

Introduction

Managing human resources effectively has become vital to organizations within the modern and fast-paced business environment, more so as the economy the world over converge into a synapse of globally connected and interdependent sectors aimed at preserving and creating knowledge¹ rather than products and services alone. The novelty in the market today demands innovation² and trust³ more than mere comparative analysis of sales and market share, and the hierarchy of the centre and periphery model is evolving into a different paradigm.

Human Resources specialists are more important in business strategies today for this very change in market dynamics – more so in the present economic situation of a global recession and downturn across industries and sectors. The focus has turned on HR Department at every organization – the survival lines are running drier with every passing week at the trading markets the world over, and the aim is not only to see through the recession, but more importantly⁴, to ensure employees are still committed to the organization. HR development acts as the mentor⁵ to its employees – guiding, training and educating them in the way of the industry and the organization. Well trained and competent employees, who are able to showcase themselves and their organization to the customers in a more effective manner, help in increasing customer satisfaction and overall clientele, by adding credibility and reputation to the business. Effective HR planning and development practices⁶ bring quality and loyal workers who are committed and passionate about the success of their organization.

Google Inc., the 9 year old technology service provider based in Mountain View, California, was voted⁷ the number one **Best Company to Work for in America** for the second year in a row by its employees. It is the biggest⁸ brand name in the world today – a brand that is built upon a culture that is high on trust, low on politics, great at sharing resources and sharing the wealth, and full of meaning and significance. However, besides the usual and much publicized remuneration package and plush offices, deeper and more thoughtful set of factors have been identified and acknowledged by consulting firms and employees alike on why it is such an attractive organization to work for.

Industry	-	Media and Internet Services
Headquarters	-	Mountain View, California
CEO	-	Dr. Eric Schmidt
Founded	-	1998
Ticker Symbol	-	GOOG
Website	-	www.google.com
Job Applicants	-	761,799
Training	-	120 hours/week
Voluntary Turnover (FT)	-	4.3%

¹ JH Dunning; 2000; Regions, Globalization, and Knowledge Based Economy; 136 – 138;

² WC Kim, R Mauborgne; 1999; Sloan Management Review; Strategy, Value, Innovation, and the Knowledge Economy; 4;

³ PS Adler; 2003; Market, Hierarchy, and Trust: The Knowledge Economy and the Future of Capitalism;

⁴ G Ebadan, D Winstanley; 1997; Human Resource Management Journal - Blackwell Synergy; Downsizing, Delaying and Careers – The survivors' perspective; 79 – 84;

⁵ Arnoldo C. Hax; 1987; Oxford University Press, New York; Planning Strategies That Work;

⁶ Ann Mirel; 2008; Development and Strategies for Human Resource Development; 4 – 8;

⁷ Courtesy: Great Place to Work® Institute Inc.

⁸ Courtesy: Millward Brown Optimor; 2008; Top 100 Most Powerful Brands '08;



