



Newsletter of the International Executive Search Federation

The worlds largest executive search group

## Partner Spotlight: IESF India

Vivek Ahuja is the Managing Director of IESF India, Confiar Consultants India Private Limited, better known as Confiar Global -[www.confiar.in](http://www.confiar.in). His company is a unique executive search firm with a Pan India presence including offices in New Delhi, Gurgaon, Mumbai, Chennai, and now expanding to other cities. Below, Vivek explains what makes Confiar an excellent search partner in India.



Confiar Global is a dynamic and fast growing executive search firm with unmatched standards of client service, superior delivery and commitment. We are unique, because we give each client "personalized service", and regardless of the number of clients we have, the Director or only his senior consultants deal directly with clients. We have a single window system, where each client is dealt with personally through one SPOC (Single Point of Contact).

We focus on changing requirements in the industry and client's growing needs for acquiring and building human capital of qualified and result oriented senior talent, in diverse sectors. Confiar offers Executive Search and Human Resource Consultancy.

Confiar works across all industries, including Consumer Retail, Industrial, Technology, Banking and Financial Services, Insurance, EPC, Power, Aviation, Hospitality and Law, just to name a few. At Confiar we all believe in a "can do and will do" philosophy.

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Confiar is equipped with highly skilled and experienced consultants and now it is re-aligning itself to the changing needs and requirements of clients, as the HR hiring standards are going for paradigm shift, after the recent economic crisis in India and world at large.



Left: Vivek Ahuja, Managing Director, Confiar Global

Right: Vivek and the Confiar team.



## Executive Search Market—India

### HR Management within the economic crises

Though the Indian economy has not been affected as severely as America and Europe, recession had an impact on many local organizations and multi-national companies in India. International companies are looking at India as a big market. After China, India will be one of the largest markets in the world in the years to come.

With the changing scenario, and keeping the global recession in mind, HR managers in most organizations are reviewing their human resource pool and devising new standards and imperatives for selection of new employees. It is a known fact that the current economic situation has thrown many challenges at employers and employees alike. The employees are under immense pressure to deliver more in shorter time, and under cost constraints. In today's competitive world, the concept of futuristic organization cannot be achieved if the foundation itself is based on historic policies and processes that are redundant today.

The changing environment and the competitive scenario make it mandatory to reconsider policies and hiring standards to achieve desired results from employees. Many organizations have hired experts in the industry to carry out HR audits and have removed some not so effective, non-productive employees at short notice.

The HR function has gained traction. The skills they need are changing. The HR professionals now have to become business partners. They have to learn to react to business needs—and the workforce strategy is the number one driver. Also the concept of a variable pay and a smaller fixed remuneration has come into force. Employers pay as much as employees deliver. This works as a win-win for both employees and employers.

This year employers, their HR managers and HR Consultants will face a reality check. Earlier businesses were reactivated as the economy rebounds companies to be more proactive. The rules of the game have changed. The organizations have gone through introspection. The employer brand has become critical, as gaining the right kind of experience and a

career path. The vision of the organization and their HR managers, is to provide challenges for the employee, keep them engaged and test them for inner motivation to excel in difficult situations - this will ensure that they have the dependable pool of human resource in times of difficult situations or crisis if the business slumps.

### Cost-cutting perspectives

To achieve this and be able to reconstruct one's organization to be effective and in line with their main business aspirations, organizations have to invest in HRM leaders who can articulate this new vision and they must also understand that the bottom line is directly related to employee engagement.

Due to the recent slowdown in economy and its after-effects on India Inc., cost cutting is also on top of the agenda in most organizations. Cost cutting through downsizing seems to be an instant solution to most companies, but there are others who feel that cost should be reduced by other measures, downsizing being a last resort.

Experts advocate that a better cost-income ratio can help organizations achieve their goals faster. If the employee is apprised in the crisis and sees that the company is putting all efforts to reduce cost without retrenching employees, he/she gets a sense of belonging. Cost cutting can be achieved to some extent in areas like—administrative and operations e.g. travel cost, communication cost, electricity.

Employees are proactive and multi-tasking. All these make employees feel part of the crisis management team and they don't only save their jobs, but also get their bonus and larger variable pays.

### Creating solutions

Solutions are being discussed and mulled over broadly in Board Rooms.

