HR INSIGHTS
Magazine
from the eyes of industry leaders

6 MEGATRENDS
CHANGING THE FACE
of HR AND BUSINESS

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

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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HR INSIGHTS

from the eyes of industry leaders

6 **MEGATRENDS** CHANGING THE FACE *of* **HR AND BUSINESS**

BY WORKHUMAN EXECUTIVE FORUM

In the wake of the shift from the industrial age to the information age, the global workplace is undergoing yet another major transformation: this time, it's entering the "human age." Today, the true value of workers is measured not just by their hands or their brains but also by their hearts—their commitments to a company and its values. With the top-down hierarchical approach a dying legacy of the industrial age, the human age requires more human-centric approaches to HR that consider how people work today and draw on peer-to-peer connections, organizational communities, and teams.

The pillars of human capital management are truly crumbling. Forward-leaning organizations have long foreseen the dismantling of old HR processes as workforce changes and new technologies and data analytics combine to empower HR leaders and employees. In their approaches to performance reviews, performance ratings, pay, managerial styles, and other areas, these organizations are looking past the old ways of thinking and building new ways to inspire the modern workforce to achieve its fullest potential.

This shift starts with a workplace that emphasizes not just tracking *what* gets done but also examining *how* it gets done. It's not a question of asking how to *get* more from employees but one of asking how to *give* more to them. In short, the goal is to provide a more "human" employee experience that strengthens connections between people and teams and ultimately drives stronger employee and company performance.

Six trends in particular are propelling HR toward the new way of thinking. They offer opportunities for HR leaders to become the champions of change that will optimize the employee experience and promote long-term sustained growth and more "human" workplaces.

CONTINUOUS CONVERSATIONS AND FEEDBACK

Performance management needs a revolution, not an evolution. Annual performance reviews are outdated relics of old processes, and today's HR departments are increasingly adopting the use of continuous conversations. These ongoing check-ins help keep employees aligned with the organization's priorities and help reinforce each employee's strengths in meeting those goals.

Integral to these conversations is multidimensional feedback that includes constructive criticism to guide employees to better performance but consists primarily of positive celebrations of employee performance, which have been proven to elevate performance and meet employees' higher-level needs. A critical component of that positive feedback is crowdsourced recognition, which empowers the entire company to recognize great achievements and behaviors. Positive feedback also builds trust and opens the door for peers and managers to have honest, developmental conversations. It gives managers values-based data points throughout the year, which they can use to reinforce the types of performance the company seeks. It also turns performance management into a more frequent, ongoing, and more natural "human" exercise that builds trust with organizational leaders and optimizes performance.

CROWDSOURCED REWARDS AND PAY

With pay policies long grounded in archaic practices that aren't aligned to a company's structure and power centers, HR is now shifting toward variable pay policies. In forward-leaning companies, such policies link the distribution of performance to incentives. Consequently, variable pay and bonuses are migrating toward high-performance, high-potential people.

The new model is a Bell curve in which variable pay makes up 10% of total compensation. Eighty percent of the variable pay goes to the top one-fifth of employees via bonuses and incentive programs (with some of it bleeding into "the mighty middle"). The remaining 20% of the variable pay (2% of total compensation) is distributed as micropay awards—mostly to top performers, but to some middle performers as well—by their peers across the organization via crowdsourced recognition. This real-time model of continuous rewards leverages the "crowd" to determine where the money flows, and matches reward to performance in order to unify and direct people toward company priorities.
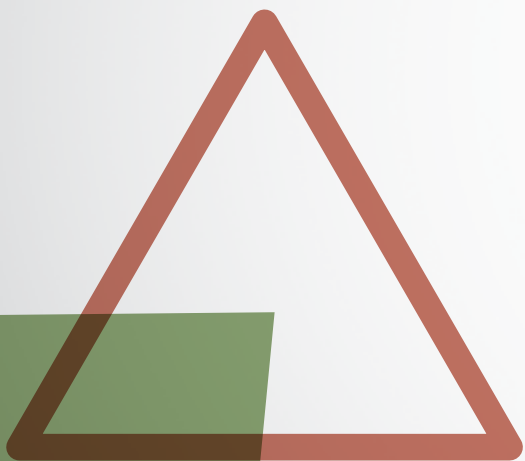
TEAM ENGAGEMENT

When people are part of a winning, performance-driven team, they deliver better results and have stronger connections within a company. A critical component of the employee experience, team engagement is even more important than company engagement. Today's companies consist of a series of teams in which the daily work takes place and in which the strongest employee connections are built. The working team—not the hierarchical chart—should be the focus of the organization. By uncovering and recognizing individual strengths, the team becomes more empowered and efficient, and managers and leaders learn where to focus in order to maximize productivity and performance.

INDIVIDUALIZATION

New technologies are centering HR processes and functions around individuals. Such personalization can create an experience that focuses on an employee's unique needs, cycles, projects, and milestones with the company, thus creating a better "human" connection between the employee and the organization. Numerous studies—and common sense—indicate that happy employees work better and stay at their companies longer.

MANAGERS AS COACHES

Forward-thinking companies around the world are driving a fundamental shift in the manager's role from "command and control" to "inspire and empower." Decades of research have long demonstrated the need for managers and leaders to exhibit higher levels of empathy toward employees, with the aim of developing their skills and strengths. Contemporary management is adopting a more "human" approach in which managers become mentors who coach, teach, and guide. This approach empowers employees to become less dependent on their managers and to aspire to develop new skills. With interaction that gives meaning to words and meaning to work, it's also the framework that makes continuous conversations and feedback possible.

