

## From The CEO

## THE **RESOURCE**

At The Resource we are passionate about our story and the stories of evolution our clients have to tell.



Best Regards,

Kathy Hartung, CEO

We like to say we are revolutionizing the way companies handle their greatest assets, their people. In practically every company in the US, the 80/20 rule still stands. You can easily identify your key employees, the cream of the crop. So often though, employees outside the top performing 20 percent get looked at as underperforming, when really it's just that they are in the wrong position.

The hiring landscape is continually changing, as CEO, I felt that in my own company. Companies needed a hiring system that is a standalone predictor of future performance.

The Core Hiring System reveals the kind of position a person is designed for based on their core unchanging nature, and then matches them to a position within a company where they will be a top performer. By optimizing the talent you have, and positioning you to only hire the right people, we are showing companies the effect of having a top performer in every seat.

We dig in with our clients to understand each position based on specific revenue generating tasks to create a Job Blueprint. Then we use The Core assessment to go beyond a person's skill, experience or even attitude and look at how they are hardwired to perform the tasks the position requires. We work alongside you to ensure that you only consider future top performers.

Our mission is a top performer in every seat, in every company.

From the CEO to the leadership team to the entry level position, a person doing what they are naturally designed to do has the power to rewrite the story; the story of your company, the story of your life.

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by Sharlyn Lauby

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from the eyes of industry leaders

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Whenever an organization is looking for talent, that doesn't necessarily mean it must fill a full-time position. Many organizations, regardless of size, have a need for specialized skills but sometimes only want an extra set of hands for a few weeks or a couple of months. They would love to find people who can be regular (but nonpermanent) extensions of their operations. That's why organizations are increasingly using "borrow" tactics to meet their staffing needs: instead of hiring full-time employees for some needs, they're bringing in freelancers, contractors, or consultants to complement their regular full-time workforces.

According to a study by Intuit, by 2020—fewer than three years from now—"contingent workers will exceed 40% of the [U.S.] workforce." Thanks to this increase in self-employment, organizations have more and more opportunities to leverage independent work by borrowing talent when they need it.

But utilizing borrow tactics requires a shift in the company's mindset. For years, organizations have regarded freelancers as "temporary" or "dispensable" workers. Those days are over. To implement borrow tactics successfully, organizations should view contingent workers as an essential piece of their staffing strategy.





#### **ADVANTAGES AND CHALLENGES**

The biggest advantage to borrowing talent is the efficient utilization of resources. Organizations can get specialized talent exactly when they need it without having to hire full-time employees. In addition, borrowing lets companies retain experienced employees who are transitioning to semi-retirement and interested in part-time opportunities. Through borrowing, organizations can also attract former employees who are looking for side jobs.

One benefit of using borrow tactics is having freelancers who are available when the company needs them. But those freelancers will be interested in the work only if they feel connected to the organization. Maintaining—and strengthening—that connection involves paying attention to their engagement.

Companies need to find new ways to keep consultants and contractors connected even when they aren't working for those organizations. Managers must be able to effectively select, engage, and maintain relationships with their freelancing teams. Vendor management isn't a skill required only in procurement departments but one that must be developed at every level.

#### **IDEAS FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

Although certain industries have been using contingent workers for decades, this practice can be implemented across a wide range of fields. In particular, businesses with defined peaks and valleys might find using contingent workers a great way to staff up during busy times and staff down during slower periods. For example, similar companies with oppositely timed peaks and valleys could share job openings with each other—a practice that not only helps both businesses find the staff they need, but also keeps talented freelancers engaged with those companies.

A tenured workforce is another group with which companies can utilize borrow tactics. With Pew Research estimating that "10,000 baby boomers will reach age 65" every day until 2029, organizations are looking for new ways to

prepare for those departures.<sup>2</sup> For both health-related and financial reasons, more and more people are continuing to do some type of work during retirement. Companies that offer freelance or consulting work to retirees can benefit from those employees' experience and expertise.

Borrow tactics also work well with parents who choose to leave traditional jobs in order to have more freedom as freelancers. In those situations, organizations don't necessarily have to lose those employees' knowledge and skills. Many of them would be open to part-time work arrangements that give them the flexibility they need.

#### A NEW RECRUITING MENTALITY

Part of HR's role is to make sure that newly created positions are truly necessary and provide value. That means that HR needs to be able to move beyond the traditional "all jobs are full-time jobs" perspective and be willing and able to consider contingent worker roles. If they can develop a new recruiting mentality and treat freelancers as an extension of the workforce, companies can develop a well-publicized contingent workforce strategy that supplies the talent they need and helps with retention.

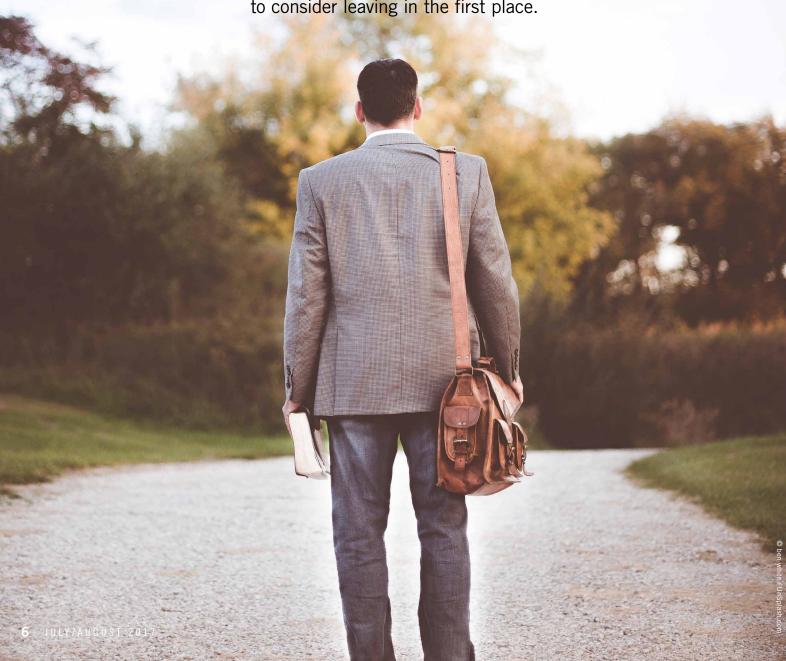
Sharlyn Lauby is the author of HR Bartender (www.hrbartender.com), a friendly place to discuss workplace issues. This article was reprinted with permission from Alongside (https://www.alongside.com/), a company that bridges the communication gaps to create a better hiring experience for both employers and job seekers. You can connect with them on Twitter at @AlongsideHR and @HRBartender

