



NEWS ALERT

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PUMA Thinks Out of Box

Sporting goods maker Puma will launch eco-friendly packaging for its sneakers next year to reduce its carbon footprint, beating governments to the punch as it kisses old-fashion shoe boxes good-bye. Puma will roll out its new packaging in the second half of next year. It will sell its shoes in cardboard frames wrapped in reusable shoe bags – called the 'Clever Little Bag'. In doing so the company says that it will use 65pc less paper and save 20m megajoules of electricity, 1m litres of water, and 500,000 litres of diesel and 8,500 tonnes of paper a year.

Nearly 15% of India's middle managers are disenchanted at work. Worse still, half the country's mid-management would jump at the next offer that comes their way though they may not be looking out. Some of the findings of the recently-concluded Towers Watson 2010 Global Workforce Study, are sure to jolt the most well-meaning employers. The seething discontent in the mid-ranks is in stark contrast to India's relatively better standing globally post-downturn. The study finds that the 'middle' men put their mouths where the money is—better compensation, skill upgrade, higher status and a perch in the senior leadership team— in that order, particularly after the downturn. For India, the data assumes significance as over 3,000 of the 25,000 respondents belonged to the country. The study examined the November 2009 to January 2010 period and covered a majority of male candidates in the 25-35 age bracket with an average work experience of five years or less in middle management. Worryingly for employers, there's been no sharp drop in the slice of employees who lack motivation. The study found that 43% of the workforce falls in the enrolled bucket — the borderline cases, people who are not fully engaged, yet not entirely disenchanted — against 46% in 2007.



Education loans will become cheaper with the government planning to pay the interest for the duration of the academic programme, for which the student has taken the loan. "Between joining a course and its completion is the moratorium period, during which the student will not have to pay the interest...this is a proposal that the government is considering. This would significantly bring down their EMIs," said a senior banker familiar with the discussions. The proposed interest rate subsidy from the government will also benefit banks which have been complaining of defaults and non-payments on education loans.

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