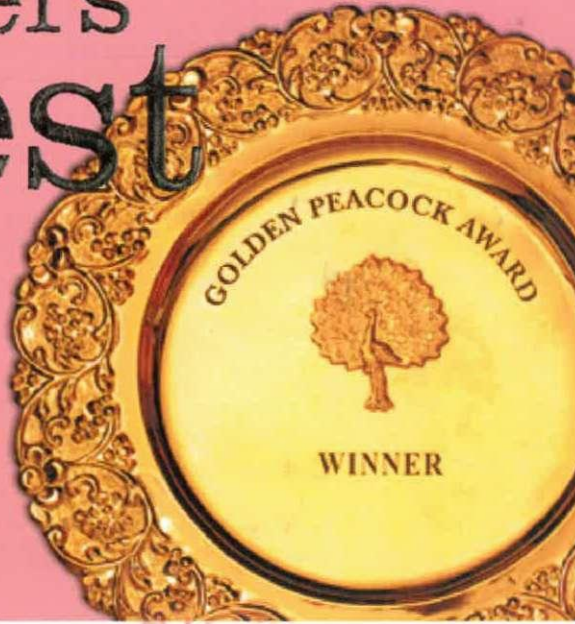


One of the main objectives of Golden Peacock Awards Scheme is to raise the Overall Quality and Competitiveness of major corporate functional areas and boost an organization's **BRAND** image. It also encourages the Winners to share their **success** initiatives with others

# Winners' Digest

**Success Stories on**

HR Excellence  
Innovation Management  
**2022**



Winners of Golden Peacock  
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GRASIM INDUSTRIES LIMITED

BIRLA CELLULOSE

PULP & FIBRE BUSINESS

MUMBAI



### **Organizational Description**

Grasim Industries Limited, Birla Cellulose, Pulp & Fibre Business, Mumbai is in the business of manufacturing Manmade Cellulosic Fibres (MMCF). It is one of the largest viscose staple fibre (VSF) producers in the world (14% share of global market) with a fibre manufacturing capacity of 3430 TPD (1252 KTPA) and pulp manufacturing capacity of 2680 KTPA. It also manufactures Modal and Lyocell fibres. Birla Cellulose operates 11 pulp and fibre sites globally, which use closed-loop processes and environmentally efficient technologies to conserve natural resources and recycle raw materials and to follow the principles of circular economy. Its New Generation innovative products like Livaeco, Liva Reviva, Birla Excel (lyocell) and Birla Spunshades are designed with superior sustainable credentials. These products are the outcome of strong R&D capabilities including six advanced research and innovation centres that are equipped with state-of-the-art facilities and pilot plants.

### **Prime Factors for Innovation**

Birla Cellulose embodies the Aditya Birla Group Values that promote a dynamic, nimble and thinking organization. Such organizations realize the need to continuously evolve and transform themselves to be able to respond to the rapid changes our society and marketplace is witnessing. Some of the prime factors that have helped motivating employees to innovate in Birla Cellulose include a powerful vision, nurturing a growth mindset, encouraging entrepreneurial spirit, a robust rewards and recognition system.

## **Investment in Human and Technology Development**

Birla Cellulose recognizes the importance of Research and Development for its long-term viability. The Business typically invests ~ 1% of its total annual Sales on R&D. Given that the business operates in products that have become commoditized over the years, and in comparison to companies in the same market segment, the Business' investment in R&D significantly stands out. The Business has developed state-of-the art R&D facilities. The Pulp and Fibre Innovation Centre at Navi Mumbai, which is the seat of much bench scale and conceptual research as well as modeling and data analytics, comprises of 50 scientists and engineers, out of which ~ 40% have obtained a PhD in materials science, textile chemistry, chemical engineering, applied physics, or synthetic/physical chemistry. The R&D department also provides the option for the employees with a Master's degree to pursue a PhD, and has agreements with the reputed University of Mumbai Institute of Chemical Technology (UICT) to enable this Industrial PhD program.

Birla Cellulose is Reimagining Digital and driving a digital transformation of the entire business. An interim target is to make Vilayat - a key VSF manufacturing site - part of the Global Lighthouse network by 2025. Over fifty projects spanning ERP, connected workmen, smart asset maintenance, robotic cleaning, warehouse management, soft sensors, etc are being implemented aggressively.

## **Product Development Strategies**

Birla Cellulose practices the Stage Gate Process for ensuring a healthy pipeline of Value Added Products catering to ever evolving market needs. A well designed process is used for identifying product innovation needs and opportunities. The process involves capturing Voice of Customer by sales and marketing teams, converting the needs to compelling Value Propositions, developing initial prototypes, pilot scale-ups, commercial scale trials and finally market tests. The Business leverages the innovation capabilities of the Group Innovation Cell (GIC) of the Aditya Birla Group. GIC maintains close contacts with renowned global think-tanks and academia and typically provided early intelligence on emerging technologies. This information is converted into ideas that feed into the innovation funnel and are assessed for their Desirability, Feasibility and Viability. The Business actively participates in industry-wide trade consortiums and scientific societies. This exposure enables the Business to gain a broad overview of mega-trends, prevailing and

incipient challenges, and feasible approaches that can be developed into commercial solutions.