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#### 5 Reasons Why Your Best Employees Are Quitting

BY ALLAN MAGUIRE

No one likes losing good employees: recruiting, hiring, and training new workers costs both time and money. Although employees sometimes quit their jobs for reasons that are beyond the company's control, often they leave for workplace-related reasons. In those cases, companies need to understand what those reasons are and then address them—both to persuade departing employees to stay (or return) and to ensure that employees never want to consider leaving in the first place.



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#### THEY'RE BORED AND FEEL LIKE THEY'RE STAGNATING

There's nothing like being stuck in a rut for killing whatever passion someone may have once had for a job. No one wants to feel like he or she is stuck at a dead end, doing the same thing day in and day out until retirement. If your employees are disengaged, bored, or unchallenged in their work, rest assured that they'll soon look elsewhere for something more fulfilling. If your people don't feel motivated, inspired, and like they have adequate opportunities for advancement, you'd better start booking their goodbye lunches now.

#### THEY'RE BEING WORKED TO THE BONE

Routinely overworked employees are unhappy employees. And unhappy employees leave companies. Nothing will burn people out quicker than piling more and more work on them without recognition, reward, or financial compensation. This overload is particularly common with the best and brightest staff members, whose talent and capability make it easy for managers to keep increasing their workloads to unsustainable levels. Eventually, those employees will feel like they're being punished for being good at their job—and they'll resolve that situation by going elsewhere to work for someone who will treat them fairly and compensate them for doing all of that additional work.

#### THEY HAVE A BAD RELATIONSHIP WITH THE BOSS

This is one of the primary reasons why people leave good jobs. When the worker-manager relationship unravels for any reason (whether it's because of the boss's shortcomings or a clash of personalities), employees tend to hit the road. Good bosses are good leaders who give clear direction, communicate effectively, inspire confidence, and listen to their staff. If several employees who share the same manager quit in rapid succession, then maybe it's time to question whether that manager is in the right position given his or her skills.

#### THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS AREN'T RECOGNIZED

Everyone likes to be recognized for a job well done. The form of the recognition can vary wildly (e.g., a raise, a promotion, a cash bonus, a simple "thank you"), but the most important thing is to actually give it. Failing to recognize employees' good work effectively amounts to demotivating them—and promoting undeserving individuals is as good as sending your overlooked hard workers out the door and into the arms of another organization.

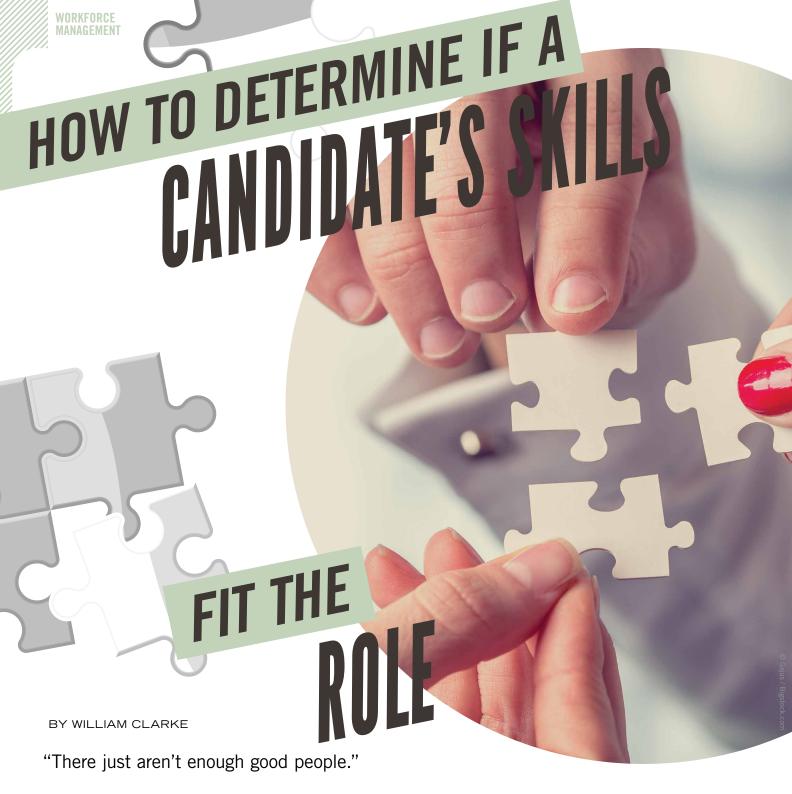
#### THEY DON'T HAVE A POSITIVE WORK CULTURE

Do your employees feel that their workplace is friendly, inclusive, and supportive? Do they feel valued both as workers and as people? If your answer to any of these questions is no, then be prepared for a revolving door of employees. People spend a large proportion of their adult lives in the workplace, so if it's a toxic environment, they will walk out in search of one that appreciates them and treats them with respect.

#### MAKING CHANGES NOW WILL BENEFIT YOU IN THE LONG RUN

Retaining good employees is infinitely more cost-effective and resource-friendly than getting trapped in an endless cycle of resignations and hiring. When people are happy in their work lives, they are much less likely to leave. By making some simple adjustments in your organization, you can save yourself the pain of replacing yet another person and inspire loyalty and longevity in those who work for you.

This article comes to us from Jazz (www.jazzhr.com) where they're on a mission to make recruiting and hiring easy, effective, and scalable no matter what growth looks like at your company. The Jazz Performer Platform doesn't just help your company grow, it can help your recruiting process grow up, putting you on the path to hiring "Performers Only."



