MOTIVATING EMPLOYEES:
LOOK BEYOND
MONEY

> **As we celebrate the 40th Anniversary of our Company in 2019, I feel compelled to reflect back on the incredible journey that brings us to this milestone.** *- Kathy Hartung*

THE RESOURCE

Recently a Professional employee asked if I would be willing to mentor her and share insight about running a company successfully, etc.. I was certainly honored that she would ask that of me. I still see myself as a work in progress and never reaching the pinnacle of success. So, as I pondered for a few minutes on what it has actually been like running a business, here is what came clear to me:

3 F's that has made it work for me.

1. *Faith* - in God. Never having to worry about tomorrow because tomorrow will take care of itself. There have always been many unknowns and no way to control any of it. Faith is what gave me the courage and confidence to push through and trust that the Lord knows the future and that He will see us through and take care of us. This faith also keeps me grounded that we are nothing without Him. Also, that we must save during the good times to survive the bad times, because we will have both along the journey - and the bad times will increase our faith and our courage.

2. *Fun* - It has to be fun or we will not persevere. Whether the fun is because of what we get to do or who we get to do it with, you need to enjoy it. When it is fun then it's not work and it will energize and motivate us and give us fulfillment, ultimately. It is important to see the positive in every situation and limit those who don't. If you don't, they will suck the life and energy out and hinder positive movement. Making tough decisions is not usually fun; it can be awful and takes a toll on you. It's also part of it!

3. *Figure it out!* - There is no road map or business plan to follow that will ultimately lead to a successful business. Instead, there is a lot of trial and error and really the most valuable lessons come from failure. There is a lot of pain and regret along the journey. It is important to learn from each mistake and success and to implement those lessons and share them with your team. I spent very little time looking at where we had been and instead looking at where we needed to go and how to get there.

Be sure to check out the next issue to read my answer to the question - *What do I know today that I wish I had known at 29!*

> **Are you operating as your BEST SELF? How can we help you be your BEST SELF? Call me. In 10 minutes after taking the CORE, I can begin to help you understand how...**

Best Regards,

Kathy Hartung

Kathy Hartung, CEO

HR INSIGHTS Magazine

COVER STORY

HR INSIGHTS

from the eyes of industry leaders

HOW TO MOTIVATE EMPLOYEES: LOOK BEYOND MONEY

BY VALERIE M. GRUBB

When people are financially invested, they want a return.
When people are emotionally invested, they want to contribute.

— SIMON SINEK

No matter what size their departments are and how far removed they are from the CEO's office, all managers are responsible for defining the missions and goals of their departments (preferably keeping them in line with the overall missions and goals of their companies). By rewarding employees who successfully help a department accomplish its goals (often by achieving their own individual goals), leaders reinforce what is valued in—or even required by—a job.

Unfortunately, many leaders in corporate America don't see the importance of recognizing and rewarding their employees. Because people who feel valued at work are more likely to be satisfied and motivated, those leaders miss out on many of the benefits of an engaged workforce:[1]

· higher productivity
· higher success rates
· better customer service
· higher safety rates
· greater job satisfaction
· lower turnover and absenteeism
· greater happiness

The more motivated employees are, the more likely they are to put forth their best efforts on behalf of the company. And those best efforts translate into great success for them—and for the organization.

When companies want to motivate their employees, they often turn to the old standby: money. No doubt raises, bonuses, and other financial incentives can have a strong positive influence on employees. But money isn't the only motivator out there. In fact, it's not even the best motivator: in recent years, study after study has revealed that employees usually rank money well below the intrinsic awards associated with work that's well done (and well appreciated).[2]

STARTING POINT

Before taking any action to motivate their teams, managers must first motivate themselves, because their behaviors and attitudes have a ripple effect throughout their departments. When managers hate their jobs, their team members are more likely to hate their own jobs. When employees see that their managers are stressed out, the chances are good that they will be stressed out as well. After all, negativity is contagious. Fortunately, so is enthusiasm! When managers are excited and motivated about their jobs, it's much easier for those around them to have similarly positive feelings about their own jobs.

INTERNAL MOTIVATION

Motivation that comes from within an individual has a more lasting effect on that person than external rewards (such as money, titles, corner offices, etc.) whose positive effects soon fade. Here are some strategies for helping employees develop intrinsic motivation.

- **Keep employees in the know**. No one enjoys feeling like a cog in a machine. Employees are more engaged in their work and with the company if they have a sense of the "big picture," not just of their small slice of the organization. So give them insight into how the company operates (and how it is doing financially). With this knowledge, employees are more likely to feel that the organization is *their* company—and not merely a place where they work in accounting or HR or marketing.

- **Assign interesting and engaging work**. Management theorist Frederick Herzberg once said, "If you want someone to do a good job, give them a good job to do."[3] So give employees good jobs by making sure that their responsibilities include something of interest to them. Even in jobs that are inherently boring, having at least one or two stimulating projects can motivate employees to perform well on the mundane tasks, too.

- **Invite involvement and ownership in decisions.** Most companies don't prioritize involving employees in decisions that affect them. Perhaps it's time to reconsider that practice, though. Keeping employees in the loop is not only respectful (and makes them feel like part of the company), but also practical: people who are closest to a situation typically have the best insight on how to improve it. Employees on the ground floor of an issue often know what works (and what doesn't) and can provide valuable insight into how to resolve a problem quickly and effectively. In addition, employees who have a hand in crafting a solution feel ownership of it and are therefore more invested in working toward its successful implementation.

- **Increase visibility and opportunity**. Don't make assumptions about how much visibility and opportunity employees want. Everyone likes to be recognized and noticed by more than just his or her supervisors after doing a good job.

Whether or not they want promotions or more challenging work, all employees flourish when they receive more visible recognition and opportunities that are personally meaningful.

- **Provide autonomy**. Employees value the freedom to do their jobs as they see fit. So if employees are able to get their jobs done (and done well) on their own, *leave them alone!* Giving high-performing employees more autonomy increases the likelihood that those employees will continue to perform as desired. Even with new recruits who haven't yet proven themselves, it's possible to provide autonomy in work assignments by telling those employees what needs to be done without dictating exactly how to do it. By letting go of all the decision making, managers not only ease their own burdens but also empower employees to develop and demonstrate their own skills in leadership, organization, and communication.

- **Be loyal**. Bosses should demonstrate loyalty to their employees, even though it can sometimes be challenging to do so. This can include being transparent (when possible), providing accurate feedback designed to improve an employee's performance, and giving full and proper credit to employees for their work.

- **Show appreciation**. It's amazing how many managers don't thank their employees for completing tasks. Yes, it's their job to do that work, but why not take a moment to say a simple "Thank you"? All employees like to be appreciated, and whether appreciation takes the form of small gestures or big statements, it can go a long way toward motivating—and retaining—them.

