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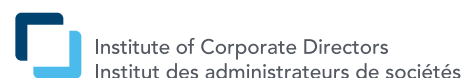
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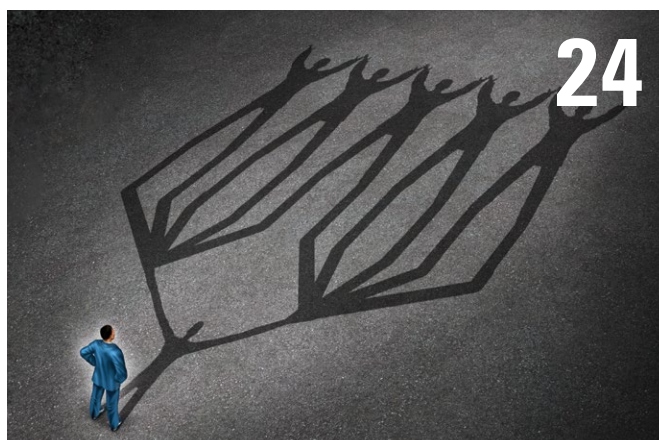
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IN THIS ISSUE

Few corporate careers get as wide a workplace perspective as an HR leader. Reaching the executive level in an HR role is no easy feat, and there are a variety of paths that professionals can take to attain those goals. To explore what it takes to become an HR leader, flip to page 24.

contributors



CATHY GALLAGHER-LOUISY

Cathy Gallagher-Louisy leads the Canadian Institute of Diversity and Inclusion's Research and Knowledge Services portfolio. Additionally, she provides consulting services and training workshops to help partner organizations and clients develop strategic diversity, inclusion and cultural competence development strategies, educational programs and tools. Gallagher-Louisy is currently the instructor of the fully online Centennial Certificate in Leadership and Inclusion. Read her article discussing how workplaces benefit from supporting and accommodating the parents of special needs children, starting on page 28.



MARK BANIA

Mark Bania is the managing director of Canadian operations at CareerBuilder. He oversees sales operations in both the Toronto and Montreal offices and partners with CareerBuilder's many business units to ensure that the company's data, advertising and software solutions are tailored to the Canadian market. Bania attended the University of Toronto where he received his Honours Bachelor of Arts with majors in economics and political science. Read his article about HR leveraging big data for more effective recruitment, starting on page 45.



ERIN MEYER

Erin Meyer is the author of *The Culture Map: Breaking Through the Invisible Boundaries of Global Business*. She is a professor at INSEAD and the program director for INSEAD's Managing Global Virtual Teams program. Her work focuses on how the world's most successful global leaders navigate the complexities of behavioural differences in a multicultural environment. Her work has appeared in *Harvard Business Review*, *Singapore Business Times*, and on Forbes.com. Read Meyer's article that discusses strategies for working effectively around the world, starting on page 49.



SHERRI WRIGHT-SCHWIETZ

As the head of talent and mastery for ATB Investor Services, Sherri Wright-Schwietz develops innovative talent experience and development strategies to support a rapidly growing wealth management firm. Throughout her tenure at ATB Investor Services, she has received several international awards for her innovative orientation package and industry leading recruitment process, including the HR Summit Award in 2009 and 2010. Wright-Schwietz received her Bachelor of Arts in psychology from the University of Calgary and is a Certified Human Resources Professional, with designations from the Human Resources Institute of Alberta, the Association of Professional Recruiters of Canada and the Society for Human Resource Management. To read her tips for attribute-based hiring, flip to page 72.



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letter from the editor

LEADING THE WAY

The February issue of *HR Professional* has arrived, and with it, the Human Resources Professionals Association (HRPA) 2015 Annual Conference & Trade Show. This is my second year at the event, and I'm looking forward to the world-class session leaders who will be discussing, in various capacities, the "Business of HR." With over 130 sessions to choose from, the most difficult part will be deciding which ones to attend!

For information about the HRPA 2015 Annual Conference & Trade Show, flip to page 18 or visit <http://bit.ly/1BQopxt> to download the full event program.

In this issue of *HR Professional*, we discuss what it takes for an HR professional to become an HR leader. Recruitment firm Hays Canada interviewed more than 100 HR leaders with the title of VP or higher, and discovered that the path to HR leadership involves varied approaches and strategies. To read our cover feature, turn to page 24.

Another topic of particular relevance to today's HR professionals centres around compassionate care leave, and how organizations can further support employees needing time away from work to provide end-of-life care to a loved one. HRPA conducted a survey of 692 of its members between June and July 2014 to learn about the attitudes and policies of HR leaders concerning compassionate care. Flip to page 32 to read the results of the survey.

As always, please feel free to send me your feedback and ideas; I look forward to hearing from you and hope to see you at the HRPA 2015 Annual Conference & Trade Show.

Happy reading,



Jill Harris

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The Business of HR



By Philip Wilson, CHRE

The theme of this year's HRPA Annual Conference & Trade Show is the "Business of HR" – how human resources is evolving from the back room to the boardroom, from tactics to strategy and taking ownership of the business and its outcomes.