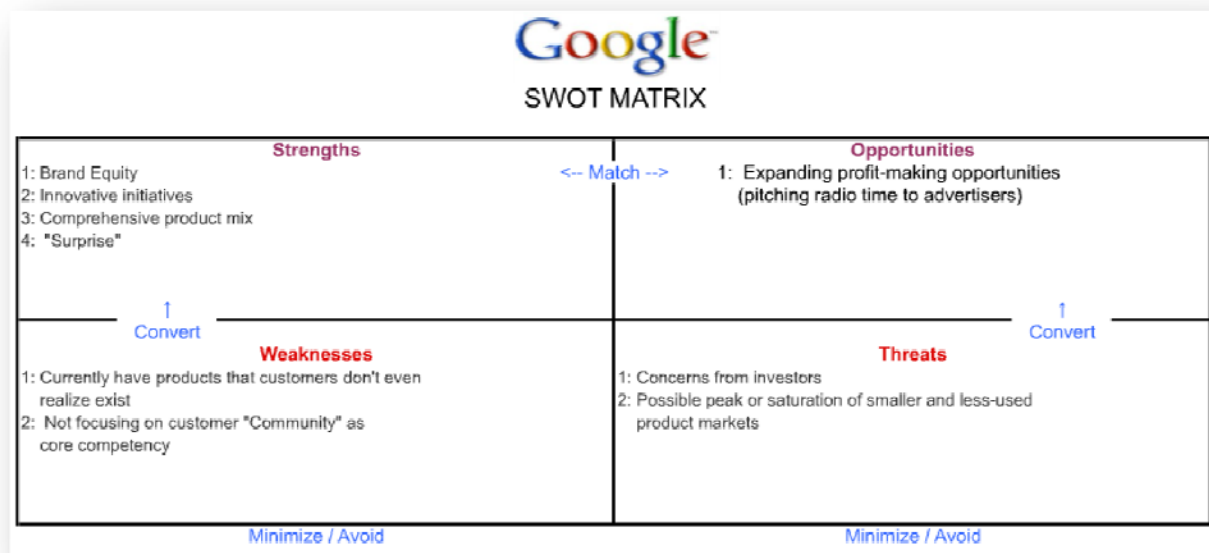
Organizational Goal and Vision

The work culture and employee empowerment philosophy at Google was apparent from the day the company was launched in 1998. The founders, Larry Page and Sergey Brin, wanted to establish Google as a company that was to be seen as a company run by the geeks. The HR Department, in its alignment with the business strategy of trying to attract the best minds across the globe to work for Google, has since always aimed to become the strategic partner to the business operations.

Business Strategic Model

As an organization, Google and its employees take pride in being regarded as geeks. In fact, one of the banners that greets you as you enter Google's Toronto Officeⁱ reads "proud to be geeks". How this very philosophy dictates their business strategy can be understood from the fact that Larry Page once remarked that Google was comprised of people with 'frighteningly' single-minded focus. Google offices are seen not as locations where people go to work, but rather as dream-houses for these geeks to retire to when they want to create something innovative and state of the art.

"Four years ago, the average search took about 3 seconds. Today, it is down to about 0.2 seconds. And since 0.2 is greater than zero, it's not fast enough". A small statement from Peter Norvig, an engineer at Google, tells the tale of the work culture and employee commitment at Google – the employees don't need the next deadline or next project proposal to work on creating something, but rather an intrinsic⁹ challenge – a challenge that could be driven by self benchmarks, or by peer influence, or simply, the quest for solving something. As a company, Google completely understands that such is the nature of devoted and committed geeks – and provides everything that is possible to keep these geeks motivated to work on novel and creative pursuits.



Understanding Google's business strategy needs a subtle understanding of how the so-prejudiced geeks work and present themselves. For a media and technology service provider like Google, the competitors have always tried to downplay the role of Google's HR department in the overall success of the organization. This is clear from the scathing criticism from Steve Ballmer, CEO of Microsoft Incⁱⁱ, where he has repeatedly questioned and challenged the business

⁹ Keith H. Hammonds; 2004; A Googler's Admission: Life amid Semantic, Visual, and Technical Esoterica; 2-4

strategy and model of Google. “They're really just one business, a search and advertising business”. However, this does not explain how Google was able to reach the \$10 billion revenue mark much quicker than Microsoft.

The explanation, as Larry Page puts it in his official blog, comes from the intrinsic Google’s vision – Google wants its employees to be as committed to technology solutions and services as the founders themselves were when they were busy conceptualizing this very vision in the dormitories at Stanford University during their college days. From providing everything that the employees need for them to focus on creativity and innovation, to helping these employees have the right information and the right resources for their work, Google has always focussed on the human capital creation and retention since becoming operational in September 1998. The business strategy for Google is tightly coupled and strongly reflected in their company’s vision statement, now known as ‘The Ten Things’¹⁰ because of the way Google was able to envisage, and more importantly, deliver, this vision.

This philosophy¹¹ at Google has served as the operating guidelines for the Human Resource Department there in a very broad and yet amicable manner. It is clear from this philosophy that Google, when formed, was aimed at creating innovative and unique solutions which would uphold the brand equity and reputation of the company not by who its employees were, and how did they dress and behave, but rather from whether the product they launched in the market could deliver what it promised or not.

As a company, Google was founded and has succeeded on the shoulders of its innovative products and clutter-free presentation. The strategy has been to provide the user a completely precise and to-the-point customer experience – and to accept¹² short term losses over long term goals. The fact that Google’s home page always consists of exactly 37 wordsⁱⁱⁱ proves the point.