- **Cultivate a fun environment.** It's common sense that when people like their workplaces, they're more likely to stay with their companies longer and put more energy into their work. Even in companies that have more "buttoned up" or formal environments, managers can still try to inject some fun at the department level.

- **Show empathy**. In any workplace and with any employee, sometimes "life just happens." When employers understand that problems arise outside the office and are willing to work with employees in times of a crisis, that can go a long

way toward building the goodwill that's key to securing an employee for a longer tenure.

- **Coach and mentor**. Unlike the goddess Athena, who sprang from her father's head as a fully grown adult ready to take on the world, people don't start their careers with all the knowledge and skills they'll ever need. They have to learn those things along the way—often with the help of their managers and senior colleagues. (In fact, most successful leaders have had a great mentor in their past!) By cultivating coaching and mentoring relationships within their own organizations, managers not only help employees develop their skills but also strengthen the relationships among team members—both of which can increase engagement.

IT'S NOT "ALL ABOUT THE BENJAMINS"

Money can buy a lot of things, but it can't buy everything. And in the workplace, it can't buy the attitudes and knowledge that drive employee engagement. To motivate employees to do their best (both for themselves and for the organization), appreciate and reward their efforts and successes, and give them the recognition and support they need to thrive. ∎

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THE *REVERSE* PERFORMANCE REVIEW

BY JEFF MILLER

When asked about the best jobs they've ever had, most people will say that their best jobs were the ones for which they had the best managers. "Most people" isn't merely anecdotal, though: that claim is backed up by plenty of data. For example, Gallup research finds that "managers account for at least 70% of the variance in employee engagement scores across business units," and half of the workers surveyed "have left their job to get away from their manager at some point in their career."[1]

Managers have this influence because they are responsible for creating the environments in which their employees operate. A great manager motivates and inspires everyone on the team to do exceptional work. On the other hand, a manager who struggles to create an optimal environment can actually inhibit a team. For managers to improve, they need feedback—not only from senior leadership, but from employees as well.

In a way, this feedback process is a reverse performance review. It starts when managers ask employees the right questions. For example, a question such as "Is there anything I can do to be a better manager?" won't elicit the feedback someone needs to improve because it's too vague and open-ended.

Based on motivation theory, the following six questions will yield far more useful data. They are designed to address the features of a team culture that, when optimized effectively, will create the best environment in which employees can achieve—and in which managers can thrive.

"Do I ask you to do things that seem to lack value or purpose?" The employees in the movie *Office Space* are irritated by their manager's repeated demands for TPS reports because they don't understand *why* they have to do those reports. Managers should strive to decrease the amount of work that their teams perceive as useless. One way to accomplish this is to understand which tasks feel that way to them.

"Do you feel that you own the work you're doing—or that you're just doing what you're told?" To create an environment in which employees will succeed, managers must make sure that those employees have ownership of the work they're doing. When a manager delegates a task, the employee must understand how the task has meaning and adds value.

"Are the goals we're setting together meaningful and manageable?" A manager's expectations should be high—but also reasonable. Use the old fable "Goldilocks and the Three Bears" as a guideline: when expectations are too low, employees won't feel challenged; when expectations are too high, employees will feel discouraged. Managers should aim for expectations that are "just right" and leave employees feeling stretched but not overwhelmed.

"Do you get a balance of positive and negative feedback?" Just as often as they point out which behaviors are preventing employees from achieving results, managers should also point out which behaviors are helping employees reach their goals. This question is designed to measure recognition, which is just as important as criticism.

"Do you understand how to get your job done in a meaningful, efficient way? If not, how can I help you learn this?" People perform better when they understand their roles, how their teams fit into the larger organization, and what tools and resources they can use to do their jobs.

"Do you feel you can go to your colleagues to brainstorm, solve problems, and collaborate to get work done?" Every employee should feel that the team has his or her back. Every employee should be able to communicate and collaborate with his or her colleagues. A strong sense of team connection is a high indicator of motivation and success.

Managers should ask employees to include in their responses a scale (1 to 10 or even 1 to 100) to indicate importance as well as specific examples. Simple "yes" or "no" answers not only omit a lot of valuable information but also fail to promote a growth mindset—and there's always room for improvement. Delving into the details gives managers opportunities to learn how to make employees' experiences even better and, by extension, improve the team's overall performance. ■

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Change your thoughts and you change your world.
— NORMAN VINCENT PEALE

How to Improve Leadership through Stories

BY LYNNE LEVY

At most leadership development training programs, attendees receive a toolkit and a set of processes. Yet many of these programs do not take into account the mindset needed to be an effective leader. One of the prominent themes of Workhuman Live 2019 was that a great leader asks questions and enables others to realize their dreams, in part by understanding how stories can affect leadership, innovation, productivity, and organizational growth. Inspired leaders focus on rewriting and unraveling negative stories to transform them into positive stories that reinforce accountability.

Both Brené Brown and Cy Wakeman have done research on some of the critical skills needed to reframe negative stories. Brown's research makes it clear that vulnerability and courage work together: the human mind tends to tell itself stories that associate vulnerability with weakness and shame, but it is only by reaching into that vulnerability that leaders can inspire their teams.[1] Vulnerability creates trust and permission to experiment, learn, and make mistakes. As Brown stated at Workhuman Live 2019, "Without leadership that accepts and exposes vulnerability, innovation will not happen. Do not expect individuals to come up with creative ideas if there are negative repercussions for failure."

The human brain is wired for stories, and in the absence of data it makes them up. For example, someone who feels ignored by her manager at a meeting might start to feel that she is about to receive

some bad news, her career is ending, or she will never get the promotion she deserves. These stories use what little information is available (even if it's incomplete or inaccurate) to inflate fears, create shame, and embolden insecurities.

Leaders who believe these stories start to micromanage and become too controlling (possibly even bullying). The most resilient leaders, however, recognize that these stories are made up and change them by focusing on the facts and emphasizing the positive. They ask themselves, "What do I know? And what is the story I am telling myself?"

Accountability, too, changes the story. With the philosophy that leaders must hold each person accountable, Cy Wakeman explains that individuals and leaders who do nothing but complain, moan, and whine often end up stuck on negative stories that create a victim mentality.[2] When employees believe they cannot change anything, declines in productivity and innovation result.

Venting is how people keep negative stories alive. It feeds the ego and protects them from the realities of their circumstances. One of the most effective tools for changing negative stories is self-reflection, the ultimate drama killer. Some questions that turn negative stories into positive stories that promote accountability include:

- "What can I do to help?" (This moves someone from a state of judging to a state of helping.)