HR AS CULTURE FACILITATOR

The megatrends reshaping business and management are putting HR in the role of culture facilitator for the entire organization. In this capacity, HR can help break down outdated bureaucracies and drive the development of a more "human" workplace with more positive employee experiences. These efforts, however, can succeed only if they are widely adopted and accompanied by a philosophical shift throughout the organization.

Progress is possible only through the adoption of new mindsets. In today's organizations, this means that managers must learn to lead with empathy, not fear; employees must be empowered to innovate; and compensation models and feedback strategies must be redesigned. As workplaces become increasingly diverse (in terms of ethnicity, age, sex, and personality type, to name just a few factors), the need to build inclusive and more "human" workplaces has never been stronger. And today's HR has a great opportunity to play a critical role in creating more positive employee experiences—and thus driving companies to new heights. ■

The article is the result of collaborative discussions at recent WorkHuman Executive Forums organized by Globoforce. These professionally facilitated, small-group meetings enable networking and learning for executive leaders who strive to create more "human" work cultures and provide a platform for thoughtful conversation and idea generation to inspire future innovations in the HR industry.

Use Assessments to CLOSE THE SKILLS GAP

BY SHARLYN LAUBY

In a 2016 study by the Society for Human Resource Management, "68% of HR professionals reported their organizations experienced recruiting difficulty for full-time regular positions" during the previous year. At the same time, "more than half of HR professionals reported some level of basic skills/knowledge deficits among job applicants."[1] Other research highlights the same problems, with 87% of companies that responded to one survey indicated "that the skills gap was affecting their performance."[2] With not enough talent—or not enough of the right talent—businesses are forced to turn down projects.

At some point, organizations need to realize that they must invest in employee training and development in order to get the talent they need. Obviously, turning away business isn't the answer. And waiting for someone to apply with the perfect resume is not a feasible solution either. Companies need to be proactive about bridging the skills gap.

"BUY, BUILD, AND BORROW"

· One good starting point for dealing with the skills gap is the "buy, build, and borrow" strategy:

· **BUY: hire outside talent.** This approach can help the organization get fresh perspectives and new ideas, but attracting good talent from the outside can be expensive.

· **BUILD: develop internal talent.** This strategy is great for employee morale, but developing talent takes time and requires the organization to have the necessary training resources.

· **BORROW: use freelancers, consultants, and temporary employees as needed.** Because not every job is a full-time job, this approach enables companies to get the talent they need when it's needed. It's not easy to keep freelancers engaged so that they're available and ready to work at any time, though, and the same temporary employees may not be available every time a need arises.

These strategies can be implemented separately or combined as needed. For example, an organization can "buy" the best talent, then "build" their skills. But for organizations to successfully blend recruitment strategies, they should determine which skills a candidate absolutely must have and which skills can be developed once someone is hired.

ASSESSMENTS AS PART OF A RECRUITMENT STRATEGY

To evaluate a candidate's potential, organizations should use assessments that measure more than whether he or she knows how to create a pivot table in Microsoft Excel. Although skill tests are important, they aren't nearly as predictive of on-the-job performance as cognitive aptitude tests (which measure potential to learn complex subjects) and personality tests (which measure how well a personality type fits with a role). Combined, these two assessments help companies find productive employees who are more likely to be retained because they are well suited to their roles.

Two case studies from Criteria, a provider of pre-employment testing services, highlight how such assessments can predict success in training programs. In one study, 100% of the highest scorers on a cognitive aptitude test successfully completed an intensive financial-services training program, whereas only 45% of the lowest scorers did. In another study, when a personality test was used in recruiting call-center sales consultants, those who were recommended by the test earned significantly more revenue per day than those who were not recommended by the test.

CLOSING THE SKILLS GAP

Employers who hire talent based on measurements of potential are more likely to close their skills gaps. Because they're not waiting for the "perfect" candidates, they can fill their open positions faster and can then train those new employees. This approach also enables organizations to engage new hires immediately: by demonstrating an immediate interest in their new employees' success, companies see a faster time-to-productivity—which yields a positive impact on the bottom line. ■

Sharlyn Lauby is the author of HR Bartender (www.hrbartender.com), a friendly place to discuss workplace issues. She can be reached on Twitter at @HRBartender.

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How to Promote Harmony

BY JANINE MILNE

Between Humans & AI

Although artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, and cognitive computing are making increasing headway into every nook and cranny of the workplace, this shift does not mean that society will soon turn into the plot of a science-fiction movie about a dystopia in which humanity is pitted against the evil machines.

Rather, the future is much more likely to be one in which humans and machines work together in harmony, complementing each other's strengths to transform business for the better. In some ways, the future is already here. Siri, Alexa, and self-driving cars are just a few examples of technology that is already capable of mimicking human behavior, and more and more businesses are embracing robotics, automation, and AI technologies. So how can HR prepare employees for the imminent arrival of tomorrow's technology?

CREATE A FLEXIBLE WORKFORCE

"Jobs for life" no longer exist, so workers must constantly reinvent their skills in order to keep up with current business needs. With the pace of change continuing to accelerate, companies need what Accenture calls a "liquid workforce" that has "flexibility fundamentally built into three areas: skills, projects, and the organization as a whole" and whose members are agile enough to grow and adapt with the company by performing a range of tasks rather than one fixed task.[1] Similarly, Josh Bersin (of Bersin by Deloitte) suggests that companies adopt an approach similar to the one used to produce Hollywood movies: "people come together and bring their skills and abilities to projects and programs, they build and deliver the solution, and then many of them move on to the next movie later."[2]

Both of these approaches offer employees the chance to grow and learn—and, ultimately, to do more interesting and varied jobs. With this future on the horizon, the role of HR and the rest of the senior team is to identify key areas in which AI will have the biggest impact and to start putting programs in place to help people learn new skills. At the same time, HR must also stress the importance of lifelong learning and provide opportunities for employees to constantly upgrade their skills and experiences.

