

**İKDUYAYEN**

YEŞİM SARIER AKSU

**INTERVIEW:**

PERFETTI HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR KASIM KORUN

## Employee's Engagement Should Be On The Basis Of HR

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Perfetti Human Resources Director Kasim Korun says that Human Resources functions are integrated with each other and emphasizes that priority should be given to the employee's engagement. Mr. Korun combines the education history with HR and says that "A sustainable HR strategy is important for a company in terms of both sustainable growth and sustainable skills development".



Perfetti Van Melle Human Resources Director Kasim Korun, who studied Economics master degree after being graduated from the Mathematics Department of Hacettepe University, explained that he has met the human resources world through the trainings he participated in this period. Mr. Korun who told that he was always interested in social areas though his department was mathematics in the university shared that he met with Pusula Education and Management Consultancy after his researches and norm cadre studies during his master degree studies. Mr. Korun stated that he has started to recognize the HR with his work there, and recorded that he had the opportunity to work in different areas of the HR throughout his career for 20 years. Korun also states that while creating HR strategies, they attach great importance to employee's engagement and a pool of sustainable talent and he explained the studies they have undertaken for this issue in Perfetti Van Melle.

### Could you tell us about your first encounter with HR and your studies after the training?

I worked for seven years in a training management consultancy company that I met immediately after the school. I liked this area starting from the business kitchen here. Training and management consulting was a place where I really understood whether I liked this business or not and whether it fits me or not. Because I was giving trainings to many international and local big corporations and also was making consultancy for HR projects and HR Management. I prepared trainings, I supported consulting projects. After a while, I started to give trainings. We gave very good trainings and thus I had the opportunity to improve myself. But even when I was working in the consulting company, I was always told by the HR world that I started the work in the opposite direction and that I have to see the company side of the business. So in 2004, I accepted the proposition from Avon Cosmetics and I passed to the other side of table. I served there as the manager of sales training department; as the sales training manager and field training manager. We formed an education department there. I then passed to Nestle and started to serve as Sales HR Business Partner. I worked in Nestle for 7 years as firstly Sales HR Manager and then as Operations Partner. I was responsible for all the

factories and supply chain. I also worked as Director of Industrial Relations. We were making works such as trade union relations and negotiations. I learned a lot at Nestle about HR practice, operational studies, daily HR practices and strategies. In 2015, I received a proposition from Perfetti for the position of HR Director. I saw that they were very suitable for my values ??and vision and started to carry out my duty there.

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**You come mostly from the training side of HR. How did you decide to progress in HR after training? What has affected you?**

Perhaps my passion for the personal development... My family is composed of educators. In our family values, self development and learning something new were always on the front. I've always been a person who always cares about personal development, reads new books and thinks about the way to apply it on myself. Especially in my university years, I was also interested in social sciences. The HR has addressed my such values ??and I felt I enjoyed doing it. It was very important to learn something new and share it with people. This gave me a lot of fun when I was teaching. It was very valuable for me to make small or big contributions to personal development of people, to share something with them and then to get their positive feedback and thanks.



**What are the main dynamics of HR do you think? What do you think about the bases that a HR department should be on?**

Training was always on the first plan during the period I started HR practices or served as HR Manager, because I was engaged in training in the past. But by time I have seen that these are integrated systems. Providing primarily the employee's engagement lies on the basis of this. All HR functions serve this. When you start to separate them, employee's satisfaction and engagement begin to be affected.

On the other hand, sustainable results and productivity are the main factors for the company. It is important for the performance to improve and to have a long-term sustainable HR pool. So I always try to keep these two main factors together. First of all, do we have a sustainable HR strategy for the company? Because this is necessary both for the company's performance, profitability, costs, and for the development of forward-looking capabilities. On the other hand, on the employees' side, does the climate we create here really make them come to work pleasantly every day? Does it make them engagement to this company? Can they realize their missions in this company? And does their satisfaction get bigger, even if just a bit? That is the cause I see HR on these two bases. While looking on these two bases, I realize that all HR functions actually affect both of these factors. But sometimes we see the need for prioritizing some certain functions according to the priorities and needs of the companies. What is most enjoyable for me is to be able to bring new talents to the company always, to develop them and in the long run to see them at critical positions in the company.

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**Which studies did you do with this point of view after you have come to Perfetti?**

After we got here, we did a situation analysis firstly. Perfetti Van Melle is a company investing in Turkey's HR. It has a history during which it has developed and applied very good practices. When I came here, I studied the whole situation. We all started to think about the method to move positive things forward. We have studied the company's human resources for this. This is a very young company. We have an employee count of one thousand. We have 800 operators working in production. When we look at the structure, we see that a large majority of them are Y-generation. So while setting our strategy here, the two factors I mentioned just before were very important. Mainly, to continually improve employee's engagement and satisfaction and to create a continuous improvement model for the company. Y-Generation has certain expectations. They expect more flexibility in the company such as flexibility in working hours, flexibility in side benefit. We continued to make improvements for such areas. Secondly, we started to work on digitization.

**What did you do for digitization?**

We have restructured our internet site and made it attractive for younger people. We had a performance system for our operators and the system was in the form of a pen and a paper. We transferred this to electronic media based on more objective data. Then we have set up a sales target system. We follow key performance indicators of our sales personnel on an online system. We constantly receive information from them through this online system. This system measures both business results and a number of behavioural competencies. The company already had training programs to develop the skills but we restructured these training programs under one roof. We named it as Career Kitchen. We have prepared this program together with Bilgi University in a fun way with the simulations that will attract Y-Generation. Because we know that personal development is very important because our team's age is young. So, we have considered the trainings as multi-module programs of one-week or ten-day, under the roof of a university, but not as a one-day or two-day system. We have launched the Sales Academy program under Career Kitchen. We will continue this program next year together with Leadership Academy.

**Why did you name the program like this?**

The feedback we received from our employees directed the general name of these studies to be Career Kitchen. Employees in Perfetti see here as a career kitchen. They consider it as an important opportunity to improve their careers. We have integrated this Career Kitchen brand with our trainings in conjunction with our products, in order to make their careers more pleasant in this direction. In this context, we also work to provide internship opportunities for our 3rd, 4th class students and new graduates from universities. Within this program, we accept long term interns from different departments of the universities and after a certain internship; we also evaluate these colleagues in business opportunities that occur.

**Do you carry out these studies with a strategic plan in the name of the employer's brand? Why is this concept so important do you think?**

It is important for us because of two aspects. One of them is that our brands are rather in the foreground and reach the consumer at first hand. Such as Vivident, Mentos, Chupa Chups...

Our corporate name is a bit more backwards. Right now, we want to introduce our company more in this sense. Employer's brand is very important for employee's adoption. Employees want to work in good companies which are close to their own values. These companies being known with certain values ??also make the employees more pride in daily life. Secondly, of course there is serious competition. This competition is also for gaining the talented people. Talented people also want to know and understand the companies better while making their choices. Recently, the social media is very important and we are actively using those media.