Hiring managers say this all the time. Whether they're looking for entry-level coders, sales managers, or experienced executive assistants, no one seems to be good enough. That perspective is often accurate, but it's also true that hiring managers sometimes have a tendency to hold candidates to impossible standards.



Putting a candidate on a pedestal or holding out for a perfect, zero-risk, no-tradeoff employee makes it harder to hire the "good fit" people who actually exist—and undermines the hiring process before it's even begun. Every month that goes by without a hire costs both revenue and productivity while making the organization's strategic goals all the more difficult to achieve. If your company has trouble finding the right people for the right role, consider making some changes to your approach.

#### **DEFINE AND ALIGN**

Before even beginning to look at candidates, define the role. Rather than search for unicorns, figure out the abilities, skills, and experiences that are crucial to a role. Meet with hiring managers to figure out the position's placement on the organizational chart, to whom it will report, its direct reports, and its core responsibilities. Without these details, finding candidates who fit the role is impossible, because recruiters and sourcers won't know what they are trying to find. A clear description of the ideal candidate for the role also enables hiring managers, recruiters, and other stakeholders to align their needs and interests, thus making it easier to find candidates who match everyone's expectations.

#### **SET EXPECTATIONS**

Create a highly specific, descriptive job listing that clearly defines the role in natural-sounding language. The more accurate this description is, the more likely it is to attract better inbound candidates and recommendations. On the other hand, a job listing that uses jargon or creates false impressions will alienate otherwise competent candidates (and possibly undermine your employer brand, too!). Overselling or creating false impressions will come back to haunt you down the road when candidates find out that, thanks to your inaccuracies, they have mistaken ideas about the role or your organization.

#### SCREEN FOR THE HARD SKILLS . . .

Organize your screening process around evaluating in-demand hard skills (such as data science, computer programming, and engineering) that, in today's technology-filled workplace, take years of focused training, classwork, and on-the-job experience to truly master. A brief skills assessment sent to every inbound candidate is a great way to screen

out those who lack the requisite technical abilities. Asking all candidates for work samples (if relevant) is another great way to explore their accomplishments without demanding too much of their time. These data points will save both the hiring team's time and the candidate's time by ensuring that everyone who advances in the hiring process actually has the skills needed for the role.

#### ... BUT DON'T NEGLECT THE SOFT SKILLS

Hard skills have long been at the center of attention, but for many jobs soft skills (such as the ability to interact with people and hold conversations) are becoming equally—or even more—valuable. In fact, one survey found that American executives regard the soft skills gap as larger and more important than the lack of hard skills. Today's workplace requires critical thinking skills, the ability to navigate complex problems in an increasingly connected workplace, and the ability to collaborate as part of a diverse group (both onsite and remotely). Such skills will be even more crucial in tomorrow's workplace, with the Institute for the Future (a future-studies think tank) predicting that nine of the ten skills that will be most important in 2020 are soft skills.2

#### PARADIGM SHIFT

Instead of looking for the one perfect candidate, focus instead of finding the right pool of candidates through a well-calibrated search that clearly defines the role's essential skills, experiences, and abilities. A structured interview process will reveal the best candidates while yielding the information you need to make the best possible hire.

William Clarke is a writer for Entelo, a new and better way to recruit. The Entelo platform combines machine learning, predictive analytics, behavioral listening, and social signals to help recruiting organizations identify, qualify, and engage with talent. To learn how leading companies such as Facebook, Schneider Electric, and Tesla are building their teams using Entelo, visit www.entelo.com.

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Words commonly used today to talk about employee engagement include research, ROI, and performance.
Although each of those topics is important and relevant to the discussion, that vocabulary omits one topic that is perhaps the most fundamental. At the core of employee engagement lies connection—with managers, colleagues, other departments, and, ultimately, the organization as a whole.

#### **CONNECTIONS WITH MANAGERS**

When Maslow's hierarchy of needs is applied to the workplace, physiological and safety needs are usually met by an employee's basic employment package: a competitive salary, good benefits, and a safe work environment. Once those basic needs are taken care of, the need for love, belonging, and esteem take center stage. Those needs are fulfilled through engagement, and to feel engaged employees must have solid working relationships and a sense of connection with their managers.

Observe employee-manager relationships in your organization and address any concerns with employee engagement (by offering training courses in supervisory skills, for example, or by conducting team-building exercises about communication styles).

#### **CONNECTIONS AMONG EMPLOYEES**

One question that sometimes appears on employee engagement surveys is "Do you have a best friend at work?" Some respondents scoff at that question ("Why would anyone need a best friend at work?"), but having a true friend in the workplace is actually pretty important for the sense of connection that relationship provides in the place where employees spend most of their waking hours. In addition, that friendship can serve as a sounding board to talk through work-related issues that, if left unresolved, can negatively affect engagement levels.

You don't necessarily need to ask your employees if they have best friends at work. But look around and try to determine if people sincerely enjoy the time they spend with colleagues. If they don't, enhance the opportunities for people to find, meet, and connect with new friends at work (by creating employee networks based on common interests, for example, or by creating company-sponsored teams for local recreational-league sports).

#### **CROSS-FUNCTIONAL CONNECTIONS**

In small and large organizations alike, departments must often work together cross-functionally to accomplish a task or meet a goal. Those connections not only benefit the employees but also benefit the company by maximizing efficiencies, leveraging skills, and building the best possible solutions. When an organization has silos and collaboration isn't encouraged, it's impossible for employees to create the cross-functional connections that help deliver results.

Assess your leadership team: are its members working together cross-functionally to demonstrate what can be achieved through teamwork? If not, make changes here first, in order to model for everyone else the power of cross-functional collaboration as part of daily operations.