Some of these are:

1. Look only for personnel who actually achieved, accomplished and delivered for business and not be impressed with the qualifications, certifications and number of years of experience

2. As more and more younger achievers are aspiring for promotions, the organization has to make policies so that these young and bright innovating people with a real talent, are pushed up the ladder sooner than it was done in earlier times. At the same time organizations have to ensure the right mix of experienced and young people with new ideas.

3. Employees are required to work more effectively and be appraised on the basis of their actual contribution towards the company's business goals and additional inputs they bring along.

4. HR managers in these organizations are expected to search for people who are organization fit in terms of delivery rather than just the experience. The senior HRM personnel will be expected to provide the requested training to improve their skills. Though most small companies are becoming cost conscious, they are also looking at reducing the hiring and training costs of new employees. Still, most of the topnotch professional organizations are willing to invest into employee hiring considering that they get good, reliable, and realistically talented employees.

India is a land of opportunities, and we at Confiar Global are all geared to face the challenges of growth.

>>>Contributed by: Vivek Ahuja  
- IESF India



## Tips for Trips—India

On the social front, Indians on the whole are not formal people; so don't be too concerned about appearance. Business dress is the same as most other places in the world, namely suits and ties. Indian custom encourages modesty in clothing, especially for women, so cover legs and arms wherever possible. Both men and women should always remember to remove shoes when entering temples or mosques.



The Indian Hindu greeting is to put your hands together as if in prayer and tilt the head forward. Indian women will generally prefer not to shake hands; for men this practice tends to be more acceptable, although on the whole handshaking is not as common as in the West. It is usual within business

circles to exchange business cards.

It is important not to use the left hand for eating as it is considered unclean. Public displays of affection, such as kissing, hugging and holding hands, are frowned upon. If you are invited to a Hindu house, do not enter the kitchen, as it may cause offence.



Office hours in India are 09:30 to 17:00, Monday to Friday, with an hour's break for lunch. Most New Delhi businesses will also be open on Saturday mornings from 09:30 to 13:00. Banks are unlikely to open on Saturday.

## IESF Looking forward to 2010

Following great momentum from the 2009 Global Conference in Madrid throughout the autumn – winter period, IESF partners can look forward to new faces and new developments abound throughout 2010.

Our most notable new face is Laura Crueru, Marketing Officer, who has hit the ground running and is now really making headway collecting data for updated presentations and marketing information and driving forward the crucial IT development projects.

We have recently enjoyed success in winning major international projects with clients in the Life-Sciences and Pharmaceutical arena through development and joint proposals by Switzerland and the UK. As this work continues, further international collaborations and the continued development of our new International Key Account Management concept in 2010 will continue to drive this initiative and growth in cross border business.

We will welcome new associates and partners in the New Year. Initially these will be seen in Greece, UK and UAE with further developments through our strategic targets.

The IT development for IESF continues. The website front page will see additional design elements at the beginning of the year and the partner content managers will be activated. The technical development for the new intranet system will also commence with a first phase launch envisaged for the regional meetings in the Spring.

## IESF 2010 Calender:

### 18 - 20 March:

Asia Pacific Regional Meeting, New Delhi hosted by IESF India

### 24 - 26 March:

Americas Regional Meeting, Sao Paulo hosted by IESF Brazil

### 8 - 10 April:

European Meeting, Paris, hosted by IESF France

### September:

IESF Global Meeting, Miami

# Season's Greetings!



# The Automotive Market

All around the world carmakers sales decreased significantly. In Russia and Spain for example the shrinkage is up to 44 %.

At present only three of the big national automotive markets are experiencing growth. Germany, where automotive sales grew by 18% during the first 4 months of 2009 compared to the same period in 2008; China (+ 8%) and India (+ 2%). China and India are no surprise. They are the most important emerging markets in the automotive field, 2% and 8% are not so impressive compared to the two-digit growth of these markets during the last few years.