FOSTER SOFT SKILLS

Ironically, one consequence of the increase in automation is that humanity's unique qualities are becoming more important. For example, soft skills are more in demand—and harder to find—than ever, with well over half the respondents in one recent survey of hiring managers saying they had trouble finding the soft skills they wanted.[3] Although machines are better than humans at repetitive tasks, people handle uncertainty better, outperform machines at tasks that involve empathy, and excel at dealing productively with other people. To meet the growing need for soft skills, especially as more

industries adopt Bersin's work model, HR needs to help employees identify and improve their talents in those areas.

PRIORITIZE RIGHT-BRAIN THINKING

Alongside soft skills, creativity is becoming a prized quality in the age of AI and automation. Lateral thinking and the ability to turn machine-generated hard data into useful insight are key human skills that demonstrate how human intelligence can complement technological developments. With this in mind, HR needs to hire and inspire workers who can think strategically and creatively. One way to identify such people is to ask them interview questions about their competencies in these area (such as how they used creative thinking in previous roles).

The robots *are* coming. But that doesn't mean the world is headed toward a bleak future. Rather than regard AI as a threat, people should see its arrival as an opportunity for them to showcase their human creativity and productivity at work. ■

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The Right Way to Deliver Negative Feedback

BY ASHLEY MACINNIS

One absolute truth is that humans are not perfect—and sometimes this imperfection makes its way into their work. Managers can find it daunting and extremely difficult to deliver negative feedback to their teams, so they often try to envelop it in a wrapping of positivity. This popular method of delivering less-than-awesome news to a team doesn't work, though.

First, people *need* constructive criticism. With it, they can learn how to become better at everything they do (such as dressing themselves, creating stellar content, or providing top-notch service to their clients). Without it, they assume that everything is fine and dandy and therefore make no improvements.

Second, delivering negative feedback in the middle of an otherwise positive communication delivers a mixed—and very confusing—message. Employees find themselves wondering,"Am I being praised?" and "What does my last report have to do with how I always clean up the staff room?"

Finally, if the criticism is overly harsh, it can obscure the positive parts of the feedback—thus making the negative feedback harder to comprehend.

At some point in his or her career, nearly everyone receives some negative feedback or constructive criticism. Sometimes it's delivered in such a way that makes the recipient feel empowered and inspired to improve. But sometimes it's delivered poorly—and a wrong delivery can be soul crushing. Managers who don't want their feedback to fall into the second category should keep in mind these guidelines the next time they have to deliver negative feedback to a team member.

DO BE DIRECT.

Instead of dancing around the subject, come right out and say it. And be specific: comments such as "This could be stronger" or "You kind of missed the mark" are confusing, not helpful. Instead, explain exactly what the problem is (e.g., "Your report needs to be more direct in displaying the data,""Your blog post had a number of spelling and grammar errors, so it is imperative that you edit before you post").

DO USE POSITIVE LANGUAGE.

When delivering negative feedback, don't focus only on the negatives. Instead of telling team members just what the problems are, offer guidance on how to fix those problems, too (though without necessarily handing them ready-made solutions).

DO MANAGE EXPECTATIONS.

When doling out assignments, discuss all expectations (both those of management and those of team members) openly and in detail. Define the desired outcome and timeline, and empower team members by giving them the tools and support they need to do the job (but without doing it for them).

DON'T BE DIRECT IN FRONT OF THE REST OF THE TEAM.

Unless the issue is directly related to every member of the team, *every member of the team does not need to hear it*. Singling people out publicly does two things: it makes them look bad in front of their colleagues, and makes them feel bad in front their colleagues. Even if someone did do something very wrong, discuss it in private. Belittling team members in public will backfire *every single time*.

DON'T WAIT UNTIL PERFORMANCE REVIEWS TO DELIVER NEGATIVE FEEDBACK.

Most people make mistakes throughout the course of the year—not just right before year-end performance reviews. Waiting until the end of the year to deliver all feedback can make that delivery feel like a big, negative event. Instead, share feedback (both good and bad) regularly and maintain open dialogue with team members during the whole year.

DON'T UNDERMINE PRAISE WITH NEGATIVE FOLLOW-UPS.

At the same time, though, don't follow a compliment with a gigantic "but," as in "You're a valuable member of the team, but your performance has really gone downhill the last few months." When giving praise, simply offer it on its own: a negative qualifier diminishes (or even kills) all the positives. (And don't forget to offer up praise—or at least say "Thanks!"—regularly.)

DO BE READY TO HELP SOMEONE IMPROVE.

Everyone gets off his or her game occasionally—even top performers. When a valuable team member's performance suffers, managers need to find out why. Rather than cast an inquiry in a mostly negative light (such as "You usually do good work, but your work has declined lately, and you really need to improve it"), point out the positives and indicate concern and a desire to help that employee improve: "Your performance has really gone downhill in the last few months. You're a valuable member of the team, and we need you on your *A* game. What can we do to help?"