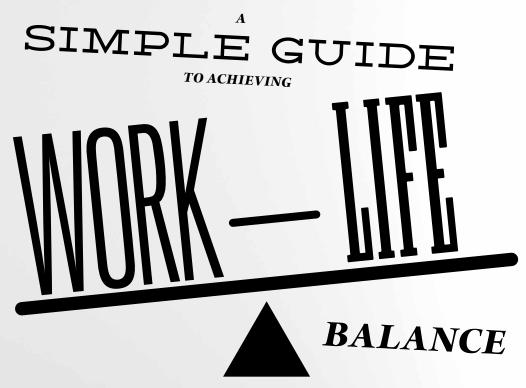
#### CONNECTIONS WITH THE ORGANIZATION

Once the connections between employees and their managers, among colleagues, or among departments are in place, the connection between employees and the organization often evolve organically. Creating an environment in which managers are competent and supported, employees are encouraged to build friendships, and cross-functional work is encouraged will build a strong foundation for employee engagement with your organization. If other issues exist or an employee becomes disengaged, chances are good that one of those connections can help readjust and rebuild that employee's sense of connection with the organization.

Liz Sheffield is a freelance writer with more than a decade of experience working in HR. Her areas of expertise are in training and development, leadership development, ethics, and compliance.

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BY AVERY HELWIG, aPHR

There's a constant stream of emerging research today about how Americans are working longer hours than ever before. The 40-hour work week has turned into the 45-hour work week, it says. Or people are now working 50 hours—or longer each week. At the same time that work hours are increasing, paid time away from the office is decreasing: one poll conducted in early 2016 found that "less than half of all workers who receive paid vacation days [had] used all or most of them in the past year."1

There is no one specific time when "work" ends and "life" begins, and with employees now accessible around the clock by e-mail, text, or phone call, it's extremely difficult for employees (and their employers) to maintain a firm line between the two. Lately, the term "work-life integration" has been gaining currency (especially among Millennial employees) as a way to suggest that those two domains don't have to compete with each other but can instead exist in harmony. But "work-life balance" remains the term that's used most often.

Jae Ellard, an authority on developing the skill of awareness in the workplace, says, "Most people share a similar desire, which is to create easy joy and meaningful engagement between the interconnected roles, relationships, and responsibilities that make up life."2 In order to create and maintain that engagement, people need to figure out how to balance their work lives with their personal lives. Here are some useful steps to take in that direction.

#### **LET GO OF PERFECTION**

The sooner you let go of the ideal of "perfection," the sooner you will realize that it is only a false picture in your head of what you think everyone expects you to be. Focus instead on your own ideas about personal growth.

Healthy striving is selffocused—How can I improve? Perfectionism is otherfocused—What will they think? — Brené Brown, The Gifts of Imperfection

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#### PROTECT "ME TIME"

Personal time is extremely important for a healthy balance between work and life. Each day aim to set aside some time (even just a few minutes) to do something that is entirely for yourself.

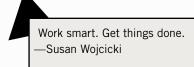
If you have no time to rest, it's exactly the right time.

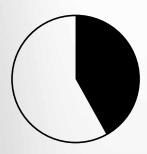
—Mark Twain



#### LEARN TO WORK SMARTER

Knowing where and when to focus your attention is a skill worth mastering. Identify what needs to be accomplished and always have a plan before jumping in. Stick to that plan as much as possible (while also allowing room for interruptions and setbacks), but don't overwhelm yourself: if you are continually coming up short, it may be time to reevaluate your workload and consider eliminating unnecessary steps.

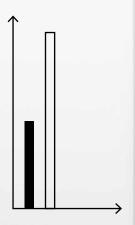




Everyone deserves to have a healthy work—life balance. To achieve that goal, you might have to make some changes in your life. Don't be afraid to take the steps that can lead you to happiness. ■

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#### Connecting Work Ethic to Company Mission

BY VALERIE M. GRUBB

Connect the dots between individual roles and the goals of the organization. When people see that connection, they get a lot of energy out of work. They feel the importance, dignity, and meaning in their job.

—Ken Blanchard and Scott Blanchard

**14** JULY/AUGUST 2017

#### BY THE NUMBERS: THE VALUE OF THIS CONNECTION

An employee's work ethic can be strongly influenced by several factors, including how linked he or she feels to the company mission. This connection is particularly important among Millennials, with one recent survey indicating that 59% of Millennials have the "desire for a job that can make a difference" and a report from the Council of Economic Advisors pointing out that they value "making a contribution to society" and "want to be leaders in their communities." And all signs indicate that the next group that's just starting to enter the workplace, Generation Z, will share its predecessors' interest in having a positive impact on society.

With these trends in mind, senior leaders should expect the concepts of environmental sustainability and corporate responsibility to creep into conversations about company mission. As companies increasingly institute sustainable sourcing and production practices, those efforts are recognized—and valued—by both their customers and their employees, particularly those of younger generations. Nearly three-quarters of the Millennial and Generation Z respondents to one recent Nielsen global online study were "willing to pay extra for sustainable offerings," for example.<sup>3</sup>

In that Nielsen study, Grace Farraj, senior vice president of public development and sustainability at Nielsen, points out, "Brands that establish a reputation for environmental stewardship among today's youngest consumers have an opportunity to not only grow market share but build loyalty among the power-spending Millennials of tomorrow, too." With that loyalty expressed not just in customers' spending but also in employees' increased commitment to joining (and staying with) a company, organizations have a strong motivation for incorporating sustainability efforts into their corporate mission. Even organizations that aren't as overtly "mission driven" as some (such as community-based groups, nonprofits, or charities) can benefit from having a strong mission.

Research by Hewitt Associates indicates that a company's active pursuit of pro-environment practices has a direct impact on its employees' positive attitudes about those efforts—and that those attitudes can influence employee engagement and loyalty.4 Similarly, other research found in companies a strong correlation between strong sustainability programs and "positive outcomes." When surveyed about the effects of such initiatives at their organizations, 55% of employers reported "improved employee morale," 43% pointed to "more efficient business processes," 43% said that their companies had "strong public image," and 38% said there was "increased employee loyalty."

