



Interview with ...

Manish Sharma
Senior Managing
Director, Global BPO
Delivery and Solution
Development Lead,
Accenture

"We are not doing impact sourcing to get more profits. We pay similar salaries to our impact workers and charge same rates from our clients. We are into this (impact sourcing) because we as an organization and our employees want to do this for the social welfare..."

Impact Sourcing

Q&A

Manish Sharma talks about Accenture's strong focus on Impact Sourcing and social benefits associated with it

Q:

What category of impact sourcing do you use in your company? Can you please elaborate on backgrounds of impact workers and the kind of work they do?

A:

We have several ongoing initiatives in different parts of the world that relate to impact sourcing.

We have a 'Hub and Spoke' approach towards impact sourcing. This includes several satellite centers (spokes) in rural locations that are associated with Accenture's regional delivery centers (hubs). We are running 5-6 such rural centers across India right now. These satellite centers receive infrastructure and training support from their respective hubs and primarily focus on hiring local rural talent and training them. We typically invite our clients to use these centers and only after their approval we use these rural centers for service delivery. It is important to note that we do not offer any discounts to clients for using impact sourcing as we offer at par salaries to these employees.

Another way in which we use impact sourcing is by partnering with Impact Sourcing Service Providers (ISSPs) in India and Philippines. We typically work with them on contractual basis and do not have any direct investment in these rural BPOs. These ISSPs provide skills and training to local talent, along with access to employment opportunities.

We also have a "Skills to Succeed" program which focuses on mentoring and training students and youth from disadvantaged backgrounds. This is purely a social development initiative and our employees undertake these activities voluntarily after office hours. This program focuses on helping disadvantaged high potential individuals in their education and employment opportunities.

In terms of type of work, our impact workers typically start with transactional work which helps boost their confidence. Over time they not only deliver basic F&A processes but also deliver more complex HR, PO, F&A functions to local and international clients. They also delivering vernacular language support functions. We also run one of the biggest centers employing disabled people in India, focused on delivering transactional F&A services. In some of these centers, our impact workers have successfully progressed to delivering relatively higher complexity processes such as analytics in

procurement and HR. This progress has strengthened our faith in our impact sourcing practices.

I must highlight that we are motivated to do impact sourcing because of the social benefits it helps us achieve. All of our initiatives linked to impact sourcing are driven by our CSR agenda and aimed at creating opportunities for high potential youth who are otherwise disadvantaged.

Q: What has been your experience so far working with these individuals – benefits or shortcomings? How do they perform compare to the traditional workforce?

A: We have had great experiences from different impact sourcing initiatives so far. Our impact workers receive same training as traditional workers and deliver services at par with traditional workers. There is absolutely no difference in the quality of work delivered by impact workers.

In fact, we have realised several benefits through impact sourcing which include lower attrition, motivated workforce, reduced migration (rural to urban migration) among workers hired at these centers, and local socio-economic development. Several of our impact workers have achieved significant increase in their annual income, have been able to pay off their education/bank loans, purchase additional amenities for their families, and afford a better lifestyle given stable employment.

Q: What's your view on future outlook of impact sourcing? Does your company plan to increase intake of impact workers?

A: As mentioned earlier, our motivation for impact sourcing is driven by its social benefits. For example, our estimates show that for every impact worker hired in India, the socio-economic benefits percolates to 4-10 related individuals. In Philippines, our experience has been that the average annual income of impact workers increased by ~33% post BPO employment. Given these benefits of impact sourcing and our motivation for social benefits, we plan to grow our use of impact sourcing in both scale and scope of processes covered. Our target is to grow our global impact program significantly over the next 5 years.

"...the performance of these impact workers has been consistently at par, if not better, as compared to our traditional employees..."

About Accenture

Accenture is a global management consulting, technology services and outsourcing company, with more than 293,000 people serving clients across all industries and business functions in more than 120 countries.

About This Joint Project between Everest Group and The Rockefeller Foundation

The Rockefeller Foundation has funded Everest Group to conduct an in-depth assessment of how the growth of Impact Sourcing can be accelerated using a fact-based business case that substantiates the benefits of the IS model. This assessment includes sizing the market, profiling the landscape, detailing the business case, and creating case studies to raise awareness of IS in the enterprise buyer and BPO communities. Establishing the business case for IS will contribute to the growth of the sector, which means that more high potential but disadvantaged youth will have the opportunity for employment, improving their lives and the lives of their families and communities.

About The Rockefeller Foundation

For more than 100 years, The Rockefeller Foundation's mission has been to promote the well-being of humanity throughout the world. Today, The Rockefeller Foundation pursues this mission through dual goals: advancing inclusive economies that expand opportunities for more broadly shared prosperity, and building resilience by helping people, communities and institutions prepare for, withstand, and emerge stronger from acute shocks and chronic stresses.

About Everest Group

Everest Group is an advisor to business leaders on the next generation of global services with a worldwide reputation for helping Global 1000 firms dramatically improve their performance by optimizing their back- and middle-office business services. With a fact-based approach driving outcomes, Everest Group counsels organizations with complex challenges related to the use and delivery of global services in their pursuits to balance short-term needs with long-term goals. Through its practical consulting, original research and industry resource services, Everest Group helps clients maximize value from delivery strategies, talent and sourcing models, technologies and management approaches. Established in 1991, Everest Group serves users of global services, providers of services, country organizations and private equity firms, in six continents across all industry categories. For more information, please visit www.everestgrp.com and research.everestgrp.com.