- "What do I know for sure?" (This loosens the grip of the negative story and moves the emphasis to accountability.)

- "What can I do to add value?" (This helps the brain figure out how to make things work rather than focus on negativity.)

- "What would 'great' look like?" (This is the ultimate positive accountability question.)

Wakeman firmly believes that suffering is optional and that individuals can control their suffering by changing their stories. Leaders need to help their teams change the stories to create accountability. For example, they can ask venting employees to edit their stories (perhaps by writing things down, which can help individuals tune into their thoughts). Two great questions to think through during this process are "What would be most helpful in this situation?" and "Would I rather be right or be happy?"

The impact of stories on leadership, innovation, productivity, and organizational growth cannot be overstated. Over the course of millennia, stories have come to play a pivotal role in shaping human communication, connection, conflict, and myriad other types of interaction. Because stories have the ability to bring many benefits (or great harm) to the workplace, leadership needs to become adept at helping people shift from negative stories to positive ones and thereby increase their accountability.

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Scan to watch Brené Brown's compelling TEDx talk on *The Power of Vulnerability*

Career Sites: The Key to Better Candidate Experience

BY iCIMS

When businesses need to drum up sales, they advertise. Using billboards, targeted e-mail blasts, and countless other media, they try to entice people to visit their websites and brick-and-mortar locations. Taking a page from consumer marketing, many recruiters and businesses use similar advertising strategies to attract job seekers to their career sites.

Unfortunately, recruitment marketing still falls short of its goal: whereas consumer websites are usually well organized, easily searchable, and full of interesting and relevant information (about sales promotions and the latest trends, for example), career websites tend to be clunky and lack features and functions to make them useful recruitment tools. Unless they want to watch today's dwindling supply of talent search for better experiences elsewhere (that is, with the competition), businesses need to fix this problem.

Josh Wright, chief economist at iCIMS, points out, "Career sites are not just about making the right brand impression, but also about herding candidates into position, each step pushing them onward through the funnel. These sites have the potential to draw candidates in, just as storefronts do with shoppers." Yet companies keep failing to take advantage of this opportunity: of the "41 percent of employers [that] know their career sites provide a neutral to very poor experience to applicants," the majority of them still have no plans to make improvements.[1] This means that businesses that treat their career sites as priorities can gain an invaluable edge in the fight to hire the talent that they need to grow—but only if they act quickly to pursue four key strategies before the window of opportunity closes.

IMPROVE SEARCH FUNCTIONALITY

Most job seekers already use search engines to find open positions and information about potential employers, and Google is the tool of choice for most (69 percent) of them.[2] Such searches are likely to increase on Google now that it indexes job openings shared on the Internet and more businesses optimize their job descriptions to improve their Google search rankings. On the upside, these searches will lead more job seekers to companies' career sites, thus decreasing (and possibly even eliminating) the need for costly third-party job boards. The downside of this shift, though, is that many companies' career sites offer poor search experiences, which makes it difficult for job seekers to find what they need on them.
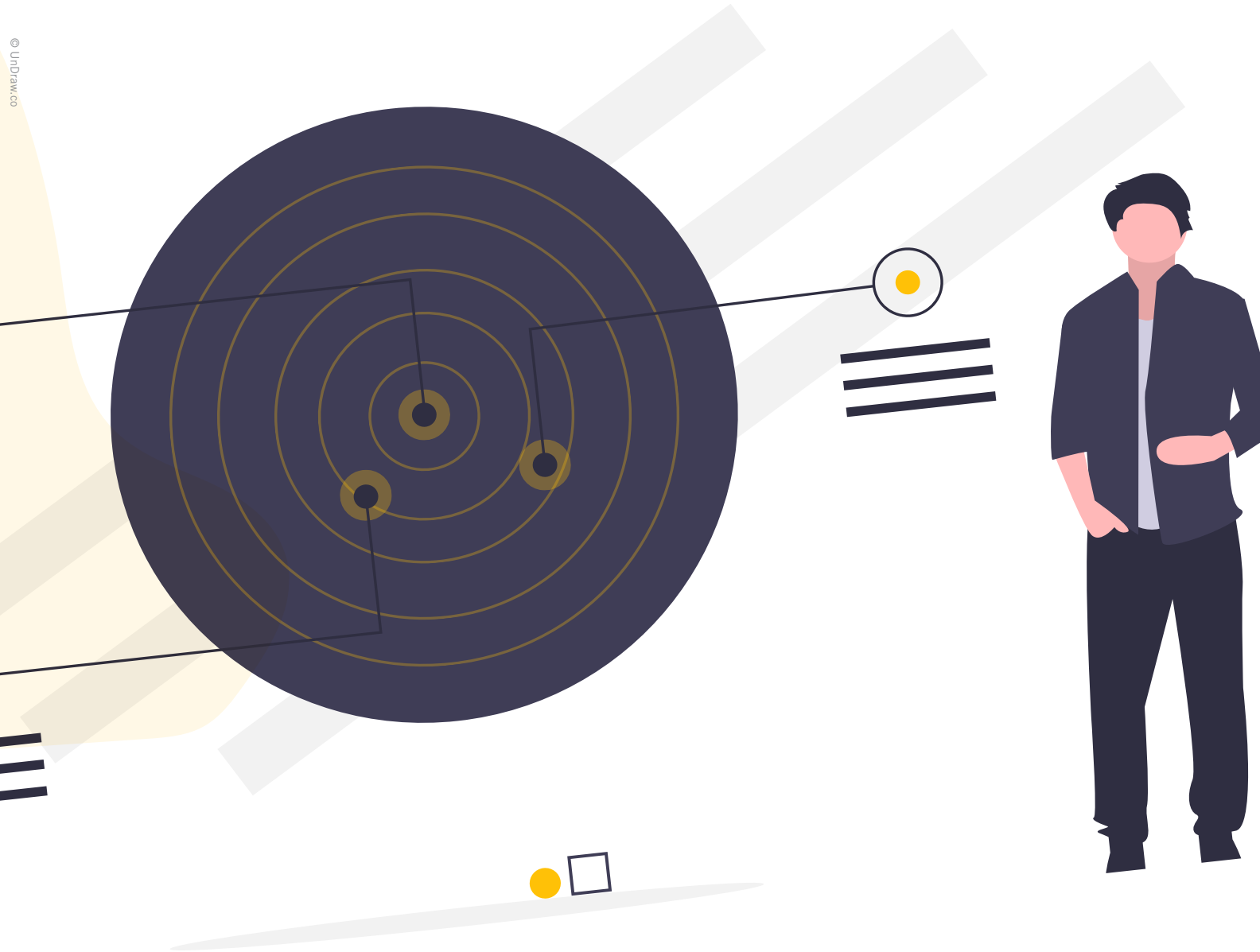
OPTIMIZE FOR MOBILE DEVICES