#### SUCCESS STORIES OF CONNECTING WORK ETHIC TO COMPANY MISSION

The benefits of prioritizing environmental sustainability and corporate responsibility are clear. If you want to attract and retain top employees at your organization, you need to appeal to the aspects of their work ethic that value social engagement and demonstrate how your company mission ties into expected employee behavior.

For example, consider Starbucks, a company that has publicly declared its commitment to having a positive impact on the communities it serves. On its website, Starbucks lists its four strategies for achieving that goal:

- · "Source ethically and sustainably"
- · "Create opportunities" by offering "education, training, and employment"
- . "Lead in green retail" by "minimizing our environmental footprint and inspiring others to do the same"
- . "Strengthen communities" by promoting "public conversation and elevating civic engagement through service and promoting voter registration"6

The website for Whole Foods similarly details its mission in descriptions of its eight core values (rather than in one specific mission statement).7 Through supporting local and global communities and practicing and advancing environmental stewardship, the company marries its ethics to its pursuit of profits and growth.

Smart companies link their business goals to a social- and environmentalfocused company mission. Smart managers then ensure that each and every one of their employees understands the ethical elements of the company's mission, then tie that mission to each employee's work ethic. Making this connection enables companies to secure better employee buy-in for these effort—and even increase employee loyalty (especially among the Millennials and Generation Z employees who value those goals).

#### MAKING THE CONNECTIONS AT YOUR ORGANIZATION

If your company already promotes corporate responsibility in its mission statement, make sure that your managers and your employees are on the same page in their understanding of how the organization's goals tie in to employee goals and work ethic and to broader, society-wide goals. If your company doesn't have a mission statement with clear links to corporate responsibility (and isn't interested in developing one at this time), you can still build employee loyalty by tying individual goals into company goals.

This connection can help motivate and engage employees of all ages by making them feel that they're part of the organization's "bigger picture" and not merely cogs in the corporate wheel. Savvy managers will thoroughly explain the organization's mission, vision, and goals, then connect the dots to show how, by

accomplishing his or her own tasks and projects, each individual employee helps the company meet those goals. These connections are especially important for younger generations: if managers want to elicit a positive work ethic (meaning getting the job done on time per the quality standards you've laid out) among those groups, they need to make sure that those employees understand why their work matters and its importance in the grand scheme of running the company. If that connection isn't clear to them, don't be surprised if your Millennial employees push back on the need to do the work (or halfheartedly turns in subpar work).

Even though younger generations have a reputation for prioritizing "the greater good" in their work, that doesn't mean you should ignore the needs of older employees. The company mission matters to Baby Boomers and the members of Generation X, too. (The good news is that Baby Boomers usually need less of an overt tie-in to the company mission, because they don't spend a lot of time asking why something needs to be accomplished and just focus on getting it done.) Regardless of what generation employees (and their managers) come from, though, employee engagement and loyalty can be strengthened by connecting the company mission to work ethic.

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In a recent interview, Max Ventilla, the CEO and founder of AltSchool (a private school that describes itself as "a partnership between educators, entrepreneurs, and engineers"), discussed how education can give people the skills and knowledge they will need as future members of the workforce. He explained that today's students learn "basic skills such as math and language" and how to learn, but that tomorrow's workers "will need . . . problem seeking [skills] and the ability to find the right problems to work on"—that is, creative thinking.1

The need for such skills is apparent in the recent story of a museum whose collections had held a fossil that remained unidentified for many years. No one had been able to figure out how to classify the tiny creature, and most examiners thought it was some sort of invertebrate. The problem was solved by a new employee—a recent college graduate—who, using her knowledge of new equipment and new techniques, determined that the creature was not an invertebrate, but rather had a primitive spinal cord. This discovery, which led to the classification of the mysterious fossil, would not have been possible if that new employee hadn't had the "problem seeking [skills] and the ability to find the right problems to work on" that Ventilla described.

Clearly, it's critical for HR departments to find employees with the creative-thinking skills needed to work in an environment of innovation and to survive the onslaught of AI-based job replacement. In order to help employees understand how creativity plays into their jobs and to learn how to know what are the right problems to work on, companies should promote innovation by taking the four steps outlined by Andrew Horne, an IT practice leader on the Corporate Executive Board CIO Leadership Council.<sup>2</sup>

"Foster openness to innovation." Horne's belief that "innovation entails creative tension and a willingness to take risks" is one echoed throughout the HR literature. But how often do executives and management actually follow that advice? Not all organizations have mechanisms in place to encourage and reward innovation—but they should.

"Expand the pipeline of new ideas." Organizations need to promote exposure to information beyond the company walls—and not just in the HR field.

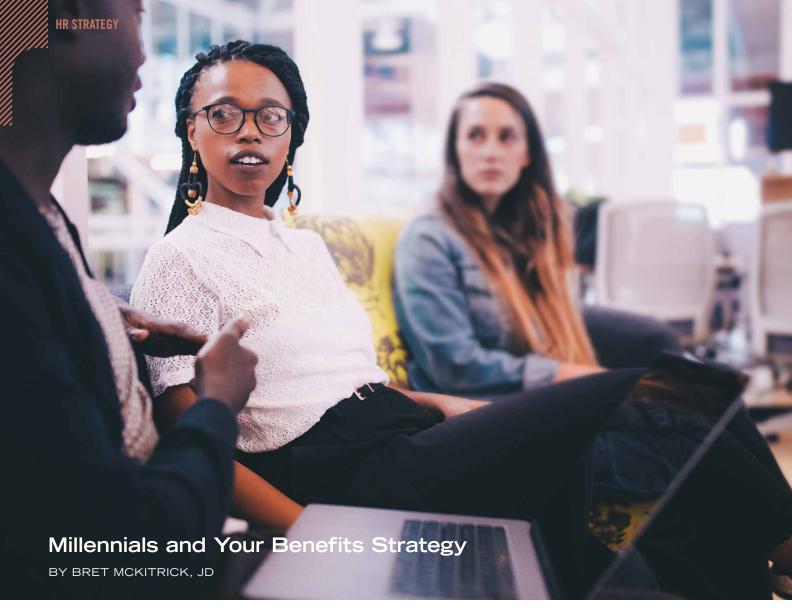
"Triage the most promising ideas." "The idea is to determine whether an innovation warrants further exploration, not to generate a business case or estimate ROI, as too little is known about the innovation to assess the business case effectively," explains Horne.

