



## Mr. Akmal Saeed

Head of Human Resources  
Nestlé Pakistan & Afghanistan



“Career growth is dependent on learning, personal development and sustained good performance. Also, do not limit your career to one type of role; try to be multi-skilled which increases the career growth options”

**ICMA Pakistan:** Professional development of employees can be instrumental in improving their efficiency and the organization's productivity. Being Head HR, how do you demonstrate that professional development is necessary to improve efficiency in the organization?

**Akmal Saeed:** Nestlé Pakistan puts a strong focus on the professional development of people. We identify the development needs of employees based on the functional and leadership competencies required to drive business results. Also, the company has a continuous focus on bringing innovation to our products, improving ways of working, and driving efficiencies throughout our value chain. Hence, the professional development of employees in line with business requirements is the key to improve efficiency in the organization. Our people are on the competitive edge to win in the marketplace.

**ICMA Pakistan:** What key initiatives have been taken by Nestlé Pakistan for Professional development of employees and HR strengthening?

**Akmal Saeed:** Nestlé Pakistan has taken initiatives on experience-based, relationship-based, and education-based learning interventions. We have our in-house learning programs in the market at regional and global levels. We also work closely with our external partners to fulfill the development needs of people. We have learning programs available for all levels of employees, both for functional and leadership competencies. We also provide cross-functional development opportunities to our employees by offering short-term mission assignments to accelerate their career growth.

**ICMA Pakistan:** On-the-job training plays a pivotal role in professional development. What training methods have been used by Nestle and which have proven the most effective in your experience?

**Akmal Saeed:** We have training programs in a classroom setup, Virtual Trainings, E-Learnings, and Development Assessment Centers. During the COVID phase, E-learning and virtual trainings have been very effective. Development Assessment Centers are very helpful in identifying the right development needs of people to put

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a concrete development plan in place. We have our flagship initiatives (associate trainees program) to support youth to get developed and trained which increased their employability in the market. We also heavily invest in apprentices and internships and these are truly based on hands-on training and learning.

**ICMA Pakistan:** Selecting of right people for the right job. What challenges Nestle Pakistan face in hiring the right people for various corporate functions?

**Akmal Saeed:** The challenges in hiring are primarily in the Sales function, where it is difficult to find experienced female candidates to work in the field. Secondly, we are experiencing some challenges in getting seasoned profiles for the senior positions in our supply chain, HR, finance, and marketing functions.

**ICMA Pakistan:** Nestle is a multinational company and you must have experience of other countries. How would you compare the professional corporate culture in Pakistan with other developed countries?

**Akmal Saeed:** Across the Nestlé world we have a very inclusive culture that allows employees to give their best in achieving business objectives. We truly live our Values

(i.e. Respect for others, Respect for diversity, Respect for future and Respect yourself) and strictly follow our business principles. We have a very strong family culture that allows us to work in harmony and if we have different opinions, these are resolved through bilateral discussions.

Professional Culture across Nestlé globally is very similar in developing and advanced countries. The company has a strong focus on ways of working, leadership competencies, and driving performance in an aligned manner across all markets. However, the language, dress code, and few country-specific cultural elements may vary from one place to another.

**ICMA Pakistan:** Nestle offers a challenging work environment. How our qualified CMAs can apply for different corporate positions to prove their mettle in the areas of management and finance?

**Akmal Saeed:** We are an equal opportunity employer and we post all the vacancies on our career webpage, as well as on our Facebook and LinkedIn pages. Students can subscribe to those pages and apply for the relevant opportunities posted there.

**ICMA Pakistan:** ICMA Pakistan and Nestle Pakistan can jointly organize training programs for corporate employees? Your comments and way forward for implementing this proposal.

**Akmal Saeed:** We always love to partner with the institutes like you for the development of our youth. We have such partnerships with LUMS, UVAS and other reputable institutes. We would like to explore the details to partner with ICMA Pakistan in this regard.

**ICMA Pakistan:** What career development tips and advice you would like to give to the members and students of ICMA Pakistan?

**Akmal Saeed:** Be yourself and deliver what you have in your hand with high quality. This will help you to get strong visibility and have a sense of achievement. This will also give you positive energy to unleash your potential. Keep a focus on learning, not on the job grades and associated benefits. Career growth is dependent on learning, personal development, and sustained good performance. Also, do not limit your career to one type of role, try to be multi-skilled which increases the career growth options.

*The Editorial Board thanks Mr. Akmal Saeed, Head of Human Resources, Nestle Pakistan & Afghanistan for giving his exclusive interview for Management Accountant Journal.*