Most of today's applicants (especially among the younger generations) expect businesses to offer mobile-friendly career sites and application processes. Unfortunately, companies too often spend a fortune on recruitment marketing tactics only to see job seekers abandon applications that are too difficult or time-consuming to complete or that request additional documents (such as resumes). To prevent this waste of money, businesses need to design their career sites so that job seekers can easily submit applications from their mobile devices, which are the means by which increasing numbers of job seekers engage with job portals. Companies that make this change will not only connect with top talent more easily but can also decrease their costs. (For example, making it possible for job seekers to use their mobile devices at any stage of the application process helped Esurance raise its "candidate experience net promoter score by 36 points" and lower its "cost per hire by 41 percent."[3])

TAKE CONTROL OF CONTENT

Many businesses pay third parties to manage their career sites, a practice that not only adds another expense but also risks having exposure to inconsistent branding when job seekers move from one online property to another. Businesses that assume ownership of their career sites can eliminate the cost of paying somebody else to manage it, ensure consistency with other branded properties, and promote high-priority job postings.

MEASURE AND REFINE

Finally, businesses need to tie their spending on recruitment marketing to proven results by measuring candidate-conversion rates. By employing some of the same methods used to determine the success of marketing (through measuring leads, opportunities, and sales), companies can ascertain whether their recruitment efforts are good investments to continue—or ineffective strategies that need to be retooled or abandoned. ∎

iCIMS Inc., is 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.

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5
Key Strategies
for Developing
NEW MANAGERS

BY JESSICA MILLER-MERRELL

One of the most important services HR leaders provide is training for new managers. This type of training varies tremendously, depending on the new manager's previous management experience or, in the case of an internal promotion, the knowledge he or she already has of company rules, regulations, and processes. It can be difficult to develop individual management training based on currently available resources, but by focusing on certain areas it's possible to offer excellent training for both internal and external candidates who are new to supervisory roles.

WHY IS NEW MANAGER TRAINING IMPORTANT?

As the old saying goes, "Employees don't leave companies—they leave managers." Managers "account for at least 70% of the variance in employee engagement scores across business units," and because low employee engagement can lead to low retention, poorly trained managers can have a direct impact on a company's bottom line.[1] Great employees don't always make great managers, but many management skills and qualities can be taught.

HR professionals are tasked with educating managers on best practices and company expectations in areas such as the consequences of sharing too much with their employees via social media, performance reviews, hiring and termination documentation, the ramifications of disclosing (whether intentionally or unintentionally) confidential information online, and much more. The fact that managers need to

be familiar with such a wide range of topics raises several important questions: When is the best time to train new managers who aren't hired internally? How can the company know if an internal employee is prepared for management? How can the company ensure that its policies and procedures are followed? Most importantly, how can the company's HR leaders support new managers?

WHAT TYPES OF RESOURCES AND SUPPORT DO NEW MANAGERS NEED TO SUCCEED?

On the *Google Partners* podcast, Google's manager development programs lead, Sarah Calderon, revealed some secrets about how Google trains and develops great managers.[2] By using strategies that build on some of Google's examples, HR leaders can help new managers acquire the tools and experience they need to thrive in their new roles.

Don't overwhelm new managers. Calderon recommends giving new managers a few basic resources they can use during their first few months on the job and putting them through formalized management training only after they've been managing for a while. (For example, someone whose department will be rapidly growing needs early access to resources on hiring, compliance, the interview process, and related areas. And someone who will be supervising a large team can benefit right away from guidance on listening and learning, as well as on how to lead with a coaching and mentoring mindset.) Offering formal training too early can overwhelm new managers, but not offering it soon enough can allow them to form bad habits.

Develop their feedback skills. Much of new manager training focuses on feedback—both giving it and receiving it. At Google, new manager training includes multiple sessions on developing emotional intelligence (EQ) and helping managers know their own triggers so they can take on challenging situations—such as dealing with feedback—with self-awareness. Managers who want to give and receive feedback well must first understand how to manage themselves and their emotions. Mentorship programs (in which new managers are paired with more experienced managers) and peer coaching among managers are two other options for helping new managers develop their feedback and mentoring skills.

Teach them to communicate effectively and to build trust. Managers provide guidance and help to their teams by communicating with them in regular team meetings, in one-on-one meetings, and in ad-hoc meetings when issues arise. In training, HR should stress the importance of using different methods of communication and educate new managers on the best practices for each. These training sessions should also cover how managers can use communication to build trust, maintain positive relationships with team members, and support employees to meet team and department goals.

Help them avoid micromanaging. One of the most common mistakes newly promoted managers make is thinking that they must know what every team member is working on at all times. After all, in the nonsupervisory roles they had before, new managers knew everything about their own work. But it's not possible for one person to keep track of all the details involved with every team project. Micromanaging can create negative experiences by making employees feel underestimated, untrusted, and controlled. Through training, new managers should learn not only how to understand their roles, but also how to broaden their thinking to prioritize the bigger picture and team results as they relate to company goals.

Explain why and when they need HR. New managers may not be prepared for the shift from a position with a narrowly defined purpose to one with a broader scope. Therefore their training should focus deeply on identifying and managing employee issues in a broad array of areas, such as performance, personality conflicts, burnout, job stress, and even mental health. It's important that they understand that HR is always standing by to offer guidance (and resources to share with team members) in these tricky areas.

This area of development also focuses on what the company expects from its managers. How often should they conduct performance reviews? What kinds of performance reviews work best for their teams? What decisions can they make, and what requires executive approval? How often does senior management want to be briefed (and in how much detail) about the projects that the manager is overseeing? First-time managers should be briefed on all of these topics.

HOW HR CAN SUPPORT MANAGERS AND LEADERS

HR leaders should be clear on when managers must seek their assistance. Hiring, disciplinary actions, termination, employee leave, workers' compensation, and employee complaints (such as harassment or discrimination) are all areas that require HR input before taking action. New managers should have a strong understanding of the expectations of their roles. They also need to be aware of when to turn to HR because they want support—and when to turn to HR because legal compliance compels them to do so.

First-time managers are undertaking a huge responsibility. They will need ongoing professional development to help them grow, and opportunities for that training will come from HR. "One size fits all" step-by-step guides can cover basic compliance issues and policies, but new managers have skill sets that vary wildly. Therefore HR needs to be ready to help them improve their "soft" skills (such as negotiation, conflict resolution, and communication) through custom-tailored training. ■

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According to the most recent report from the global communications firm Edelman, in 2018 "trust in the U.S. . . . suffered the largest-ever-recorded drop in the survey's history among the general population."[1] For both individuals and organizations, restoring broken trust is very difficult— but it can be done, provided they focus on improving integrity and take the following actions.