"Adopt a 'Test and Learn' Approach." Failures happen. But they can be powerful learning experiences. That's why, Horne points out, companies that want to innovate need to "get to the failure as quickly and cheaply as possible, accept the failure without faulting anyone, and move on."

Organizations that adopt a forward-looking approach that places a high value on creative thinking and problem solving skills will find themselves well-situated to face the challenges of the future work-place.

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Much has been written about managing the Millennial generation of employees. This group's characteristics and expectations have been so heavily scrutinized for good reason: it's the largest generation ever to enter the workforce. Motivating this group successfully requires paradigm changes in recruitment and retention, with a particular focus on the use of employee benefits to attract and motivate a new generation of workers.

#### HERE ARE THE MILLENNIALS

Definitions of each generation vary, but Millennials are generally characterized as those born between 1981 and 1997. In 2015, Millennials outnumbered the Baby Boomers (born 1946 to 1964) for the first time. By comparison, Generation X (born 1965 to 1980), the smallest generation so far, won't surpass the Baby Boomers in number into

2028.¹ These numbers are significant when considering the state of the current workforce and the future need for employees. As Baby Boomers exit the workforce, there are not enough Generation X workers to take their places. This means that Millennials will be called upon to fill both new positions and the holes created by the mass exodus of retiring Boomers—often taking on management, executive, and other leadership roles earlier in their careers than prior generations. Because of such demand, the methods and incentives employers use to hire and keep the best people in these key positions are as important as ever.

#### **SOME GENERALIZATIONS**

Each generation has its own personality: its members often share similar values and motivations. This may appear to be a simplistic generalization, but remember that a combination of behavior and characteristics are what define a generation. Although generations are analytical constructs partly based on statistics and timelines, demographic and attitudinal evidence of habits and culture help establish the years in which a new generation begins and another ends. In other words, what may be dismissed as a stereotypical depiction is likely a relatively accurate characteristic that shapes not just the perception but the indispensable significance of an entire generation.

The potential that Millennials bring to the workforce is perhaps unprecedented. While growing up they have been provided with more knowledge and now have access to more information than any previous generation. That combination illustrates this group's potential to be the highest performing generation in history.

Millennials were also raised on high expectations and thus have grown into adults with high expectations of themselves and others, in both work and life. Where other generations have sought to achieve work–life balance, Millennials were raised to find jobs that make them happy and fulfill their desire to have a positive social impact. Where other generations may have considered their careers at odds with their idealistic ambitions, Millennials truly believe that through their work they can shape the world in which they live.

#### THE EFFECT ON RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Because of the emotional connection that Millennials desire with their jobs, an attractive compensation package alone no longer suffices for keeping key employees. At the same time, a shift in employers' expectations for longevity means that they no longer seek to retain employees for 10 or more years. With Millennial job tenures getting shorter and shorter, employers are increasingly striving to create compensation structures and environments that can make the two-year employee into a five-year employee (and possibly into an employee who stays even longer).

#### THE NEED FOR BENEFITS

A recent Gallup report<sup>2</sup> shows that the Millennial generation of workers is more likely to change jobs for a particular employee benefit, as compared to Generation X or Baby Boomers. For example, 45% of Millennials surveyed will change jobs if a new employer offered student loan reimbursement — compared to only 19% of other working generations. That's an easy one, as Millennials are the most academically leveraged in our country's history. Most of the benefits popular among Millennials are intuitively so, but the importance placed on such benefits by younger workers is what is most revealing.

Many employees value health insurance to the point where they may change employers to seek a better benefit. However, Millennials are nearly fifty percent more likely to change jobs for other types of insurance coverage. The most common "other" type? Pet insurance! Another example: Baby Boomer and Generation X employees heavily utilize the dependent care assistance program that many employers offer. That is the ability for employees to set aside money in a pre-tax fashion under a cafeteria plan to be used for child care expenses. But that program is funded with money that would otherwise be included in an employee's taxable salary. Millennials are seeking more, as 30% indicated that they would change jobs for employers offering child care reimbursement. In other words, a child care assistance program that is completely employer-funded. Finally, nearly half of Millennials surveyed will change jobs for paid maternity and paternity leave, as compared to just over fifteen percent of Generation X and Baby Boomers.

#### ATTITUDES TOWARD BENEFITS

The Baby Boomer generation has often been characterized as one that "lives to work." The rebellious Generation X that followed reversed those priorities and instead "works to live." Millennials, however, do not view work and life as dichotomous; rather, they integrate the two spheres through a more centralized worldview that incorporates skill set, talent, motivation, and opportunity. They hold a similarly

different view of compensation as well. Thus key points of every employer's compensation strategy must tailor to this generation the type of health benefit offered and how that package is communicated.

Money is still money. And additional perks of a particular job will largely be determined by industry and the culture of a specific employer. As part of any employee's overall compensation package, benefits can often sway interest in a job depending upon how they are delivered. Where health insurance is concerned, the problem lies not in determining a Millennial's need but in positioning and communicating that benefit in a way that is meaningful to that employee or prospective hire.

#### DEFINED-CONTRIBUTION APPROACH

Traditional benefits are delivered in a manner that varies only by benefit type or coverage tier. Although it seems that many choices exist, the reality is that the benefit is actually defined even though the employer contribution can vary greatly. This can lead to the problem of employers not getting enough bang for their buck. A defined-benefit approach often results in unpredictable costs and inequitable contributions. Even worse, the benefits are packaged in a homogeneous manner that doesn't allow much flexibility or choice among participants. The result is a less-than-enthusiastic response from Millennials whose values about work and life may differ significantly from those held by an older generation of workers.

Employers who take a defined-contribution approach provide roughly the same dollar amount contribution or fixed percentage of compensation to every eligible employee. The employee then pays the balance of the total cost of benefits he or she elects. Unused contributions may be forfeited or cashed out as taxable income.

