

MOVE AFTER THREE-WAY AMALGAMATION

BoB Integrates 30k Employees of Vijaya, Dena Banks in 7 Mths

Talks with managers and placating members of employees' unions helped in execution

Rica.Bhattacharyya
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Mumbai: Seven months after the first three-way amalgamation of its kind in the country, Bank of Baroda (BoB) has succeeded in integrating 30,000 employees of Vijaya Bank and Dena Bank, increasing the headcount to 85,000.

This happened due to efforts including creating new levels of management while putting a new structure in place, rounds of discussions with managers and employees of all the merged entities as well as placating members of employees' unions. "We had to first put a structure in place because the entire span of control was becoming larger," said Joydeep Dutta Roy, head (strategic HR) at Bank of Baroda.

To begin with, BoB brought the entire set-up under a four-tier structure that it originally had, created more zones and regions, and adopted a unified reporting structure. "This exercise we did in April helped smoothen the other business processes and systems that had to be aligned," said Roy.

After that the bank put in place a

Lessons from BoB

- Created additional layer of CGM
- Deepened verticals
- Took regular feedback from employees across levels
- Consulted unions on deployment and promotion policies

- Harmonised benefits and policies
- Adopted 'best-of-three' approach

plan for the leadership and talent in higher positions to be aligned to the new structure, and for that it also created some new positions since there were now more people at the senior level.

It created a position of chief general manager (CGM) between the general manager (GM) and executive director so that a group of GMs would report to the CGM, making managing a bit easier. This also enabled the bank to place some extra people at the senior level in these positions. "

The criterion for role allocation was merit-cum-suitability and we allocated people in a fair way," said Roy. "The selection of the 15 CGMs (nine from BoB and three each from Dena Bank and Vijaya Bank), for instance, was done in a very transparent way. We got a board-approved policy and got people to apply from all three banks and they were put through a pro-

per selection process. Everyone got a fair representation."

Once a structure was put in place, the next challenge was allocating people to different roles, and for that it was crucial to take people into confidence.

The bank undertook a system of monthly pulse surveys, with four or five questions sent to every employee's mobile phone. Each month 20,000-30,000 people would give their feedback on how things were progressing which allowed the bank to do course correction where required. Asked about possible job losses and golden handshakes, Roy said PSBs have a lot of space for absorbing people because the bandwidth they manage is huge. Next was dealing with employees' unions. Public sector banks have a number of unions and associations, said Roy.

"The unions are also largely looking at the people aspect and how it is getting managed and if the people aspect is not getting managed well, probably the issues will come," he said. "For some policies, we have taken them into confidence and discussed – for instance, deployment and promotion policies. We have taken their views also into consideration and put all of them into a harmonised policy. However, there are some things that did not require union discussion."

Experts said the first three-way amalgamation of its kind in the country will pave the way for upcoming four mega bank mergers.

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BRINGS ENTIRE SETUP UNDER 4-TIER FORMAT

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