6 WAYS TO IMPROVE TRUST

BY SHARLYN LAUBY

Keep confidential things confidential. People want to know that when they say "Let's keep this between us," the other party will respect their wishes. Confidentiality can be especially challenging in HR; for example, if someone says, "I'm being harassed," HR cannot keep it secret (but should tell that person that confidentiality can't be maintained and why).

Know when to let things go. Not every issue is meant to be a battle. Sometimes people say things just to see if they can "push a few buttons." But just as it's important to recognize when someone's antics can be ignored, it's equally important to know when to take action. Whether someone is a client, customer, manager, or coworker doesn't excuse his or her behavior. People don't have to be publicly shamed, but they *do* need to be held accountable for their actions.

Follow through. If everyone had a dollar for every time someone said "I'm going to send you X" or "I'm going to do Y" and didn't do so, the whole world would be rich. People with integrity actually do what they say they're going to do.

Don't hide changes in perspective or opinion. People are entitled to change their minds, but when their views evolve, they need to share that information with those who are affected by it. For example, if a manager has one opinion on Tuesday then without warning or discussion does an about-face on Wednesday, his or her employees don't know what that manager stands for. More importantly, they don't know whether he or she will support them.

Have an ethical compass. Without ethics to help define appropriate behavior, trust and integrity are eroded. If a company wants its employees, managers, and organizations to act ethically, then it must hold them accountable to an ethical standard that it defines and makes explicit.

Respect people even when there is disagreement. Whether management or employees are involved in a disagreement, it's possible to express differences in a respectful manner. Even in the presence of constant or strong disagreement, people can still treat each other respectfully.

This is an "easy to read" list, but it's not an "easy to do" list. No individual or organization can check off all (or even most) of the actions on this list. But with effort, patience, and time, it is possible to increase integrity—and strengthen trust—in the workplace. ◼

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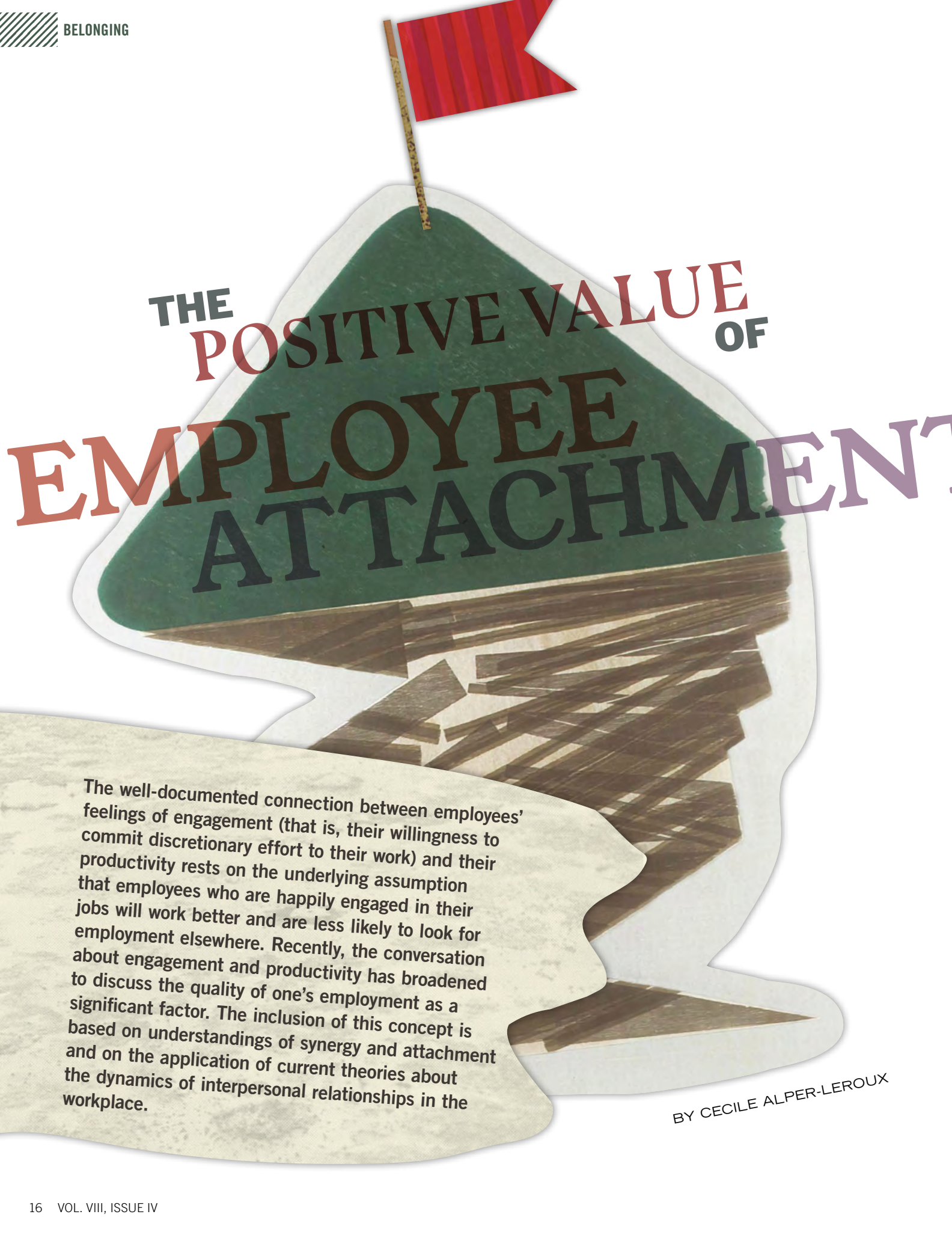
THE POSITIVE VALUE OF EMPLOYEE ATTACHMENT

The well-documented connection between employees' feelings of engagement (that is, their willingness to commit discretionary effort to their work) and their productivity rests on the underlying assumption that employees who are happily engaged in their jobs will work better and are less likely to look for employment elsewhere. Recently, the conversation about engagement and productivity has broadened to discuss the quality of one's employment as a significant factor. The inclusion of this concept is based on understandings of synergy and attachment and on the application of current theories about the dynamics of interpersonal relationships in the workplace.

BY CECILE ALPER-LEROUX

Humans form communities and attachments to each other in ways that distinguish them from other species. Their very complex brain biochemistry has evolved to enable incredible social collaboration, a behavior that has helped push humanity to the top of the food chain. Humans' amazing adaptability has allowed them to respond to myriad external conditions and changes, including the creation of the modern-day workplace and technologies with an exponential growth trajectory.