If this setup sounds like the old cafeteria plan suites, it's because they are very similar. Qualified benefits still retain their tax-free nature, and any cash component is taxed accordingly. The defined-benefit approach not only helps employers provide more uniform contributions among employee groups (which helps stabilize benefit budgets), but also gives employees more choices by allowing them to select benefits they value over those they may not want. The employee has more choices and greater decision-making power. Such benefits can fit better into a Millennial's lifestyle and approach to compensation.

Employers are wise to consider ideas such as concierge banking and lending services, advanced-planning evaluations, and incentives for community service. Although benefits may vary based on taxability, the possible strategies for attracting young employees are virtually limitless. Employers who apply a defined-contribution approach find themselves better equipped to meet their Millennial employees' needs, values, and understandings.

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The days when an employee would spend decades at one company and, upon retirement, receive a gold watch as a symbol of the organization's gratitude are long gone. Workers today are constantly on the move—and that movement will only accelerate as job growth picks up. This turnover makes it particularly challenging for companies to hold on to their best and brightest employees.

In response, innovative companies are beginning to embrace a promising new retention strategy: employee rotation. Instead of locking workers into single job categories that each have a specific career trajectory, companies are moving workers through a variety of positions within departments or teams. Job rotation is seen as a way to motivate key employees, broaden their skill sets and, most important, keep them. It also gives employers the reassuring knowledge that they have people in place who can quickly fill ailing or departing coworkers' shoes.

"I can't think of a single industry that wouldn't benefit from job rotation," said Susan Heathfield, a 30-year veteran of the human resources industry, when I spoke with her about this strategy. "It helps employees spread their wings and extend their boundaries," she said. Additionally, she pointed out, this practice also helps employers engage and motivate their staff.

#### THE PAYOFF

So where should a company start when putting this program in place? First, it's important to recognize that employee rotation programs should be implemented only after careful consideration. Establish clear guidelines with each internal team so employees know what the rotation will entail and so managers have a set of best practices. Without clear guidance or oversight, the rotation will fall apart as employees wander from job to job. Have a purpose, have a plan, and have a way to determine if the rotation is successful, Heathfield said. The programs can often be costly in terms of time spent training workers for their new jobs, she added, but the benefits can far outweigh the expenses.

Take, for instance, human resources. In a large company, an employee who typically handles employee health insurance can be shifted into a position that tends to job referrals. "So many employees come to human resources for a multitude of reasons, and it makes more sense if their questions can all be answered by their first point of contact," explained Heathfield. "I want everyone in HR cross-trained so that he or she can serve employees immediately."

The same logic applies to sales teams. Because sales hinge on relationships, it's crucial for everyone on the team to be familiar with each other's clients. "Normally, people have dedicated customers. But if the [primary point of

contact] is out, having someone else available to serve your customers is key," Heathfield said. Sales folks are always reluctant to share their clients, but will do so if given the right incentives.

#### A MOTIVATED WORKER IS A HAPPY WORKER

Here's an all-too-common scenario: a valued employee has skills that have grown beyond his or her current duties, but a promotion isn't an option. Perhaps there isn't an opportunity for advancement. (After all, in any organization—whether flat or hierarchical—such opportunities decrease in number the higher up the ladder one goes.) Or perhaps the employee doesn't want a promotion to the next rung on the ladder and would rather stay an individual contributor than move into management.

Sometimes, a valued employee's career path isn't the right one for him or her. But that doesn't mean the employee needs to pack up and leave—quite the opposite, in fact. For these folks, job rotation can be a key retention strategy to keep them within the company. Whether or not employees want to be promoted, job rotation improves their skills and gives them a broader understanding of the organization's inner workings.

Too often managers follow the old adage "If it ain't broke, don't fix it" and are happy to have employees keep doing what they've shown they can do best. But with the Society of Human Resource Management reporting that one of the "top factor[s] contributing to employee happiness is career advancement," organizations need to be more responsive to their employees' needs and interests on that front.\(^1\) The fact is that many workers might be happier facing different challenges and learning new skills—so companies should offer those opportunities.

If employees don't feel like they're growing, they'll head for the exits, warned Heathfield. So if a great employee expresses interest in trying out new roles within a company, management should work with him or her to create a job rotation plan (or at least a test phase of one). Providing this opportunity for growth could be the difference between losing a stellar employee and helping him or her find a new passion that, in the end, bolsters the organization's bottom line.

Charles Coy is the senior director of analyst and community relations at Cornerstone OnDemand (CSOD), a leader in cloud-based applications for talent management that helps organizations recruit, train, manage, and connect their employees. He thinks a lot about how technology can influence how businesses evaluate, motivate, and value their employees—especially in light of the rapid changes happening in today's workplace. Coy can be contacted at ccoy@csod.com.

(This article reprinted courtesy of Cornerstone OnDemand.)

 SHRM Online Staff. 2011. "Benefits, Advancement Key to Worker Happiness, Report Says." SHRM website, August 12, www.shrm.org/ResourcesAndTools/hr-topics/benefits/Pages/ HappyWorkers.aspx.

- Q. A non-exempt employee, forgetting that a meeting offsite had been cancelled, clocked in at the office and then drove to the meeting. He was halfway to the location before he remembered the cancellation. He then returned to the office and clocked out. His clock time came to 25 minutes. Since he had been notified of the cancellation and hadn't done any work, do we have to pay him for this time?
- A. Wage and hour law requires that employees are paid for all time that they are "suffered or permitted" to work. The question here is whether his attempt to go to a cancelled meeting would count. As the employee had been previously notified of the cancellation and had not actually performed any work, you could likely make the case that it should not be counted as working time. However, given the small amount of time and the fact that there is some risk the employee could claim he was working, many employers would choose to go ahead and pay the employee for the 25 minutes as he was making an effort to do work. In cases like this, it's simply not worth risking a wage claim.

I do recommend that you talk with him about remembering to double check his schedule before he clocks in and drives to any secondary locations. If this forgetfulness has been a repeated pattern, you might consider whether formal disciplinary action is appropriate.