The informal structure of work setting, the focus on creativity across diverse areas of internet technology, and the performance delivery promise that Google incorporates in its vision is testified by the success¹³ of its first IPO last year. However, the innovative and novel management techniques, the unique demographics of workforce, and the marvel of web services that Google launches every now and then are not as distinguishable and clear to external observers, more so from a non-technology background. The rigorous accountability, the relentless attention to detail, and the cutting-edge ideas are not the secretive components of its success¹⁴ anymore. However, the way the HR functions and policies have aligned themselves with the business model and vision makes Google the most exciting young technology company to work for and to do business with.

HR as a Strategic Partner for Business

HR department at any organization has a unique challenge – it has to ensure that the employees are motivated and committed to the organization with complete integrity and honesty. However, at the same time, the HR department has to ensure that the market dynamics are not adversely affected by the sheer volumes of investment involved in the process. In some ways, HR department should act as a service provider^{iv} for the employees, and treat employees as its

¹⁰ For a complete listing, visit the Google’s corporate web page at <http://www.google.com/corporate/tenthings.html>

¹¹ Mohit Ranka; 2007; Google - Don’t Be Evil;

¹² Courtesy: Urs Holze, Google Fellow; “People come to Google to search the Web, and the main purpose of the page is to make sure that you’re not distracted from that search. We don’t show people things that they aren’t interested in, because in the long term, that will kill your business.”

¹³ Keith H. Hammonds; 2008; The IPO that changed Everything; 5

¹⁴ Keith H. Hammonds; 2007; How Google Grows... and Grows... and Grows;



customer¹⁵ base – treat the employees the same way you would like them to treat their customers, and the whole paradigm of customer satisfaction and delivery becomes easy to adopt and adapt.

The business model and strategy of not merely trying, but actually delivering the best solution has been a benchmark of the work culture at Google. The workplaces and office locations all over the world are built over sprawling spaces which provide the employees not only with every possible space for creativity and innovation, but also ensures that the employees' ideas are duly and uncompromisingly studied, worked on, and acknowledged.

Recruitment and Selection

Recruitment at Google is the first and foremost step in the overall HR processes. With the reputation and promise that Google holds for thousands of technology professionals who want to make Google their second home, more than 1300 Resumes are received each day by Google. Hiring the right people is a key HR philosophy at Google – the median age of employees at Google is 27 years, making it the youngest workforce across the industry. However, the retention rate, and the turnover data at Google proves that the organization has been successfully¹⁶ able to attract, retain, and motivate the most difficult crop of employees – the Y generation cyber-generation professionals who are prone to changing their affiliations quicker than they change their clothes.

Google hosts many external events throughout the year which reflect a combination of their excellent recruiting practices and their awareness of the internal culture they want to maintain. They are explicitly seeking to attract the kinds of people to the company who will be successful in their open, collaborative culture.

Training and Development

Google employees are offered tremendous opportunities to learn and grow. Professional development opportunities offered to all employees include classes on individual and team presentation skills, content development, business writing, executive speaking, delivering feedback, and management/leadership. Free foreign language lessons, including French, Spanish, Japanese, and Mandarin are also sponsored by Google. Given the prominence of engineers at Google, particular attention is paid to providing unique development opportunities for this group.

An Engineering training group, engEDU, provides orientation and training classes, mentoring, career development, and tutorial services – all programs built by and for engineers. Google has also expanded its global learning and development team during the last year and is creating new leadership development programs to help develop and support Google's future leaders. In a survey, 92% of employees indicated that they are provided T&D to further them professionally, and 97%¹⁷ indicate that they are given the resources and equipment to do their job.

It is mandatory for all employees to undergo T&D sessions for a minimum of 120 hours/year, which is about three times the industry average in North America of 43 hours/year. This shows the amount of effort, time and money that Google invests in its employees to keep them abreast of the professional and technological advancements.