Constructive criticism is an invaluable management tool. Done well, it can help employees achieve success by highlighting areas that need work and giving people the support they need to improve. Done poorly, it can backfire and actually increase problems, both for the employees and their organizations. When team members feel appreciated and valued, negative feedback won't be seen as personal attacks but instead as opportunities for growth. ∎

4 Strategies for Retaining the Best of the Best

BY JULIE WINKLE GIULIONI

Unwanted attrition is an unfortunate yet inevitable reality in today's business environment. Several recent studies highlight the threat facing leaders domestically and internationally:

· Gallup's State of the American Workplace: "51% of U.S. employees say they are actively looking for a new job or watching for openings"[1]

· SHRM Employee Job Satisfaction and Engagement Survey: "a fair amount 40%) of employees reported, to some degree, the possibility of seeking employment outside of their current organization within the next 12 months"[2]

· Dale Carnegie Training Global Leadership Study: 29% of respondents said "I "intend to look for a new job within the next year," and 16% said "I am looking for a new job now"[3]

Few things frustrate leaders more than seeing top performers take their talent down the highway to a competitor (or even down the hallway to another department). As a result, employee engagement efforts abound.

Many organizations work diligently to cultivate environments that enhance job satisfaction, help people find meaning in their work, recognize and reward employees for their contributions, and support personal and career development. Although all of these strategies are good for business and can contribute significantly to improved retention, leaders cannot depend upon these efforts alone. They must take a realistic and clear-eyed view of the future to confront the inconvenient truth that they will, at some point, lose key talent.

Because wishful thinking is not a valid business strategy, effective leaders take action every single day to protect themselves, their teams, and their organizations from the threat of attrition. Anticipating and preparing for the dangers of unwanted turnover involves looking at, planning, and delegating work differently. Four preemptive strategies can dramatically mitigate the risk and disruption that result when a top performer resigns.

DISTRIBUTE

It's tempting to load up a key, high-impact employee with a body of work that allows him or her to become the "go-to person" in a particular area. But what happens when that employee is gone? Distribute the risk—and increase the brainpower—through strategic delegation. Carve up and disperse work and assignments in a way that won't put all of a department's (or organization's) eggs in one basket.

DEVELOP

Career development is a well-known and well-documented retention strategy. But it's also an attrition-recovery strategy: by helping each employee grow to his or her potential, the organization creates a full pipeline of internal resources ready to continue essential work. It also develops a positive brand in the talent marketplace, making it easier to attract top talent and backfill key roles.

DOUBLE UP

Most organizations are operating leaner than ever before and must deploy resources with surgical efficiency. But creating the reserves required to weather unwanted turnover means thinking in terms of strategic redundancies. Build backups and actively encourage employees to share tasks and projects. This strategy offers protection from resignations and allows the organization to absorb the effects of unexpected absences. It also encourages a generous approach to vacation leaves (and the productivity boosts associated with rest and rejuvenation), because everyone knows that important work will continue to get done.

DELIGHT

The departure of an employee affects the business. But it has interpersonal implications, too, and can strongly affect his or her colleagues. As a result, organizations must find ways to engage employees, to build resilience, and to cultivate the ability to adjust quickly to inevitable workforce changes.

Turnover is an inescapable part of organizational life. And it isn't always a negative thing: the fresh ideas, energy, and perspective that follow a resignation (even that of a key player) can actually enrich an organization. Still, leaders owe it to themselves and to their businesses to take proactive steps each day to minimize the risks and to be ready to respond positively to the dreaded words "I quit!" ∎

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"LEADERSHIP"
Isn't
"Management"

BY DAVID FLOTTEN

Consider the following scenario: Thanks to an organization's policy of developing employees and promoting from within, a "rock star" employee who is a strong individual contributor in her department gets moved up to a management position. But it doesn't take long for problems to arise: the newly promoted employee struggles to deliver results and expresses frustration with her new position; other employees complain that their new manager is overly critical, doesn't communicate clearly, and provides no direction; and the department's overall productivity takes a turn for the worse. Eventually, things just keep getting worse until she quits, is fired, or is demoted, leaving everyone to wonder what went wrong with the "rock star" who was promoted.
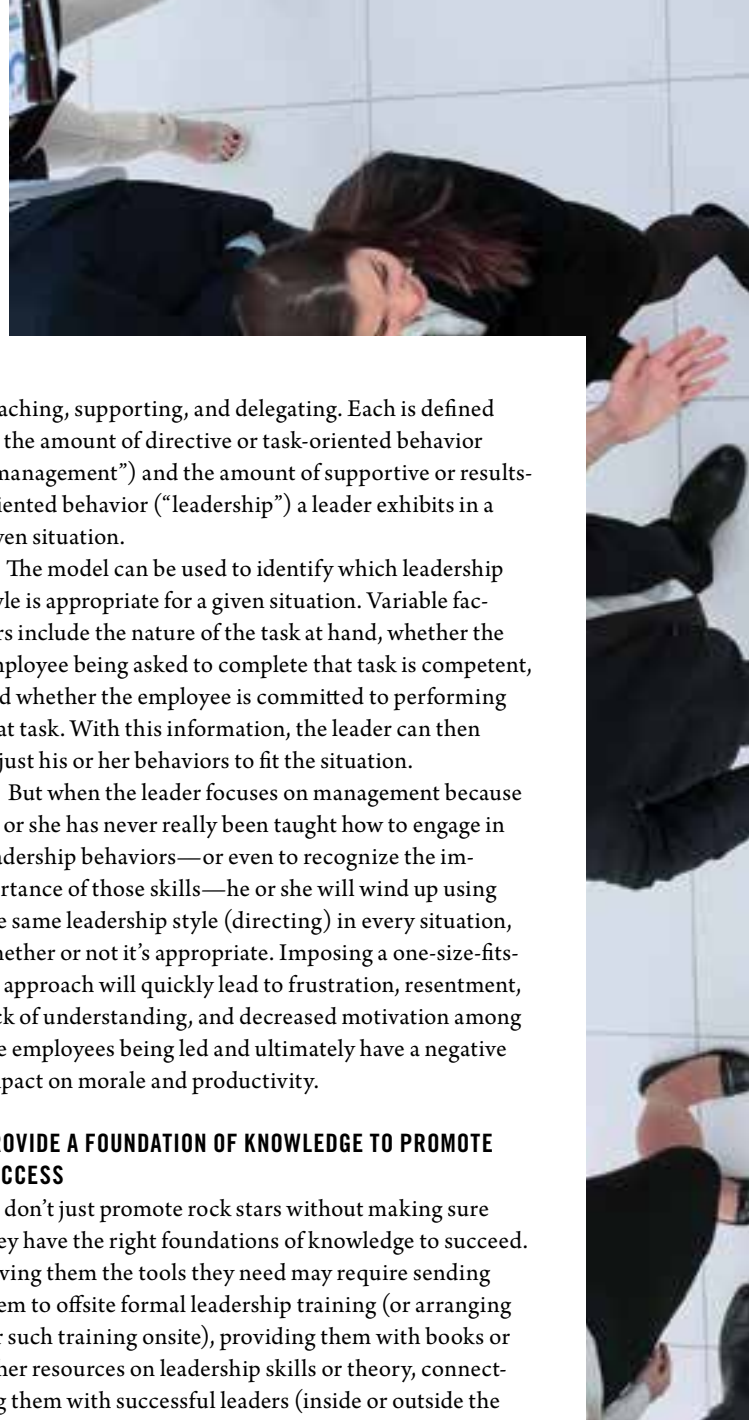
Obviously, employees who fail once they are promoted can fail for many reasons. More often than not, though, the root cause is the organization's failure to prepare those employees for their new roles. Companies often assume that because an employee is good at creating spreadsheets, assembling widgets, and analyzing data (or whatever he or she did as an individual contributor), he or she should be able to manage people who create spreadsheets, assemble widgets, and analyze data. But there is no reason at all why this should necessarily be true. The skills that make someone a successful leader are typically very different from the skills that make someone a good accountant, a good machine operator, or a good engineer.