But why is Germany doing so well? The explanation is very simple: the German government has launched a very successful car-scrapping bonus program. Everybody who owns a passenger car that is at

Number of cars sold during the first four months of 2009

	January – April 2009	Rate of change compared to the same period of 2008
USA	3.014.000	- 37 %
China	2.220.000	+ 8 %
Japan	1.280.000	- 23 %
Germany	1.248.000	+ 18 %
Brazil	866.000	+/- 0 %
Italy	728.000	- 16 %
France	690.000	- 5 %
UK	614.000	- 29 %
India	583.000	+ 2 %
Russia	526.000	- 44 %
Canada	300.000	- 15 %
Spain	265.000	- 44 %
Mexico	246.000	- 28 %
South Korea	223.000	- 18 %
Australia	213.000	- 19 %
South Africa	75.000	- 32 %

>>>Source: Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (FAZ) and several national Automotive Associations

least 9 years old gets EUR 2,500 if he buys a new car. The government has provided altogether EUR 5 billion for 2009 to finance this program. The amount would suffice to subsidise sales of 2 million cars. For the time being this triggered off a boom in the small car sector in Germany. However, everyone is afraid that this result will only last as long as the program is effective and that the market decrease will be much the worse afterwards. It will be phased out at the end of this year. What will happen thereafter?

**The Center of Automotive (CoA) at the University of Applied Sciences at Bergisch Gladbach, Germany presented its fifth annual survey of the global automotive industry.**

The study assesses market and financial performance of the 17 biggest carmakers of the world. This year's edition covers the period from April 2008 till March 2009. A period during which the automotive industry blundered into one of its most serious crises ever.

The survey reveals some interesting trends. It shows which carmakers could come out of the crisis as winner and which one runs the risk of being the loser. Being a winner will very much depend on the economic performance of the automotive groups, because a lot of strategic and cost-intensive reorientation will be necessary in order to stop the universal downturn of the industry.

Volkswagen takes the lead and replaces Toyota that dominated the last years. Currently Volkswagen seems to be the best performing car manufacturer worldwide.

Predominance of the big Japanese OEMs, which lasted at least since turn of millennium, seems to be stopped for the time being. Japanese carmakers, Toyota in particular, turn out to be susceptible to risk. They suffer more from the present crisis than others. Especially small Japanese



automakers are facing consolidation.

The Big Three from Detroit are experiencing a period of upheaval. Nobody can tell yet if the massive support by the US government or rather partial nationalization will result in regaining competitiveness in the long run. Not only Chrysler and GM but Ford Group as well is under significant pressure.

With regard to the German OEMs the picture is inconsistent. While Volkswagen could be the big winner of the crisis, the manufacturers of premium cars like Daimler and BMW have to reorganize and to discover new growth opportunities in the medium term. Compared to their direct competitor AUDI they have got significant cost disadvantages that could become threatening.

After national support programs for the automotive industry phase out, the European mass manufacturers will face a wave of consolidation. While Renault and Nissan have to intensify their cooperation and Fiat shouldered a huge burden by acquiring a share of Chrysler, PSA is forced to act. Opel needs further partners besides Magna and Russian Sberbank/Gaz to assure its competitiveness in the long run.

Rivalry for the established carmakers is pending from Asia: During the years to come 2 to 4 global

*“Being a winner very much depends on the economic performance of the automotive groups”*

automakers, probably from China, will form and gain an important role in the international arena. Therefore in the short run the number of automotive OEMs will not decrease but the playing field will shift to Asia which means that the Asian market and players will take a more prominent role in the game

>>>Contributed by: Achim Moraw – IESF Germany



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## News in Brief

- We welcome our new IESF Greece Associate, Future Trend Executive Search Consultants, represented by Mr. Costas Maragos. Contact : [greece@iesf.com](mailto:greece@iesf.com). Future Trend Executive Search Consultants offer high quality Executive Search services to the Greek HR Market. The company is specialized in the following market sectors: commercial companies, retail companies, industry, construction companies, pharmaceutical companies and services providers. For more details, please visit Future Trend's website at [www.futuretrend.gr](http://www.futuretrend.gr)
- Jacob Hoekstra, IESF Joint-President appeared in the December edition of the Dutch Financial Times, with an article titled "Even chaos called Italy, gives opportunities to the Dutch ambition"

## More Stories are needed! Please tell us what is happening in your country and market!

- Please send your stories to: [laura@iesf.com](mailto:laura@iesf.com) so that we can include them in next month's edition.

## Upcoming events!

Along with IESF's Regional Meetings and the Annual Global meeting, don't forget to let us know about any upcoming events your company might be engaged in. We encourage and support event participation for our partners.

## Sharing Experience

If you have an interesting business experience you had while participating at an event/meeting, please share it by sending it to [laura@iesf.com](mailto:laura@iesf.com)

IESF - The world's largest executive search network with over one hundred and sixty offices in over forty countries.

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