Sophia runs on artificially intelligent software that is constantly being trained in the lab, its conversations are likely to get faster, Sophia's expressions are likely to have fewer errors, and it should be able to answer the increasingly complex questions with more accuracy [7].

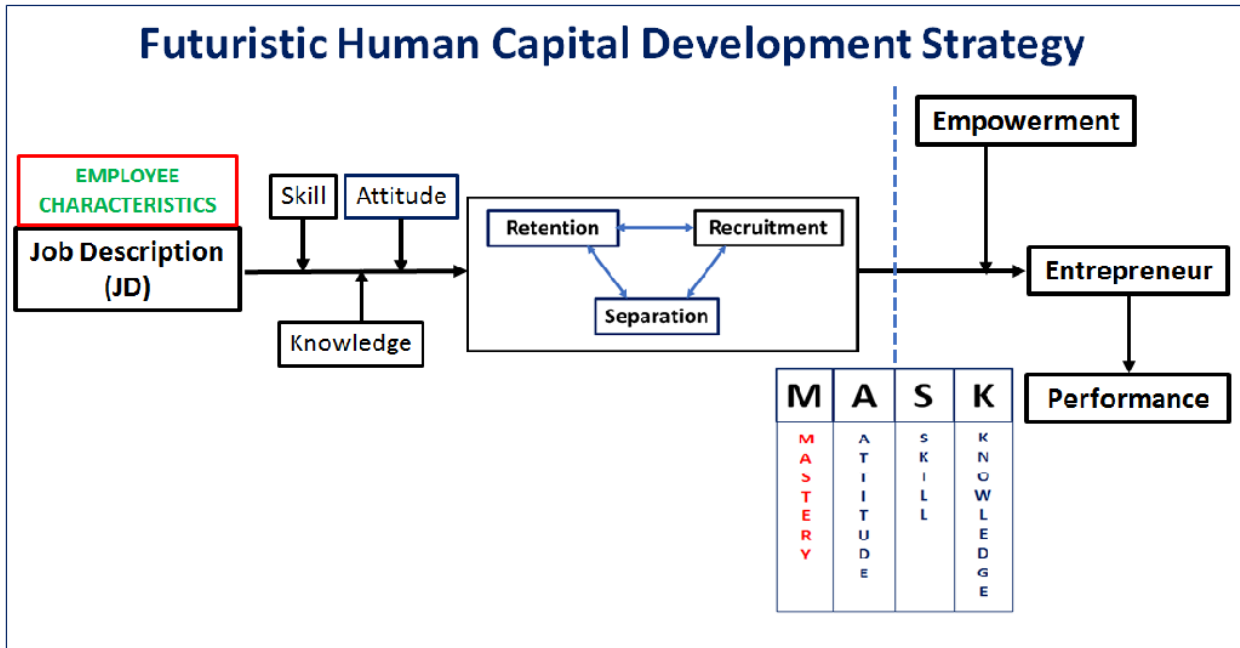


Figure 4: Futuristic Type Human Capital Development Strategy

Thus, the employee will be empowered and inspired to be an entrepreneur within the organisation, whereas he/she will be working independently towards achieving the organisation's vision.

5. CONCLUSION

As the world is moving quickly to full industrialisation via the vigorous development of artificial intelligent, the robotization or dehumanisation of employee is becoming very threatening. If nothing has been done about this, there will be a time in which the behaviour and interaction mode among fellow human beings will be like robots, without any feelings of love, caring and sharing. We must ensure that human beings always feel and behave like human beings. With the fundamental belief of Heart Count, treating the employees as human beings, organisations would be able to counter the impact of robotization or dehumanisation due to the current mode of human capital development. In the view of this, Heart Count is crucial in order to counter this problem and assist employees to feel as human being

and to treat fellow human being with love and caring. Heart count will empower the employees to achieve happiness at work and utilise it to inspire them to optimise their performance which is crucial for the organisational performance and sustainability, which in turn will make the stakeholders and customers happy as well. In nutshell, organisational sustainability in the future will be strongly influenced by organisational happiness that arises from the happiness of the stakeholders, employees and customers, which can only be attained through the Heart Count.

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