What many newly promoted managers (and the people who promote them, for that matter) fail to recognize is the fundamental difference between "management" and "leadership." Management refers to actions and behaviors to direct employees to complete tasks and meet objectives. It involves task-oriented behaviors with a focus on resources such as materials, time, and information. By contrast, "leadership" refers to actions and behaviors to inspire employees and provide vision and direction. It involves more results-oriented behaviors and addresses what is to be achieved and why (as opposed to how to achieve it) and focuses on people, communication, and emotions.

Most rock star employees are probably pretty good at management. After all, excelling at their tasks and knowing how to use resources to produce effective results are what made them rock stars in the first place. But the ability to be a good manager doesn't give someone the ability to be a good leader—that is, someone who is a good manager doesn't necessarily know how to communicate a clear vision of his or her goals, inspire employees, and manage conflict and frustration. And although management skills are important, a newly promoted employee's success is really determined by his or her leadership skills.

MATCH THE LEADERSHIP STYLE TO THE SITUATION

Many common leadership models and theories make this fundamental distinction between management and leadership and focus on how to balance those two behaviors effectively. For example, the situational leadership model identifies four basic leadership styles: directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating. Each is defined by the amount of directive or task-oriented behavior ("management") and the amount of supportive or results-oriented behavior ("leadership") a leader exhibits in a given situation.

The model can be used to identify which leadership style is appropriate for a given situation. Variable factors include the nature of the task at hand, whether the employee being asked to complete that task is competent, and whether the employee is committed to performing that task. With this information, the leader can then adjust his or her behaviors to fit the situation.

But when the leader focuses on management because he or she has never really been taught how to engage in leadership behaviors—or even to recognize the importance of those skills—he or she will wind up using the same leadership style (directing) in every situation, whether or not it's appropriate. Imposing a one-size-fits-all approach will quickly lead to frustration, resentment, lack of understanding, and decreased motivation among the employees being led and ultimately have a negative impact on morale and productivity.

PROVIDE A FOUNDATION OF KNOWLEDGE TO PROMOTE SUCCESS

So don't just promote rock stars without making sure they have the right foundations of knowledge to succeed. Giving them the tools they need may require sending them to offsite formal leadership training (or arranging for such training onsite), providing them with books or other resources on leadership skills or theory, connecting them with successful leaders (inside or outside the organization) who can mentor them, or some combination of the above. Companies that don't put in some effort to help their newly promoted employees succeed in their new roles are far more likely to lose a rock star than to gain new leaders. ∎

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HOW TO IMPROVE *MANAGER* EFFECTIVENESS

BY DAVE ALMEDA

More than anything else, managers have the single biggest impact on an organization's performance. But what makes a manager effective? How can companies identify great leaders? And how can organizations replicate the behaviors of good managers in order to make everyone better?

These questions led Kronos to launch its Manager Effectiveness Index (MEI) to examine manager performance within its own organization. This study confirmed what many have suspected to be true: there are powerful links between manager behavior and employee engagement, which in turn shapes performance and retention. With these findings in hand, Kronos identified a five-step process for making good managers great and great managers even better.