I recently had a conversation with Nancy Sajjadi, a well-being and workforce engagement consultant with a background in bioscience, about the intersection of science, attachment, and employee productivity. She explained:

> There is evidence that the maternal bond established in early infancy and childhood is universal, flexible, and accomplished by biochemistry that ultimately is "repurposed" for the relationships we form in adolescence and adulthood. When we are infants, we seek proximity to a familiar caregiver for protection and emotional support. These powerful biological forces do not dissipate. When we are adults, they affect our behavior in personal and professional relationships.

According to Sajjadi, this is why when employees feel that their supervisors, colleagues, or business leaders do not appreciate their contributions or value them on a personal level, they can become emotionally detached from their work and lose interest in the organization's success.

We talked further about the importance of healthy relationships and the broader continuum of employee needs that organizations must meet to satisfy the expectations of all stakeholders. "Fostering an understanding of how biology has worked to our advantage in terms of survival will be key to maximizing our potential as a global population in the long run," Sajjadi said. For diversity in nature, each generation of offspring provides a varying set of options that yield different degrees of competitive advantage: "It is not only diversity of individuals but complementarity—the mutual supplying of different forms of support—that truly boosts the collective advantages gained through innovation and productivity."

Today's workplaces are collections of microcultures, each with its own unique frameworks, practices, and relationships. By ignoring or failing to address issues tied to humans' deep need for attachments, companies lose opportunities to enhance connectedness and synergy within their organizations.

"Mutuality involved in complementarity does not always mean equal contributions," Sajjadi pointed out. For example, consider the biological division of labor in the production of human children. There is incredible complementarity between men and women in the process. Although what men and women each contribute is equally valuable in terms of biological success, there is significant inequity in the energy investments made. Not surprisingly, these large biological differences manifest in psychological differences that might best be viewed as synergistic success factors in human survival: "Evolution has no goal. Existence and extinction are its only metrics—fairness doesn't matter."

She stressed the importance of understanding how to create inclusion and equity among diverse individuals while acknowledging that things that offered evolutionary advantages will not necessarily lead naturally to fairness in the workplace. "Equity is something that we have come to expect as a result of our species success," she explained. "However, equity in division of labor is not what got us here—complementarity did."

When I asked how these ideas can be applied to the development of practical solutions to help employers meet the needs of a diverse workforce and achieve positive business outcomes, Sajjadi described the two ways in which employees build workplace attachments: "They form ties either through emotional bonds with the people at work or through the self-esteem boost they get when their organizations recognize, appreciate, and reward their contributions. These mechanisms apply to both men and women, but it is the attachment to others that is critical in developing employee loyalty." In short, developing and maintaining good relationships at work lead to engagement and healthy attachment to the organization. At the same time, though, current workplace dynamics make things much more complicated.

Thanks to the widespread assumption that women are more likely to compromise and cooperate, men have more opportunities to gain control and responsibility in strategic competition. "Both men and women will work hard, but being empathetic and making emotional investments in outcomes are more exhausting than other forms of effort," Sajjadi noted. Women have a tendency to "tend and befriend" and, in the modern workplace, they pay a price for that differential energy investment. Figuring out what people need to be productive means understanding how they form attachments with each other in the workplace and then finding ways to enhance—rather than undermine—those attachments:

> The challenge is in placing appropriate economic value on the emotional investments that are often disproportionately made in generating the attachments, which become the scaffolding of any successful organization. The conundrum is that fairness imposes a constraint on synergy, yet our conscious desire for synergy is rooted in a quest for more equitable outcomes.

Sajjadi's observations point to one clear fact: a successful workforce is one whose members enjoy healthy personal relationships.

Plenty of other studies have reached the same conclusion. (For example, Gallup research has repeatedly shown a concrete link between having a best friend at work and the amount of effort employees expend in their jobs.[1]) Work doesn't necessarily stop when people go home, so why should people's personal lives cease when they show up in the office? By sharing personal experience and being honest about who they are and how they feel, people can build greater quality connections between each other. As their feelings of closeness increase, people feel less threatened when offering ideas and innovations to improve their organizations. Being engaged in one's work and feeling emotionally attached to it are two different things—and both are necessary for humanity to thrive in the future of work. ■

Cecile Alper-Leroux is Ultimate Software's vice president of innovation. With more than 20 years' experience in both national and global markets, she is an internationally sought-out speaker, thought leader, and visionary on human capital management trends, hot topics, and global strategies. She can be reached at cecile_leroux@ultimatesoftware.com.

1. Annamarie Mann. 2018. "Why We Need Best Friends at Work." Gallup website, January 15, www.gallup.com/workplace/236213/why-need-best-friends-work.aspx.

HOW TO UNLOCK MORE VALUE FROM THE NONTRADITIONAL WORKFORCE

BY STIJN DE GROEF

> TODAY'S WORKFORCE HAS BECOME A DYNAMIC ECOSYSTEM.
>
> — DELOITTE'S "2018 GLOBAL HUMAN CAPITAL TRENDS"

Because the workforce has changed so much in recent years, how organizations recruit, onboard, manage, train, and retain that workforce needs to change too. Freelancers now play a large—and growing—role in the employment marketplace.

Consider these statistics excerpted from a recent study by Deloitte:1

- "there are approximately 77 million formally identified freelancers in Europe, India, and the United States"

- "50 percent of the respondents reported a significant number of contractors in their workforces; 23 percent reported a significant number of freelancers, and 13 percent reported a significant number of gig workers"

- "37 percent of this year's survey respondents expected growth in the use of contractors, 33 percent in the use of freelancers, and 28 percent in the use of gig workers"

Clearly, this is a paradigm shift. Nontraditional workers were once seen as a functional resource for filling gaps. But now that the meaning of what it means to be an "employee" has fundamentally changed, today's HR and recruitment leaders have a huge opportunity before them. Those who can unlock value from this flexible, agile, and evolving workforce can lead their organizations to significant competitive advantage. Onboarding is where this begins.

WHY ONBOARDING MATTERS FOR THE MODERN WORKFORCE

UNLOCK BETTER PERFORMANCE, FASTER

Nontraditional talent is just as important as traditional talent to the success of a business—which is why it's ludicrous to neglect onboarding for nontraditional workers. Without onboarding, new hires need up to a year to reach their colleagues' productivity levels.[2] Until then, the company is carrying dead weight. In the case of nontraditional workers, that weight can be especially expensive: not only is the organization probably paying a premium for those workers (compared to hiring full-time permanent employees for those positions), but, depending on the length of their contracts, they might not even be around long enough to reach their potential there. With onboarding proven to result in "54 percent greater new

hire productivity," it's a no-brainer for nontraditional hires who need to have an instant impact.[3]

SAFEGUARD THE BUSINESS AND ITS BRAND

About one-third of respondents in the Deloitte study reported being "concerned about the reputational risk that could arise from a negative perception of nontraditional employees."[4] And for good reason: when nontraditional workers aren't fully introduced to a company's culture, mission, and values through onboarding, they can't effectively represent it. That's a problem for the company's customer brand, because customer-facing workers might not deliver the consistent, considered customer experience around which the business has been built. That's also a problem for the company's employer brand, because employees talk to their friends, family, and wider network, and those who have poor employment experiences (such as those who don't go through onboarding and thus feel inadequately prepared for a job, for example) might not have positive things to say. *All* workers—not just traditional workers—represent the organization, and onboarding helps ensure that they do so well (even if only for the short term).

