



Embracing 'Lilly culture' through self-awareness

Why leadership is your strongest culture asset when scaling up

Priya Prabhu, Senior Associate Director Human Resources and Insights Client Practitioner, Lilly India, talks about how partnering with Insights has helped her and her team deliver on the 'Team Lilly' Culture.

Over the last two years Priya and her team have been working to ensure a consistent, authentic, and inclusive cultural experience for Lilly employees, particularly as the organization scales up in the virtual environment.

Priya explains, "Where I see the crux of where Insights really adds value is the culture piece. The culture in our organization is rich in 'walking the talk'. It's very open and very transparent, particularly around the lessons learned.

Lilly is a very relationship-orientated organization; people are tenured and bring in rich experience within the organization. Insights

is helping build relationships with a common culture and language across teams, functions and geographies. When many of our global leaders introduce themselves, they introduce themselves with their leading color energies. It's providing us a start point to really scale up for growth. In the next couple of years, at least half our organization or more will have had an Insights Discovery Personal Profile."

Globally, Eli Lilly has 35,000 employees. Priya's time is predominantly focused on the teams working for the capability centre of Eli Lilly in Bangalore India, providing state of the art capabilities across the world. Since opening in 2016, the Bangalore team has grown from 250 people to upwards of 1350 with most people joining in the virtual environment throughout the pandemic.



"We are in high expansion mode in our IDS team and are hiring top talent at a very fast pace. Given this context, Insights profiles helped us understand our new associates more quickly, along with their color energy preferences. This helped us build team bonding and collaboration and move quickly from the storming to the norming stage of team development."

– Sateesh Kalahasthy, Senior Associate Director,
Business Unit - Information and Digital Solutions



Virtual environment and human connection

When talking about on-boarding in the virtual office, Priya tells us: "In the virtual environment, Insights is helping leaders to identify preferences in their newer team members as they are onboarded virtually, building rapport and relationships quicker than they would have done ordinarily. It's a great conversation starter, especially if someone is new in the organization.

Another great benefit of using Insights Discovery is that we were able to transition seamlessly to virtual because people understood the importance of keeping connected and engaged. The Insights Discovery four-color model helped us to do this by providing a framework for understanding, recognizing and appreciating different communication and behavioral styles. It's never been more important than it is now to have a heightened sense of awareness for human connection."

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Creating a 'relationship' culture and psychological safety

Over the last two years, since Priya was accredited in 2019, she has embedded Insights Discovery into the leadership onboarding program to help retain Lilly's relationship culture, creating bonds with leaders globally through the language of color.

Priya explains how her Insights journey started: "Largely we used Insights Discovery as a collaboration and self-awareness tool for various levels of employees, and Ketaki (Insights Account Manager) has been a great advisor and thought partner on this, but we realized early on that if we were going to make an impact with this, we needed to start at the top. Meaning, showing our leaders what is in it for them and why it's so important. So today, Insights Discovery is now incorporated into our leadership onboarding. What this does is twofold: Firstly, it immediately brings our leaders into the fold of the 'Lilly Culture', and secondly it gives them an understanding of who they are as individuals and where their strength, values and motivations are".

"Really, what Insights has done for us, is that it has brought a cultural alignment top down, from executive leadership to the leadership team and is part of our high potential talent

training as well. We believe you have to speak the same language at all levels of the organization and that's what we are doing, teaching it step by step".

We asked Priya how our partnership has helped bolster a culture of inclusivity. Priya explains: "Our leaders are very intentional when they ensure everyone's voice on a call is heard, particularly when thinking about the color energies and covering all preferences from a diversity of thought and thinking perspective. By leadership understanding the importance of bringing all preferences to the table, this hugely aids inclusion.

If we really want to walk the talk on diversity, we need to be respectful of each other's differences and personalities and the way we bring ourselves to work. One thing I can tell you is that on our pulse employee engagement surveys, we consistently score high on inclusion. As well as on the question "I can be myself at work", meaning the authenticity part of culture and acceptance. Since using Insights Discovery, the metrics that have seen a positive increase include the dimensions of career and development."





Leveraging and dialling color energies

“Insights Discovery is an amazing tool to know ourselves and our teammates much better and about their unique personalities in detail. It has helped me in customizing my approach of working and communicating with them more effectively.”

– Reena Maurya
Senior Team Lead, Global Regulatory
Affairs- eCTD Publishing (LCCI)

We asked Priya how she coached individuals and positioned Insights with people who have an introverted preference. Priya tells us, “When we use the tool as an individual coaching tool, people get a lot of insight into who they are as individuals before they contribute to the team workshops. This provides an important foundation for them to understand and reflect on their thoughts before they share anything in a group setting. Without individual coaching we do not bring leaders to a team effectiveness or leadership effectiveness workshop. In the virtual environment especially, it is vital for us to ensure our leaders fully understand their profile and their preferences to give them the confidence to then use the learning with others in a group.”

Priya goes on to tell us more about how she has used Insights in group sessions, “What we tend to see in the group sessions is that the Sunshine Yellow preference is generally low and for a lot of teams this is eye opening. There is then a conscious effort to fill this gap.

For example, in one of the functions that accounts for more than 40% of the head count, we saw that there was less representation on the Sunshine Yellow side. It was a real ‘Ah Ha’ moment for them; they set up a social committee to bring about change in terms of the way they worked and had fun, connected and engaged with each other. It’s a very successful initiative; to this day, the best practices of this team are used and leveraged across the organization.

In one of our finance functions, again they led with Cool Blue. They are analytics and numbers focused. One of the challenges the team was facing was that the bias for action was lacking. I have examples of emails that say ‘looks guys we have a crisis on our hands, we have to put our Fiery Red hats on and get things done, we don’t have time to get into the detail, let’s get down to the action’.”

Priya also gave another great example of where Earth Green energy had been dialled up by managers in a particularly tough month during the pandemic in India, “We had a month where meetings were more focused on how people were doing and if they had been impacted by COVID. Managers were checking in on their team members all the time and employees said they had never felt more cared for.”

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Why Insights?

"In terms of resources, they are just fabulous. I am personally certified in other psychometric assessments, and Insights is one of the best. Particularly the kind of support and account management that the organization provides. The connection with my account manager, Ketaki, has really helped me become better as a practitioner. The train the trainer experience with Insights is so good, everything else pales in comparison. Plus, it works because it's simple and that's the key. The stickiness is there; you're not likely to forget that because it's a visual medium."

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