¹⁵ Anurag Gupta; 2005; Design Education: Tradition and Modernity; Treating Employees as Customers: A Human Resource Equity; 7 – 9;

¹⁶ Courtesy: Great Place to Work® Institute Inc., Report on 100 Best Employers of 2008 © 2008; reproduced under Creative Commons;

¹⁷ Courtesy: Great Place to Work® Institute Inc., Report on 100 Best Employers of 2008 © 2008; reproduced under Creative Commons;



Innovation and Creativity

There is a strong culture of innovation and experimentation at Google with engineers encouraged^v to take 20% of their time to develop new product or service offerings, or to provide enhancements to current offerings. Innovation from inside the firm is the norm for most engineering based software development companies. What is unique at Google is the support provided by the company, the collaboration among engineers working on each others' projects, and the final set of results that Google is able to achieve with the creativity and expertise of its engineers.

Social Good

Google has the informal corporate motto "Don't be Evil", which reminds its employees that commitment to be ethical is part and parcel of being a leader at Google. 99% of the employees indicate¹⁸ that, "Management is honest and ethical in its business practices". The standards of conduct that Google employees adhere to concern internal business practices (respecting each other, protecting confidentiality, protecting Google's assets, etc), external relations with customers and partners, and the impact on of Google's work on the larger society¹⁹.

Compensation Structure

Google stands out as being one of the most sought after and yet one of the most underpaying²⁰ employers in the industry. However, the HR strategy fits perfectly with the business model and vision at Google – wherein employees are attracted not to the short term monetary returns from work, but rather to the support system that could help them create anything. So the work hives at Google have day care and elder care centres, have spa and hair salons, car wash and oil check facilities, and virtually everything that a technology-obsessed geek would like to worry least about, in form of an all inclusive liberal benefits package, but the actual take-out cash component is negligible. The innovative Stock Option system at Google ensures that all employees get compensated²¹ competitively thanks to the remarkable equity growth of the company.

So strong is the work culture and employee committed bent upon technology solutions rather than tangible compensation that Google became the first company where the Board of Directors requested for a reduction²² in their salaries and compensation because they felt they were getting paid more money than they needed. All the employees agreed on the sentiment, and in 2005-06, the employees formally demanded a wage cut themselves. During the same period, the turnover²³ was 1.43%.

Google Perks and Benefits

- Unlimited Sick Leave
- 27 days of paid time off after one year of employment
- On-site Medical and dental facilities, oil change and car wash, courier, fitness center, banking center, free breakfast, lunch and dinner on a daily basis
- 18 weeks of additional paid time off post maternity leave; new fathers can take 7 weeks off

¹⁸ Courtesy: Trust Index Survey, 2008; Great Place to Work® Institute Inc.;

¹⁹ This last standard was a motivating factor behind the Google Solar Panel Project – the largest solar panel installation on a corporate campus in the United States. On Google's website the number of kilowatt hours of power generated in the previous 24 hours is posted, along with an indication of its equivalent in the use of common household appliances.

²⁰ Courtesy: Google Employee Salaries Data Survey; mydanwei.com

²¹ John Shinal; 2004; San Francisco Chronicle; Google IPO achieved its major goal: It's all about raising cash for the company and rewarding employees, early investors.

²² Paul R. La Monica; 2006; CNN; Google leaders stick with \$1 Salary;

²³ Courtesy: Trust Index Survey, 2006; Great Place to Work® Institute Inc.;



- Annual on-site Health Fair offering free testing services, including eye exams and cholesterol testing; also offers free flu shots
- Fuel Efficiency Vehicle Incentive Program provides a \$5,000 rebate to employees purchasing hybrid cars

Best Practice Examples

Creating a great workplace requires more than a specific set of programs and practices - there is no one set of perks and benefits that work for all. Best Companies develop their own unique cultures in their own ways, with the common feature being that employees are able to say *"I trust the people I work for, have pride in what I do, and enjoy the people I work with."*