1 IDENTIFY THE MOST IMPORTANT BEHAVIORS FOR GREAT MANAGERS AT THAT PARTICULAR ORGANIZATION.

Although certain aspects of manager effectiveness can be found throughout most companies, one size most certainly does not fit all: one size fits *one*. Each organization must identify the behaviors that best align with its own unique mission, culture, customer needs, and strategic goals. For example, after benchmarking different manager development initiatives, conducting internal analyses of performance reviews and engagement surveys, and hosting extensive employee focus groups to understand which manager actions (both positive and negative) had the most impact, the MEI researchers uncovered 16 unique behaviors that define an effective manager at Kronos.

2 FLIP THE TRADITIONAL PERFORMANCE PROCESS: HAVE EMPLOYEES RATE THEIR MANAGERS.

Kronos incorporated these 16 behaviors into its biannual employee engagement survey. All employees anonymously rated their direct managers (including the CEO) on each behavior by indicating agreement (or disagreement) with statements such as "My manager ensures that I understand the business strategy and how my work influences it," "My manager empowers me to make decisions," and "My manager truly cares about me as an employee."

3 PROVIDE MANAGERS WITH CLEAR BENCHMARKING REPORTS TO HELP BUILD DEVELOPMENT PLANS.

Kronos then gave each manager a personalized report showing how he or she ranked in all 16 areas and a matrix showing these results in comparison to those of other managers at the company. Through these reports, the managers received clear and concise feedback on employees' perceptions of their actions.

4 INCLUDE EMPLOYEES IN THE MANAGER'S GROWTH PLANS.

Armed with their MEI results, all managers debriefed with their teams (either as a group or individually) to drive ongoing, open discussions about their high- and low-scoring areas. Drawing on employee feedback, the managers worked with HR and their own managers to build personal development plans, targeted to their specific development opportunities (and leveraging MEI-specific training programs). Not only have the managers assumed accountability for their improvement, but their employees feel empowered and assured that the managers care about their employees' needs and personal growth.

5 WASH, RINSE, REPEAT—AND DON'T OVERREACT.

With the clarity provided by the MEI results, the vast majority of Kronos managers immediately focused on becoming better leaders. Ongoing discussions with their teams uncovered blind spots for even the best managers (for example, one high-scorer realized that she never asked "What are your career aspirations?" in any one-on-one meetings with her employees). At the same time, Kronos also learned that low MEI scores do not always mean that someone is a "bad manager" (for example, they can result when a manager inherits a difficult situation that has been unaddressed for a long time).

As a general rule, low MEI scores become urgent only after at least three measurement periods. Like employee performance evaluations, evaluations of manager effectiveness must be part of an ongoing conversation. Kronos plans to conduct this survey every six months.

GETTING STARTED

There are two prerequisites to rolling out a manager-assessment program: baseline manager training and a high-trust environment. It is unreasonable (and unfair) to hold managers accountable for behaviors for which they haven't been trained. And within a high-trust environment, employees can understand that the program is being implemented because the company cares about their professional and personal development. This process can be applied to any company, as long as it's adjusted for that organization's particular characteristics and needs and as long as its goals and intentions are genuine and transparent. ◼

As chief people officer at Kronos Incorporated, Dave Almeda drives the company's global human capital management strategy (including talent acquisition and development, compensation and benefits, and employee engagement programs).

How to Promote
GENDER DIVERSITY
in the
WORKPLACE

BY KAITLIN ANILONIS

Diverse workplaces foster innovation, improve employee performance, and widen the range of talents, skills, perspectives, and experiences within a company. Because workplace diversity is vital to a company's success and its ability to build a positive employment brand, recruiters and HR professionals should take a moment to evaluate the benefits of having employees and candidates of different age groups, genders, ethnicities, and religious affiliations. They should also look for ways to improve their hiring and onboarding processes for new hires from diverse backgrounds. By figure out where their companies fall short—and fixing those shortcomings—companies can attract and retain top talent.

If a company's career site and new job postings state that the organization embraces diversity, this statement should be accurate. Start at the top and take a good look at the leadership team, which heavily influences a company's culture and shapes its image in the eyes of both current employees and prospects. If the C-suite members lack diversity, that's a good indication that the company might not be as diverse as it claims to be.

Gender diversity has been particularly difficult to achieve. A recent iCIMS survey found that although "U.S. companies are making progress, [they] still struggle with gender issues, including the pay gap, parental leave, hiring women in STEM, and promoting women to C-level positions."[1] And even though women and men are equally ambitious in their desire for C-suite positions, only "32% of high-level or C-level leaders . . . are women." These statistics can be discouraging to many women and lead to a "Why should I even try?" mentality. Because a gender-diverse workplace benefits everyone, though, companies need to keep working on their diversification efforts and communicating them to current and prospective employees.

During interviews, for example, companies should spell out their offerings with regard to PTO, maternity and paternity leave, work-from-home options, and schedule flexibility. Women in particular tend not to ask about these benefits out of fear that doing so will make them look uncommitted (or less committed than men) to their new jobs. Presenting this information right off the bat saves candidates from feeling uncomfortable about bringing up these issues later and instead helps them feel supported and valued within the company.

When female candidates are hired, the organization then should focus on assimilating these new employees into the company. One great way to do this is to encourage the creation of internal communities and groups that address issues that are relevant to the new hires. For example, a "women in tech" group at a technology-based organization can provide a place where women can discuss everyday challenges of being a woman in the technology industry, ways to overcome them, and tips for success. Embracing the communities that employees create helps them to feel welcome, understood, heard, and part of a meaningful group.

A diverse workplace is a better workplace: diverse companies thrive and succeed. Clearly, there's a lot of room for improvement in regards to gender diversity. But by fully embracing pro-diversity policies and clearly communicating them to employees and candidates, companies can increase their chances for success and build stronger employer brands and cultures and enable them to attract and retain top talent. ■

Kaitlin Anilonis is a corporate communications intern at iCIMS Inc., a leading provider of innovative Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) talent-acquisition solutions that help businesses win the war for top talent. To learn more about how iCIMS can help your organization, visit www.icims.com.