— FROM KYLE, PHR

- Q. One of our employees refuses to sign the handbook. What should we do with her?
- A. First things first, talk to her about why she doesn't want to sign the handbook. There may be an easily resolved misunderstanding about what her signature on this document means.

If that conversation doesn't solve the problem, and you still want her to work for you, she needs to be told that failure to sign the handbook does not mean she is exempt from the policies and procedures within it. She will be expected to follow the same rules and will be held to the same standards as her co-workers, regardless of whether you have her signature on file.

If she persists in her refusal to sign, ask her to write "I refuse to sign" on the acknowledgement form, along with the date. You should write "employee refused to sign" along with your own signature, and if possible, call in another manager to witness this and sign off as well. Make sure you document (right on the acknowledge form is fine) that you told the employee she will still be expected to follow the policies and would be subject to discipline for falling to do so, just like everyone else.

— FROM KARA, JD, SPHR

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# WATER COOLER CHRONICLES "EASIER" DOESN'T NECESSARILY MEAN "BETTER"

IN APRIL OF THIS YEAR, McDonald's and Snapchat launched a new filter called Snaplications, which lets people take photos of themselves "wearing" virtual McDonald's uniform hats and name tags. But this is more than the usual Snapchat filter, and it goes beyond being just a public-relations campaign. It also functions as a recruitment tool: users who record ten-second videos in which they talk about themselves and then send the videos to McDonald's get redirected to the company's career website and invited to submit a job application.

By leveraging the power of both social media and digital technology, this campaign is a herald of things to come, and I suspect that similar processes will eventually be rolled out worldwide and may even lead to the elimination of the in-person interview. Candidates and companies alike need to consider the ramifications of this future shift.

Social media has revolutionized how we interact with each other both in our professional and in our personal lives. It's been beneficial for recruitment in many ways, particularly by facilitating the rapid spread of information and helping hiring managers reach out to new talent pools. It's also contributed to the rapid rise of the "easy one-click" application—which in my book is not a positive development.

That declaration might make me sound like an anti-technology curmudgeon, but that's definitely not what I am. I'm a big fan of technology when it's properly implemented. But I'm not a fan of adopting technology purely for technology's sake and without giving it careful thought. Making it possible for people to research jobs and apply for open positions online isn't a bad thing. But making it too easy for people to apply for jobs online can open a Pandora's box of problems.

First, the increased focus on submitting job applications via quick and easy routes such as social media profiles and ten-second videos may actually make it harder for hiring managers to find good candidates. If someone is looking for a job and can send in an application with just a few seconds' effort, why wouldn't he or she do that? After all, casting a wide net is one way to increase the odds of landing a job, right? But all of those applications need to be processed somehow. An applicant tracking system can do only so much (and maybe not much at all when it comes to analyzing and rating personal videos), so that means actual people need to be looking at that stuff. Now imagine that the "easy one-click" method has led to a geometrical increase in the number of applications sent to an organization—many of which likely aren't serious, and most of which will require at least some attention from a hiring manager. See the problem?

Second, "easy one-click" applications downplay one very important part of the hiring process: the human connection. These forms usually consist of just a few basic questions—not enough to yield a useful portrait of a candidate. A ten-second video doesn't help much, either: how much can you learn about someone in that amount of time?

Third, that ten-second video can actually carry disproportionate weight in the hiring process if it's all a hiring manager has to go on. It offers just a quick snapshot of a person with no opportunities for nuanced conversation or follow-up questions. It may cause hiring managers to (perhaps subconsciously) place too much emphasis on a person's appearance—and worse, it can lead to racism, ageism, or sexism playing a role in hiring decisions.

Fourth, companies and candidates have long struggled to connect with each other. Streamlining the application process and leveraging social media are two ways to address this perennial problem—but "easy one-click" applications might actually make it worse. Person-to-person communication is a key element to figuring out if an individual and an organization are a good fit for each other.

In all fairness, I should point out that McDonald's is using the Snaplication mostly to target teenagers who are looking for short-term jobs. In those situations, some might say that it isn't critical for hiring managers to get a "good sense" of candidates who aren't doing complex work and are likely to be in those positions for only a brief time. Personally, I think it's important to get a "good sense" of any candidate—but I can cede this point here.

Mike McKerns is the editor in chief of *HR Insights* and cofounder of Mamu Media LLC. He can be reached at editor@mamumediallc.com.

#### A DISH THAT'S JUST PEACHY

Few things are as perfect as a just-picked, locally grown, in-season peach. When the peaches you find in farmers' markets and grocery stores are bursting with sweetness, that's when you know summer has reached its peak. Fresh peaches are delicious when eaten out of hand, but they're also fantastic when tossed into a salad, whirled into a smoothie, or sprinkled over granola. And when they're grilled—well, it doesn't get much better than that. Searing caramelizes the peaches' natural sugars and adds a smokiness that plays well with their sweetness. Best of all, this cooking technique is a piece of cake, especially if you've already heated up the grill for your summertime barbecue!

#### **GRILLED PEACHES**

YIELD: 4 servings (approx.)

TIME: 10 minutes (if the grill is already hot)

#### **NUTRITIONAL INFO PER SERVING:**

Calories:	99 cal	
Fat:	4 g	
Dietary fiber:	2.5 g	
Sugars:	14.5 g	
Protein:	1.5 g	

#### WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 4 ripe peaches, large
- 1 Tb olive oil

#### DIRECTIONS:

- 1. Cut the peaches in half and remove their pits.
- 2. Brush the cut sides with olive oil.
- Place the peaches cut side down on a grill that's at medium or low heat, then grill for 5 minutes (grill marks will appear).
- 4. Place the peaches skin side down on a low-heat part of the grill (usually off to the side), then grill for another 5 minutes.

#### NOTES:

Grilled fresh peaches hot off the grill are pretty amazing just the way they are. But if you want to gild the lily, consider serving them with scoops of vanilla ice cream or drizzling them with maple syrup or balsamic vinegar.





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