## **Customer Value**

Customer Centricity is a Core Business Values at Birla Cellulose, and several processes evolved over decades of experience are used to monitor customer value and improve the value creating process. Mission Happiness continuously tracks the Voice-of-Customer and is administered by a dedicated Customer Centricity Team. The team facilitates continuous customer engagement and identifies customer pain areas as well as any looming problems at early stages, thereby enabling their timely resolution. Quality Councils and Steering Committees oversee product quality and customer experience for the Business. These are led by senior leaders and the governance mechanism ensures that customer complaints are addressed seriously and quickly. The time taken for complaint resolution, as well as the nature of complaints are monitored.

## **Encouraging Innovativeness and Creativity**

The culture of creativity is kept alive in Birla Cellulose using a combination of different Business processes including Talent Management, Learning and Development, Succession Planning, Rewards and Recognition, Performance Management, etc. All of these are enablers for the Business to meet its deliverables, and the Business always sets itself challenging targets and deliverables and thereby spurs the workforce to stretch their abilities and continuously grow in their potential. The Business also administers an incentive scheme whereby a fraction of the employee Compensation and Benefits is linked to the Business performance. If the Business meets or exceeds its deliverables, then the employees are awarded the incentive bonus. The rationale is that the workforce as a whole will demonstrate group creativity to meet the challenging business deliverables.

## **Assessment of Peoples' Behavior, Efforts and Results and System of Reward**

Robust performance management and talent development processes enable Birla Cellulose to assess and influence people's behavior comprehensively. Employees are assessed not only on whether they met their KRAs, but also on how they did their work. Special credit is awarded to

employees demonstrating creativity, and the generation of either intellectual property, or lasting business value. The Chairman Awards are the epitome of recognition within the Aditya Birla Group. The competition for winning the awards is intense, and is very effective in screening employees who have nurtured an entrepreneurial spirit throughout their career. Birla Cellulose strongly promotes objectivity in career growth, and in growing only those individuals who demonstrate consistently living by the Business Values and who demonstrate high levels of innovativeness is achieving and surpassing in their deliverables.

## **Training for Creativity**

Birla Cellulose considers creativity as an intrinsic attribute that all employees should possess, regardless of seniority, education or function. The Business leverages the very rich training content available on the Aditya Birla Group Training Platform - Gyanodaya. The Gyanodaya online training platform is accessible to all members of the Business Staff and Management Cadres, and offers numerous trainings on creativity. Exemplary topics include "Unleashing Personal and Team Creativity", "Creativity Toolkit 1: Changing Perspectives, and Generating Creative and Innovative Ideas," etc.

## **Nurturing Entrepreneurship and Leveraging Knowledge**

The Business Core Values of Commitment, Seamlessness, Passion and Speed embody the idea of Entrepreneurial Spirit. In all of their communications and employee connects, the MD and his staff consistently promote entrepreneurship and learning. Consistently rewarding persons demonstrating the entrepreneurial spirit enables in driving an entrepreneurial culture. Learning and Development is at the very core of the Employee Value Proposition proffered by the Aditya Birla Group, and Birla Cellulose actively encourages its workforce to leverage the diverse training opportunities within the group.

## **Communication Channel**

Over its 75 years' journey, the Birla Cellulose workforce has gathered a vast body of knowledge and experience. The Business is expending considerable effort in documenting this knowledge and expertise and has created a Knowledge Management Portal (KMP). The KMP is located on Secure Cloud and is accessible to all the Business employees. KMP houses White Papers

covering different aspects of MMCF technologies, training material and documentation, and reference books on process design, data analysis, plant optimization etc.

The Research and Development (R&D) team documents significant findings in the form of Technical Notes, which are managed by the IP Lead and are made available to a wide set of Business employees. The Technical Notes are stored on the Business Secure Cloud, and the collection is searchable/browseable.

The Knowledge Centre tracks global developments relevant to our Business, in the scientific and manufacturing fields. It publishes Newsletters at a bimonthly frequency. The Newsletters typically include a list of patents and journal articles relevant to MMCF science, as well as prominent news items such as regulations, new product announcements by competitors, etc. The Newsletters are accessible to a wide workforce.

## **Impact**

Birla Cellulose employs the Innovation Management process to build a dynamic organization that is resilient to near-term uncertainties as well as future-ready. The Business uses the contribution of Value Added Products to the Business's sales as one of the metrics to track dynamism. Our Business continuously strives to improve the sustainability of its products and processes. This includes making increase the energy and material conversion efficiencies of its manufacturing processes, reducing effluent and air emissions, and increasing the productivity of its assets. The Business expends significant investment capital and intellectual resources to achieve these objectives. These activities are also included in the Innovation Management umbrella. The Business continuously tracks Sustainability improvements and assesses its performance vis-à-vis publicly stated targets such as EU-BAT capability, Net-zero capability, etc. Birla Cellulose is on the way to creating a strong IP portfolio, and currently measures the impact of Innovation Management in terms of the number of patents filed and granted. Over the past three years (including one year of Covid pandemic), our Business has filed for 25 patent invention disclosures out of which 2 have already been granted.

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