Just over one-third of Deloitte's respondents have concerns "about the instability of a nontraditional workforce," but instability doesn't have to be the natural bedfellow to agility—not if onboarding is done properly.[5] When a company treats its nontraditional workers like disposable gap-fillers, those workers will treat the company the same way—which means the company has to start from scratch whenever it needs freelancers. Companies can avoid that time-consuming and costly process by onboarding its nontraditional workforce to prove to them that it's invested in more than short-term transactional relationships. Onboarding builds loyalty, which is the secret to a dependable contingent workforce and helps companies have the best of both worlds: agility and flexibility paired with trust and longevity.
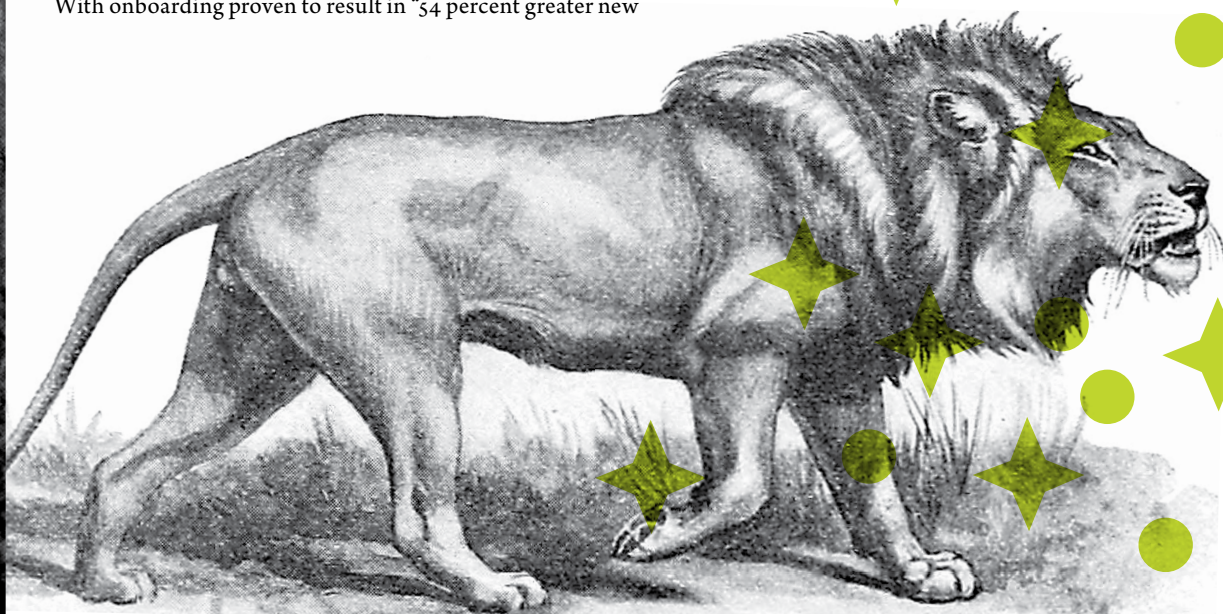
HOW TO ONBOARD NONTRADITIONAL WORKERS

HARNESS ONBOARDING TECHNOLOGY

Some companies think that onboarding nontraditional workers is a great idea but unfeasible due to a lack of time. Finding enough time for comprehensive onboarding is often a challenge, even when it concerns full-time employees. But that's where technology comes in: it allows organizations to build and automate robust onboarding processes that don't demand constant input. With a dedicated onboarding platform, the main time investment is up front, when the onboarding content is collated or created (and often companies already have much of this material on hand). Then it's a simple matter of "set and forget" until new hires are in the office (metaphorically or literally) and need personal attention.

TAILOR FOR THE PERFECT FIT

When it comes to onboarding, one size definitely does *not* fit all. The length, complexity, and sophistication of an onboarding program vary depending on who is being hired and what they need to know. (For example, onboarding for a full-time permanent hire can last weeks or even months, but that same program clearly doesn't work for a nontraditional worker on a six-week contract.) Thanks to smart onboarding technology with flexibility at its core, companies can easily tailor their onboarding programs for different roles. With minimal fuss and without a huge time investment from the organization, all new hires—full timers, part timers, contractors, freelancers, gig workers, service providers, and anyone else—get exactly what they need to succeed.

USE "CULTUREBOARDING"

Onboarding isn't synonymous with *training*. Training can figure into onboarding a bit, but companies often hire contingent workers so they don't *have* to do training (for example, when hiring for the specialist knowledge and skills they don't already have in house). Instead, think of onboarding as "cultureboarding" that can show new hires what it means to be part of the organization. This kind of information is relevant and valuable to *all* hires, whether they have six-week internships, six-month contracts, or full-time permanent positions.

THINK CONTINUOUS, NOT STATIC

Onboarding isn't an event but a process—which means it overlaps with performance management. This overlap might be easiest to envision with a full-time traditional workforce, but it's equally present with short-term workers, too: even when someone is hired for only three days, the company wants a top-notch performance from him or her during that time. Because a digital onboarding hub can also double as a communication and continuous management tool, it allows organizations to effortlessly set expectations, define objectives, and preempt issues (to power better performance), even when new hires are completely remote.

DEFINE THE OFFBOARDING ROADMAP

Companies often have a set end date in mind when they hire nontraditional workers, which means they can prepare in advance for their departures. By embedding an offboarding roadmap into its onboarding program, an organization can make sure that its nontraditional hires know exactly what will happen when their contracts end. Such transparency not only helps workers finish their assignments on a sweeter note (making it more likely that they'll to want to work there again in the future), but also makes the business better equipped to handle the change in resources without drops in productivity (when the work doesn't get done) or morale (when the work lands on the wrong person's desk). Additionally, offboarding can offer a valuable learning opportunity through exit interviews (whether in the form of comprehensive one-to-one conversations or short online questionnaires), which can offer management new insight into the business.