- ✓ Google institutes quarterly company-wide strategy sessions with senior executives and separate sessions to assess the company's performance during the previous quarter. These gatherings are intended both to celebrate the organization's achievements over the course of the quarter and to introduce objectives for the new quarter. Opportunities are provided at these sessions for employees to ask questions of senior leadership about the company's strategic direction and performance. Functional teams supplement^{vi} this all-hands session with their own department-specific meetings led by senior members.
- ✓ Google realizes that not everyone feels comfortable speaking up in a public forum. That's why they conduct a series of regular surveys to solicit input directly from employees on a range of topics. The annual Job Satisfaction Survey, the Engineering Team survey, the Sales Team Survey and numerous others gather data from employees anonymously. They then draw on those findings to improve and shape their various programs. They publish the high level results for all employees to read on their internal website, and managers are expected to discuss results with their teams.
- ✓ Google has an in-house blogging tool that allows employees to start their own blogs. Employees can use these blogs to communicate personal stories, to provide work updates, or to share notes. These blogs can only be accessed internally, and these online forums are yet another way that Google encourages cross-functional interaction across all levels of the organization.
- ✓ TGIFs are an informal company-wide weekly get together which include a preview of the week to come, a recap of the week's big events, and a question and answer session. While every week is a little different, the highlight of TGIF is always the Question and Answer section; no question is off-limits. Their team webcasts TGIFs to Google offices around the globe and archives them for those whose time zones or schedules prevent them from attending the meeting in person. Some of Google field offices have taken to hosting their own TGIFs, with senior leaders joining when possible either in person or via video-conference. They encourage all Google employees, regardless of location, to submit questions for TGIF through email if they can't (or opt not to) ask the question in person. Other employees vote^{vii} on these questions so that the most relevant work their way to the top of the queue.
- ✓ In addition to more formal venues, Google's philosophy is reflected in their "whiteboard" culture. Employees start or add to whiteboard discussions on topics ranging from future Google products to life at Google. You'll find these oversize whiteboards^{viii} all over Google.
- ✓ Employees drive Google's product development process. They first release new products and features internally^{ix} across the company, allowing employees to explore the product and provide feedback to the engineers and managers who developed it.
- ✓ Google recognizes that the first few months of a child's life are precious. They provide mothers who've been with Google for over 1 year with 18 weeks of paid bonding leave to spend with their newborn. Fathers are encouraged to spend 7 weeks of paid bonding leave with their newborn during his/her first year. To support



employees while they bond with their newborns, Google provides all employees with 100% of their normal take-home pay during maternity/paternity leave.

- ✓ Google wants employees to maintain the best possible work/life balance, so they offer flexible work hours, part-time work options, and telecommuting if the specific job allows. A generous vacation policy is provided and a vacation donation program is also used to provide an opportunity for employees to help out their fellow co-workers during a time of need. The program allows employees to voluntarily donate a portion of their accrued vacation hours to another eligible employee in case of an emergency.
- ✓ While they maintain more specialized learning programs in virtually every department, the Engineering group has taken the idea of continuous learning to new heights^x. The Engineering training group, or engEDU, aims to provide Google Engineers with compelling educational opportunities throughout their lives at Google, including everything from orientation classes to mentoring to career development.
- ✓ In 2007, Google kicked off their "Candidates@Google" speaker series, inviting 2008 Presidential candidates to stop by headquarters to speak with their employees. In addition to these political luminaries, Google hosts regular Tech Talks where speakers both internal and external present their insights on timely topics. Google's engineering tech talk program is a vital part of their engineering knowledge transfer efforts, and typifies Google's culture, which encourages engineers to air their ideas in an arena composed of highly technical colleagues, who challenge each other to push the boundaries of their thinking.
- ✓ In Q2 2007, Google announced a new equity program for employees called Transferable Stock Options (TSOs) – a first-of-its-kind program designed to help employees derive value²⁴ from their options by selling instead of exercising them. "The goal is quite simple," says David Rolefson, Google's Director of Compensation Programs. "It is to increase the perceived value of the option to the employee."
- ✓ Google maintains a strong Code of Conduct that it expects all employees to adhere to. To ensure that employees feel safe in reporting any potential violation of the policy, and/or asking questions about an action that might be construed to be a violation, Google enforces a strict "no retaliation" policy. Retaliation for reporting a possible violation of the Code of Conduct, otherwise making a complaint regarding a possible violation of the Code or participating in any investigation of a possible violation of the Code is strictly prohibited. If a complaint of retaliation is substantiated, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken, up to and including termination. The Code of Conduct, and the No Retaliation Policy both serve to uphold strong ethical behaviour at Google.
- ✓ Google places a high value on the opinions of employees. Any employee can approach any manager to discuss any issue. The official policy²⁵ states: *Google desires to maintain a friendly, cooperative atmosphere between employees and all levels of management. Consequently, the Company provides opportunities for you to express yourself without recrimination. If you have a problem with your Manager that, despite your mutual efforts, cannot be resolved, you may discuss this with the next higher level of management or with Human Resources. You may request that the Human Resources person or a co-worker accompany you in an advisory capacity in any meeting. While Google prides itself on being an open organization where you can approach any member of management directly, we recommend you first attempt to resolve the issue through your Manager or Human Resources. If not satisfied, you may then continue the process with the successive levels up to the CEO. Concerns, conflicts and complaints will be carefully considered and facilitated promptly.*

