

# EXECUTIVE ROUNDTABLE

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**HRD**  
HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR  
ASIA

# Alight Solutions and HR leaders meet in recent executive roundtable in Bangkok

HRD invited 10 HR leaders from some of Thailand's top companies to discuss HR transformation with the rise of technology

**TECHNOLOGY** is challenging the way we work today and HR plays a pivotal role in this digital transformation. How can HR effectively use technology to optimise existing frameworks while advancing to anticipate business needs?

At HRD Asia's recent executive roundtable in Bangkok, Alight Solutions' leader for HR transformation Advisory (Asia Pacific) Vikrant Khanna led the discussion by highlighting trends from Alight's biggest APAC HR transformation survey and identifying ways to leverage technology to enable HR. From overcoming longstanding challenges to more recent progress, we learn how several organisations are on the way to becoming future-ready.



## How is HR gearing up to deliver on the transformation agenda?

**Vikrant Khanna, Leader, HR Transformation Advisory (Asia Pacific), Alight Solutions:** One of the findings from our biggest transformation survey last year was that HR is putting a lot of effort into focusing on talent outcomes, building a capable HR organisation and ensuring frictionless service delivery and optimised technology stack. Yet, is HR equipped enough to move towards addressing these elements, and if so, are there examples that we can all learn from?



**Siriporn Phuangmarayat, EVP, People Strategic Partner Function, Siam Commercial Bank:** We are currently in the process of becoming more digitalised, so we are working towards reskilling our teams. For example, we have seminars held at our Siam Commercial Bank (SCB) Academy, so employees can develop skills to overcome changes in their role and in the business.

So, we go about our business as usual for our daily responsibilities while keeping focus on the needs of the future at SCB Academy – that way we are different. We

rescheme our people and revisit the talent program. We also compile high potentials for primary succession.

We're focusing on the people first. So while employees now may be working using traditional methods, one way to make our employees understand digitalisation and become more tech-savvy is to set up technological competencies and try to make it as a competency in the organisation. We're not quite there yet, but definitely in progress.





Across the company, we are also applying new ways of working using design thinking, agile approach and start-ups – those kinds of ideas are coming along as well. We’re basically moving towards that direction because we know that’s the way to adapt.

**Thitipol Thanapaet, Head of Human Resources, Krungsri Consumer Group:** Putting in technology in the company such as process automation, headcount optimization, reskilling, and then redeployment to other areas are crucial during this disruption. Across the company, we are also applying new ways of working using design thinking, agile approach and start-ups – those kinds of ideas are coming along as well. We’re basically moving towards that direction because we know that’s the way to adapt.



**How does HR’s transformation affect employee experience?**

**Shishir Bharti, Group Head People & Places, aCommerce:** It goes back to retaining talent – how you can provide services that matter to the employee, given the benefits we offer. From past experiences, benefits such as medical insurance, transportation, and free food mattered, and we delivered on those needs. However, at aCommerce we introspect and asked our employees “What matters to them most, what they would like” and to our surprise what we <People team> were thinking versus “What our employees would like” were completely different. So based on the data we gathered,

we’re customizing [our benefits] to fit every employee need and am certain that this step will help us retain talent and make employee experience better.

We have partnered with a company to help us manage tailor-made benefits & also providing other essential services at discounted prices just because you are part of aCommerce.



**The future calls for more collaboration to drive success. Do you see such collaborations happening? What are some of the challenges you’ve seen driving these collaborations?**

**Shishir Bharti, Group Head People & Places, aCommerce:** I would say the notion of collaboration would mean going beyond the functions. The expectation for me would be to look at the overall business and customer solutions, and then see how we can collaborate across [functions], regardless whether they are actually [in] COE or in a Business Partner role e.g. one thing I would challenge is the HR shared services team to mirror what we are providing our customers. For us, customer centricity is key, and when looking at collaboration, we try to extend ourselves a lot more. When you’re working in rewards – I mean, not about rewards of working in HRBPs, but going out to find the right solution and then partnering with the right talents, sourcing it for a long term.

**Siriporn Phuangmarayat, EVP, People Strategic Partner Function, Siam Commercial Bank:** Collaboration has improved through the use of new technologies, and it has improved the organisational infrastructure. We need to work together not simply because of technology, but because sharing and collaborating on information should always be there. The technology may be faster today, but we still need to collaborate



to keep that human touch and openly discuss issues. Data helps us make a better decision, but it's not the only thing that can help HR generate more effective results. Focusing on how we work together can generate more effective results than just relying on data or new technology.

**Sanjeev Bhatia**, *Global HR Head, Indorama Ventures*: Thinking about the different structures involved in the Management Information System (MIS) and decision making – for example, when the individual assigned to MIS in a unit collates data and develops MIS for the unit head, that individual also has to do a similar exercise to meet data requirements of other higher offices. So the offices at the unit, region, business segment and corporate levels ask for a number of data

which are continually fed by the assigned MIS individual at the unit, however this individual doesn't really know how these offices are using the given data, such as what kind of conclusions or information based on these data are presented to the CEO or to the board.

So what I've found is whether you use an IT platform or spreadsheet or whatever format, with the current tech, it has become easier. You can definitely run the data using different reports, different formats, graphs, and then you – in corporate – can start asking 'why does this happen?'; it can be as simple as 'why is attrition very high at this level?' Then, the trend graph or attrition analysis done at corporate can be bounced to the unit. They – at the unit – will also understand what and how corporate is looking at their data, and connecting it to

the bigger picture so it becomes easy for units to know what corporate is driving through. At any given time in the future, the same analysis can be done at a unit level. When talking about certain issues, anyone, no matter at which location, can speak the same language with the help of tech.

These analyses bring in the collaboration when we get to speak the same language and when the data is available and accessible. Tech gives us the platform for data on a global system to understand and analyse in the way you want, so for example, when we set up a meeting on a particular issue, units are aware of the topics and data which they can see through the same system.