

Job stickiness pays dividend at HUL

Execs Should Stay Put To See Impact Of Their Roles: CMD Mehta

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Mumbai: At a time when CEO tenures have come down, Sanjiv Mehta has completed five years at the helm of Hindustan Unilever (HUL). The HUL CMD, who delivered his fourth consecutive quarter of double-digit volume growth in July-September this year, believes people should spend more time in the job to make a difference. This is contrary to industry trends where people movement and job hopping are considered vital for a successful career. The Rs 36,000-crore FMCG behemoth is turning the trend on its head.

In an exclusive interview with **TOI**, Mehta said, "I believe people need to spend more time in jobs to build capabilities



SANJIV MEHTA | CMD, HUL

“In today’s world, it’s not the big who beats the small, it’s the fast who beats the slow. While we may be big, our endeavour has been to be agile... Our thinking is fast, our planning is precise and it’s much more granular

and make a difference. The flip side is that we need to ensure that the career progress keeps happening for good performers.”

Priya Nair, executive director — home care, has spent eight years in the category, Sudhir Sitapati, executive director — foods & refreshment, has been with the portfolio for five years, while Shiva Krishnamurthy, VP — tea & foods, has worked for seven years in

this segment.

“There was a time when most organisations were paternalistic and took on the responsibility of developing careers for their people. Today, careers need to be steered by individuals themselves. We have to create an environment where people are happy to continue in a category because it gives them growth and opportunity to make the difference rather than flitting

from one job to the other,” said Mehta, who is satisfied with an annual attrition rate of 6-7% because it allows the company to accelerate the tracks of other employees. On the other hand, the company is recruiting a lot of people at mid-career levels with the right kind of talent profile.

People matters occupy Mehta’s mind space a lot. “If you look at my calendar for the month, the maximum time I spend is on re-imagining HUL and coaching & mentoring of our people,” he said.

The results from the re-wiring of the system are now visible. The time taken for an innovation to hit the market has been reduced significantly, in some cases it has been cut by one-third and in some others by half. Besides, HUL has seen a 6-7% savings of turnover.