²⁴ John Shinal; 2004; San Francisco Chronicles; [Google IPO achieved its major goal: It's all about raising cash for the company and rewarding employees early](#); 22

²⁵ Courtesy: Google Corp Website; ©2008 Google Inc.;



- ✓ Google encourages employees to volunteer by alerting new Google employees to volunteer opportunities on their first day at orientation. One program that's frequently highlighted is Google Grants^{xi}, which donates free advertising services to select non-profit organizations.
- ✓ Google has initiated a number of programs²⁶ to do their part to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, to improve energy efficiency, and to support clean energy sources. In 2007, they switched on the solar panel installation^{xii} at its headquarters. Moreover, the company's benefits package includes a significant incentive for employees to purchase plug-in hybrid cars.
- ✓ Events such as seminars, get-togethers, and conferences at Google are themed with colour and creativity – and include the inspiration and imagination of every engaged employee. This allows all the employees to attach a sense of belonging to the workplace as well as to the event.
- ✓ Over the years, Google has nurtured a work culture where employees are to be quirky²⁷ and a little irreverent. Worldwide themed^{xiii} "special days" help foster their sense of community and fun.
- ✓ To round out their first week as Google employees, new employees are recognized at TGIF, Google's all-hands meeting held every Friday afternoon. Sitting in a reserved section at the front of the room, they wear Noogler hats (brightly coloured propeller beanies bearing the word "Noogler") and plaques around their neck displaying fun personal trivia of their choosing. At the beginning of the TGIF program, Google founders Larry Page and Sergey Brin lead a round of applause to welcome the new folks as their names are projected on a large screen. For Nooglers, this TGIF represents one of their first chances to experience the team spirit of Google.

HR Strategy influencing Business Strategy: An alternate view

The fact that Google provides a 20% off time to employees for their creative pursuits is an HR practice that has reaped them rich rewards. However, the business implications of such rewards are very limited^{xiv} as compared to their flagship search engine and online advertising services. Notwithstanding, the HR department and the executives still continue to encourage employees for investing effort and time into such projects – the basic idea is that the employees remain motivated and committed to innovation and novelty. The employees get a day every week where they can work on their own, and on the rest of the work week, get back to their official job description of writing complex algorithm and semantic programs for their search engine and Adwords services. The recruitment, on its part, becomes much more diverse with more and more talented minds looking to work for a company which would encourage and pay them for trying to build up a tool which may or may not come out right. This is a very peculiar case of a business strategy being an output of a deliberate²⁸ HR strategy.

The Challenge of Recession

Recession poses the unique challenge to the HR department. Google as an organization is better equipped to handle the recession than most of its competitors simply because the employee satisfaction and commitment at Google is seen much beyond the compensation structure and promotion race – voluntary turnover at Google is much less than the industry average, and layoffs that have occurred during the current and last quarter have only affected the contractual part time workers. Moreover, Google is expected^{xv} to release a host of products over the next 2 quarters, and has already invested millions of dollars into acquiring the necessary hardware and satellite systems – indicating the confidence Google has in the relative immunity of its business model to recession.

²⁶ Brad Stone; 2007; New York Times; [Google's Next Frontier: Renewable Energy](#);

²⁷ Ben Elgin; 2004; Business Week; [Google: Whiz Kids or Naughty Boys?](#)

²⁸ Bruno Giussani; 2006; [Google nonsearch: more buzz than hits, but it keeps employees happy](#);



Additional Reading

Tom Peters; 1994; The Tom Peters Seminar: Crazy Times Call For Crazy Organizations; Vintage 978-0679754930; 54 – 79;

ⁱ Google recently moved to a custom-built office space overlooking Dundas Square from the sixth floor of the Toronto Life Square Complex, which is also the company's Canadian headquarters. Some of the pictures can be made available on request.