1. iCIMS. 2017. "Women in the Workforce: A Closer Look at Gender Equality in the Workplace." iCIMS website, www.icims.com/sites/www.icims.com/files/public/women-in-the-workforce-final.pdf.

What HR Must Do to Meet Growing Business Challenges

BY KAREN MINICOZZI

"Adapt or die."

That old adage may sound overly dramatic, but it accurately describes the new reality HR practitioners face in today's uncertain business climate. Now that technology can manage and automate routine administrative tasks, HR can no longer spend its days focused on those processes. But when one door closes, another door opens— and there are plenty of opportunities for HR to be more strategic. HR practitioners are in a unique position to leverage insights from employee data to guide not only business leaders but their own workforces as well. This significant shift will no doubt require HR leaders to refocus their efforts from process management to employee enablement and measurable outcomes—all in order to more closely align their work with the business goals.

ALIGN HR PRACTICES WITH BROADER BUSINESS STRATEGIES

Although HR data has significant applications, it has the potential to be much more powerful when unified with data from other parts of the business. In most organizations today, people are both the largest expense and the greatest revenue driver. To be successful, HR needs to understand how the depth and breadth of financial and people information can be tapped to provide valuable insights to business leaders, as well as a personal and engaging experience to every person in the organization.

KEEP THE HR FUNCTION AGILE WITH TECHNOLOGY

HR professionals need to focus less on domain-specific systems and lean more on systems that use unified data to drive a meaningful, more personalized experience for every worker. Luckily, technology has evolved to the point where workforce and financial data now live in one system, positioning HR to strategize on budgeting, planning, and forecasting for major events such as M&A, divestiture, reorganization, expansion, and more.

HR DATA THAT IS UNIFIED WITH FINANCIALS IN ONE SYSTEM CAN DRIVE SMARTER GROWTH STRATEGIES.

From a granular workforce perspective, the transactional data that is captured each time a change (such as a new hire, a job move, or a compensation adjustment) is made rolls up into a holistic picture of the business and the individual employee. That information can drive a unique and personal experience for each employee (similar to Netflix recommendations for subscribers based on what they've previously watched). It's well established that engaged workers drive business results, so HR needs to increase engagement by providing delightful employee experiences that are enabled, not hindered, by technology.

At a high level, HR data that is unified with financials in one system can drive smarter growth strategies. As CEOs consider expanding their businesses, their teams must determine the labor, office space, travel, and infrastructure costs associated with such growth and then do a cost comparison against other options. By drilling down into specific data (such as open job requisitions, budgeting for office space, travel between locations, or location-specific employee benefits), HR can take charge of deciding if a company opens a location in Minneapolis rather than in Sacramento.

PREPARE FOR CHANGE DOWN THE ROAD

In the end, the most important responsibility of HR leaders operating in today's business climate (in which disruption is only an app away) is to ensure that their practitioners have the right skill sets and tools to adapt. Can they analyze data—and not just collect it? Can they provide the business with data-driven recommendations that improve the bottom line—and not just enforce policies? Anyone who cannot adapt to today's technology will face an even bigger capabilities deficit in few years, as artificial intelligence and machine learning increase the ability of organizations to cut out inefficiencies and drive business value. By building the right infrastructure, skills, and engagement framework now, companies can be ready for the uncertainty ahead. ■

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This article originally appeared on the Workday blog (blogs.workday.com).

WHAT IS THE TECHNICAL OR OTHERWISE COMMON DEFINITION OF AN EMPLOYEE'S TERMINATION DATE?

BY HRISEASY.COM

ARE WE ALLOWED TO LOOK THROUGH AN EMPLOYEE'S EMAIL?

Q. What is the technical or otherwise common definition of an employee's termination date? Is it the date the on which the termination occurs or the last date the employee performed work?

—

A. Typically, the termination date is the day that the actual termination occurred. It may or may not coincide with the final day of work, depending on the circumstances.

For example, many companies have a no-call, no-show provision in their attendance policy (e.g., three days of no-call, no-show will result in termination), after which an employee is terminated based on job abandonment. In such a scenario, the date of termination is after the third day of no-call, no-show, which does not coincide with the employee's last day of work. Alternatively, the employer or employee may give advance notice, as is often the case when employees are simply moving on in their career or the employer is conducting a layoff. In that case, the termination date is the employee's final day of work.

If an employee files for unemployment, the unemployment agency may request both the employee's last date of work and the termination date. If this request isn't made and the termination day and last work day are not the same, we still recommend providing both dates in response to the unemployment claim. ■

Q. Are we allowed to look through an employee's email while they are still employed?

—

A. The short answer is yes, you can monitor employee email. As a general rule, employees should not have an expectation of privacy when using company computers or email accounts. That said, the law is not perfectly cut and dry, so you should have both a legitimate business reason for doing so and a policy that puts employees on notice that you do — or could — review their email.

If you decide to monitor employee email, I recommend that you review your handbook policies, especially any that address company equipment or email usage. You should include a policy that says something along the lines of, "All Company-supplied technology, including computer systems and Company-related work records, belong to the Company and not the employee. The Company routinely monitors usage patterns for its email and internet communications. Although encouraged to explore the resources available on the Internet, employees should use discretion in the sites that are accessed."