As valuable business partners, HR leaders must define new ways to recruit, onboard, manage, train, and retain today's ever-changing workforce or risk getting left behind. Talent leaders must take ownership of one of the fastest growing segments of the talent pool—nontraditional workers—from sourcing onward. With the right approach, companies can unlock maximum value from this workforce sector and successfully navigate this new era of employment. ∎

A passionate HR professional, entrepreneur, and cyclist, Stijn De Groef is the CEO of Talmundo (www.talmundo.com), an HR technology company. Before founding Talmundo in 2012, he worked in senior talent management roles at EMEA and at the global level at Swarovski and Goodyear. De Groef now travels the world to spread the word about Talmundo's employee onboarding software and the strategic importance for businesses to get onboarding right.

1. Dimple Agarwal et al. 2018. "2018 Global Human Capital Trends." Deloitte website, documents.deloitte.com/insights/HCTrends2018.
2. Urbanbound. 2018. "The Onboarding New Hire Statistics You Need to Know (with 2018 Updates)." Urbanbound website, April 20, www.urbanbound.com/blog/onboarding-infographic-statistics.
3. Ibid.
4. Agarwal et al. 2018.
5. Ibid.

QUESTION:

If our employee has a child with special needs, is that employee considered to be in a "protected" category in any way?

ANSWER:

The employee isn't necessarily "protected"; however, under the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act), which covers private employers with more than 15 employees and all state and local government employees, there is protection for employees who are "associated" with a person with a disability. It's a bit of a gray area, but essentially the company cannot treat a worker less favorably based on stereo-typical assumptions about the employee being able to perform his or her job duties while also caring for a disabled family member. A company shouldn't refuse to hire a candidate because it knows that his or her child has a disability (something some employers might do because of worry about the employee being away from work, high insurance premiums, etc.). So even though a company doesn't have to make reasonable accommodations for an employee or candidate who is associated with someone with a disability, the employer can't discriminate against that employee or candidate. The EEOC enforces the ADA discrimination laws.

Additionally, for a company that meets the guidelines for the FMLA (Family and Medical Leave Act), the Department of Labor does specify that parents of adult children with disabilities (or any child with a serious health condition perhaps stemming from a disability) would be entitled to the 12 weeks per year of job-protected leave.

QUESTION:

One of our longtime employees recently died suddenly. I have never had to handle death benefits before and just learned that this employee did not update his beneficiary after his divorce and remarriage. His ex-wife is still listed as the beneficiary, and his current wife is highly upset with me because of this. Is there something I can do to let our life insurance carrier know he was divorced and remarried so his current wife can get the benefit? Did I fail in my duties somehow by not having this updated?

ANSWER:

Assuming that having his ex-wife listed as his beneficiary was against the deceased employee's wishes, this is quite an unfortunate situation. As the employer, you can do nothing about a beneficiary form that has not been updated. Beneficiary forms are the responsibility of the employee, and if an employee fails to complete one or update one or completes it incorrectly, that is his or her responsibility, not yours. Some employees balk at making the change, thinking that an up-to-date will covers this issue; however, employees should not assume that state law will revoke early beneficiary designations for company plans and allow a will to prevail. This is because in the instances of company health and welfare plans, the plans are governed by ERISA (The Employee Retirement Income Security Act), which dictates that the plan administrator of these plans must turn over the funds to the beneficiary listed on the forms, whether or not the employee was re-married or no matter what is listed in the employee's will. Many such instances have ended up in court, but there is nothing the employer can do in these situations. ∎

Strategic Human Resources Inc. is a national full-service HR management firm based in Cincinnati, Ohio. Its president and founder, Robin Throckmorton, can be reached at Robin@strategichrinc.com.

Q & A

BY STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCES INC.

HOW TO GET BETTER AT GIVING CAREER PLANNING ADVICE

BY MIKE MCKERNS

Long ago, my then-manager and I talked about how I saw myself advancing within the company and what I needed to do to achieve my goals there. The conversation energized me, and that evening I went home with renewed enthusiasm for my job and for my role in the organization. A week later, though, my enthusiasm faded as I found myself remembering that I'd had similar conversations with my manager before—and nothing had really changed. (And that's why, the following year, I left that company and started Mamu Media.)

Those memories came flooding back to me recently when I read the newly updated *Help Them Grow or Watch Them Go: Career Conversations Organizations Need and Employees Want*, by Beverly Kaye and Julie Winkle Giulioni, who offer insightful advice for managers who truly want to help their employees with their careers. In particular, they urge managers to develop the perspective of "hindsight, foresight, and insight" about their employees' career development needs. By helping employees find ways to work toward (and achieve) their advancement goals, managers strengthen their teams and their organizations.

Help Them Grow or Watch Them Go includes many useful exercises and thought-provoking questions. For example, consider whether you'd choose to discuss an employee's career planning with him or her in a single, two-hour conversation once a year or in twelve ten-minute conversations spread out over the year. "Do the math," the authors point out. "In the apples to apples comparison, it's the same 120 minutes just offered up in smaller, bite-size servings"—and those shorter chats are far more effective than a traditional conversation about career goals.

Kaye and Giulioni write that "90 percent of all career-advancing ideas go nowhere." If you want to stand out from the crowd and contribute to the 10 percent of ideas that *do* go somewhere, then spend some time with their book. A valuable addition to any manager's library, *Help Them Grow or Watch Them Go: Career Conversations Organizations Need and Employees Want* offers both innovation and inspiration. ■

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

APRICOT JAM

With the spring berry season now behind us, it's time for tree fruit to make their grand entrance. Even though fresh apricots are available year-round in the grocery stores, they reach their peak in flavor and juiciness in late summer. Grab a big box of apricots at your local market, and after you've eaten your fill turn the rest into a delicious jam so you can enjoy the taste of "sunshine in a jar" long after the apricot season is over. This recipe comes together easily in one pot and is fun to make with kids. Jam also makes a great gift—that is, if you can resist eating all of it yourself!

YIELD: 6 pints

TIME: about 1 hour

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:
6 cups fresh apricots (about 10–12), halved and pitted
4 cups granulated sugar
¼ cup fresh lemon juice
1 Tb butter

Nutrition Facts
Amount per Serving

Calories:	76 cal
Fat:	2.7 g
Dietary fiber:	0.5 g
Sugars:	18.5 g
Protein:	0.3 g

DIRECTIONS

1. Combine all of the ingredients in a large stockpot over medium-high heat.
2. Bring the contents to a boil.
3. Boil for 45 minutes, stirring frequently (scraping the bottom) to prevent sticking.
4. Transfer to pint jars and store in the refrigerator.

NOTES:

· Make sure your apricots aren't overripe. If they are, they won't have enough pectin to thicken the jam properly and make it gel.
· The butter helps prevent the mixture from foaming while it's boiling. ■

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