ⁱⁱ Microsoft Inc. has long been seen as the biggest competitor of Google in the field of media technology services such as internet search engine, e-mail services, rich media browsers, blogging and webmaster tools, VoIP tools and messengers, and revenue generation models. Even though Microsoft has always denied a direct threat from Google since Microsoft has interests in a lot of sectors and markets like Operating Systems, desktop software, offline technology solutions, etc., the share of Microsoft in the competitive line with Google has been rapidly decreasing over time. (Source: Stephen Wellman; 2007; The Information Week; Jan 25, 2007; Is Microsoft's Impact on the Economy bigger than Google's? ;)

ⁱⁱⁱ 37 words require exactly 2 bytes of data to be transferred across a network. Any less number of words would waste the data packets which are usually transferred in chunks of 2 bytes over the internet via TCP/IP. Any greater number of words would require another data packet to be transferred, which would increase the data transmission costs at the users' end. Hence, Google has always kept its home page to be kept strictly to 2 bytes of data, even though it can use the home page to display a lot of revenue generating advertisements like its traditional competitors like Microsoft and Yahoo! do.

^{iv} The author wrote a paper on Human Resources functions, and how HR professionals should consider and value the employees just as they would expect the employees to treat the organization's customers. The paper was presented and published in the annual chapter of International Design Conference at National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad, India in March 2005. The complete text of the paper is included in the Annual Design Publication of 2007 and is part of the course content at various Design institutes across the world, most notably Politecnico di Milano, Italy, and National Institute of Design, India. References to the paper may also be found in publications of AnthroTech Society.

^v Some of the results of this "20% time" can be seen in the beta offerings provided to the public at the Google Labs website (labs.google.com) which showcases experiments still being evaluated and the 'graduates' – products and services developed inside Google that are now part of their current offerings. Some of Google's newer services like Orkut, Gmail, AdSense and Google News have originated in such independent endeavours. Marissa Mayer, Vice President at Google, mentioned in a speech at Stanford University that more than half of Google's new product launches originated from the 20% time. The complete video is available at <http://stanford-online.stanford.edu/courses/msande472/060517-msande472-300.aspx>

^{vi} For example, the Engineering Team holds a quarterly "All-Hands" Meeting led by the Senior Vice President of Engineering. The Engineering All-Hands speaks to Google's core philosophy that employees prefer to hear company news in person, and directly from their leaders, rather than from an anonymous "cascaded" email chain.

^{vii} The process of voting is akin to the Business philosophy of democratic system, which is also mentioned in 'The Ten Things'.

^{viii} In addition to the whiteboards, employees can find suggestion boxes throughout the office, where they're free to enter any sort of suggestion from a new drink they would like available to their dismay over the continued use of disposable dishes.

^{ix} In addition, they have a program called the "Google-o-meter" which allows people to post ideas for changes and improvements at the company. Employees can then vote on whether the idea is good or bad which will move the suggestion up the page.

^x A great example is the Codelab tutorial series, which are continually updated online modules designed to help engineers get up to speed on new Google technologies. They have broadened and deepened their focus on learning throughout the last year. They expanded their learning and development management team worldwide. More-over, they hired a new director who'll be working to create "Google University," a centralized learning organization designed to coordinate the numerous offerings, ensure quality, and, over the next couple of years, expand the range of educational programs offered.

^{xi} Google Grants is a unique, in-kind advertising program, which, by harnessing the power of Google's flagship advertising product, Google Adwords, enables non-profits to better engage their constituents online. Google Grants has awarded AdWords advertising to hundreds of non-profit groups whose missions range from animal welfare to literacy, from supporting homeless children to promoting HIV education.

^{xii} At 1.6 megawatts (an output capable of powering approximately 1,000 California homes) Google's is the largest solar installation on any corporate site in the world.

^{xiii} This is in accordance with Google's business strategy of connecting with various communities across the border. Every now and then, Google's home page on the internet has a special logo and theme based on some significant event, date, season, or festival. Google's product of iGoogle and Gmail! Themes are also based on the same principle.

^{xiv} Recent products like Orkut, Gmail, Google News, etc. do not contribute more than 1% combined to Google's revenues. 99% of revenues are still generated through online advertisements.

^{xv} Google released its latest version of Google Earth while includes underwater imagery in early 2009.