If you monitor company email, you should also be consistent in how you do so. For example, if you're routinely reviewing emails to ensure that employees aren't conducting personal business on company time, I would recommend that you do so for all employees or everyone in a specific department. ■

In addition to live HR consulting, HRisEasy offers an award-winning online support center packed with HR tools, documents, legal updates, and more. Learn more about our services at hriseasy.com.

VIRTUAL REALITY'S PLACE IN YOUR WORKPLACE

BY MIKE MCKERNS

WHEN NINTENDO RELEASED the Virtual Boy gaming console in 1995, that early virtual reality (VR) device flopped both commercially and critically. In the past couple of years, though, several affordable—and successful—VR devices (such as Oculus Rift, Google's Daydream, Samsung's Gear VR, and the VR One from optics giant Zeiss) have hit the consumer market. Right now, the most popular VR applications are games and movies. But just imagine how VR could revolutionize recruitment, which faces the never-ending challenge of finding candidates with the right skill sets in a shrinking applicant pool.

In this digital age, consumers do their product research online before making purchases in stores. Similarly, applicants research your company before walking into your office for an interview. Take that approach one step further: what if applicants could take a virtual tour of your company? Or use VR to "try out" for a day the jobs they're applying for? Educated consumers make confident decisions. Giving applicants a chance to explore their potential jobs and work environments could translate into higher interview-to-hire ratios and improved employee retention.

Now think about the possibilities for using VR to streamline the recruitment and onboarding processes. Video interviews are now commonplace. But with glitchy technology and camera angles that often force participants to look at screens instead of at each other, the current "remote interview" experience still leaves much to be desired. Because the point of virtual reality is to deliver as immersive an experience as possible, the use of VR is used in remote interviews can help participants have "face to face" conversations and feel as though they're actually in the same room together.

VR can also be a useful assessment tool. Written tests have been standard for screening candidates for decades, but they can't measure everything. With VR-based assessments, companies can test applicants' skills in areas such as customer service, driving, and project or team management. Instead of answering questions about how they would handle workplace challenges, candidates can—through a VR scenario—demonstrate how they would actually respond to them.

Developers are just starting to explore the many possibilities of VR. Once they look beyond entertainment and turn their full attention to recruitment- and hiring-oriented applications, that shift will very likely turn the business world on its head! ∎

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

Water: ©iStock.com/Grafissimo

A SEASONAL FAVORITE: MULLED CIDER

When the mercury plummets and the days are short and dreary, few things are as cozy and comforting as a mug of hot mulled cider! Dating back to the Medieval era, mulled cider has a long and storied history as a traditional part of winter celebrations. A pot full of simmering apple cider and spices fills a home with delicious smells that evoke memories of families and friends coming together. Fortunately, it's easy to make—and your family, too, can enjoy it during this winter holiday season!

MULLED CIDER / YIELD: 12 servings   TIME: 15 minutes

NUTRITIONAL INFO PER SERVING:

Calories:	142 cal
Fat:	0 g
Dietary fiber:	0.5 g
Sugars:	30 g
Protein:	0.25 g

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:
1 gallon of apple cider
6 star anise
8 cloves
2 oranges, unpeeled and thinly sliced
4 cinnamon sticks

DIRECTIONS:
1. Combine everything in a large pot.
2. Simmer over very low heat for 15 minutes. (Don't let it boil!)
3. Pour into mugs and serve hot.

NOTES:
- For a festive touch, add a fresh cinnamon stick to each mug after filling it with mulled cider.
- To have mulled cider available for several hours (say, at a party), warm it in a crockpot on the lowest setting and replenish the cider periodically so you don't end up cooking it down into a thick syrup.
- To give your mulled cider a little kick, add a tablespoon of brandy to each mug. ∎

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THE RESOURCE

Leadership Development • Permanent Recruitment • Staffing

SOLVING PEOPLE PROBLEMS SOLVES BUSINESS PROBLEMS

OUR VISION

The driving force behind everything we do is people. We believe everyone has a place where they can naturally thrive in work and in life. Every individual has their own capabilities and goals, so we seek to help people find fulfillment wherever they are. We view change as necessary and positive. It is our goal to build opportunities for our people and clients as we continue pushing forward and to have fun while doing it.

OUR STRATEGY

Every seat in an organization matters. By utilizing our CORE assessment to reveal the true, unchanging nature of every individual, we can ensure that employees are placed in a position where they will naturally perform at their highest level. We seek to individualize our services to meet the needs of both candidates and clients. We stay on top of trends and anticipate demand, creating solutions in a proactive, not reactive way. These strategies allow us to bring a revolutionary approach to Leadership Development, Permanent Recruitment and Staffing.

CORE VALUES
Teamwork • Customer Focus • Innovation • Love What You Do

WHO WE ARE
& WHAT WE DO

We love what we do. Our passion is to serve others and our community, whether by finding people jobs, coaching them into better careers or helping feed the hungry. It is important for us to do the right thing, every time. We want every person to be their best, so we measure success as a win for client, candidate and company. With over 35 years of experience in the staffing industry, we are uniquely equipped to provide real people solutions for the business world.

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We identify the CORE nature of your leaders and develop them to fit the mold and vision of your company.

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Your people are one of your biggest investments. We take the risk out of the hiring process by getting to the CORE of the candidates.

STAFFING SOLUTIONS

Hiring doesn't have to be a guessing game. We specialize in staffing for Light Industrial and Clerical/ Professional and ensure each candidate is naturally qualified to do the job required.

"

OUR MISSION IS TO WORK ALONGSIDE YOU TO PUT A TOP PERFORMER IN EVERY SEAT IN YOUR COMPANY.

"

KATHY HARTUNG
CEO, THE RESOURCE

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