Let's unpack this, and examine it through a historical lens.

Not long ago, I came across an old plaque from the old Personnel Association of Toronto (PAT) – the forerunner of today's Human Resources Professionals Association (HRPA).

It was dated Jan. 19, 1976, and was presented by the PAT directors to the staff for their efforts to improve members' "competence in the field of personnel and industrial relations."

While HRPAs mandate remains the same, the profession has advanced dramatically since then – and we have come

THE MORE COMPLEX THE WORK OF A PROFESSION, THE HIGHER THE LEVEL OF COMPETENCE REQUIRED; AND THE GREATER THE CONSEQUENCES OF INCOMPETENCE, THE MORE THOROUGH THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS MUST BE.

a long way from the days of the "personnel department," managing things like payroll or vacation requests, and reporting into finance and accounting.

I began my own career in the early '80s, working as a recruiter in the personnel department for CAE Electronics in Montreal, and that role probably hasn't changed that much as the quest for top talent has always been a core HR function. Although the recruiter role has changed to a more strategic talent management role, utilizing social media tools to attract the

best and the brightest professionals, it is still fundamentally the same as when I commenced my career.

But what we do with that talent – hiring, training, employee development, leadership, rewarding and recognition, coaching and engagement – has evolved into an HR function that's so crucial to organizations today.

Today, the chief human resources officer (CHRO) works directly with the CEO and the senior leadership team, providing guidance on business strategies,



tips on dealing with difficult people

Dealing with someone who makes personal attacks

1. Ignore the attacks and focus on the issues;
2. Try to determine if you did anything to upset them and if so, apologize;
3. Set ground rules for behaviour; or
4. Use an “I” statement to indicate that attacks are not helpful.

Dealing with someone who is stubborn and positional

1. Separate the people from the problem and focus on the problem.
2. Show that you are open to being persuaded by them and that their view has merit.
3. Look for creative ways to accept their position and add in what you need.
4. Talk about how you will both be worse off if they won't budge and an agreement cannot be reached.

Dealing with someone who lies or is untrustworthy

1. Ask yourself whether the lie is about something important or just puffery.
2. Ask for proof/third party verification.
3. Outline the impact on future interactions if present discussion is based on lie/misinformation.
4. Build in a consequence that will occur if they have lied.

Dealing With Difficult People Workshop dates:

Toronto: February 4-6, May 11-13

Ottawa: February 18-20

Windsor: April 15-17

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And that is the business of HR.

NEW COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

HRPA's new competency framework that was released late last year is helping to give shape to this new professionalization of the HR profession.

Developed over 18 months in co-operation with leading HR academics, HR professionals at all levels and senior business leaders, the new framework is a completely modernized snapshot of HR practice in the 21st century.

The framework defines 213 functional competencies and 15 enabling competencies (things like business acumen, critical thinking, negotiation, project management, employment law) at each of three levels of HR practice – entry, professional and executive. This granularity is essential for the creation of assessment tools and the development of prep programs, education courses and curricula.

And most importantly, it's a competency-based certification framework that not only tests an updated body of HR knowledge, but the ability to apply that knowledge – similar to other Tier 1 professions including law, medicine or engineering.

It's a framework that places a great deal of importance on the rigor of the certification process, which befits the seriousness of present-day HR practice. The more complex the work of a profession, the higher the level of competence required; and the greater the consequences of incompetence, the more thorough the certification process must be. The protection of the public is enabled by requiring HR professionals to meet and exceed those standards. Indeed, this is a very exciting time and I am most excited about the evolving roles and the future human resources professionals. ■

Phil Wilson, CHRE is chair of the Human Resources Professionals Association (HRPA).

UPFRONT

HRPA EMPLOYMENT TRENDS SURVEY REPORT

To help HRPAs members and HR professionals understand how their HR practices stack up against others across the HRPAs membership, the association's research team recently released an Employment Trends Survey report, examining benchmarks around vacations, time off, recruitment, training and development, turnover and more.

"A total of 1,090 HRPAs members took part in our survey during August and September of 2014," said HRPAs librarian and co-author Jeff Smith. "The major sections of the surveys reflect the most popular benchmarking requests we receive at the Resource Centre."

The data is also industry-specific, with benchmarks cross-referenced by sector, including public, private, manufacturing, retail, financial, government, health, agriculture, extraction, engineering and energy.

The data yielded some interesting results, according to Smith. For example:

- Only 7.2 per cent of respondents offer completely unpaid internships
- 18 per cent of respondents do not provide any paid sick days
- 92 per cent of respondents retain interview notes of unsuccessful job candidates

HR HEADCOUNT GOING UP

The best news of all for HR professionals?

"Thirty-four percent of respondents said they plan to increase their HR headcount, which means that more jobs will be opening up for HR professionals," said Smith. "And if you already have a job in HR, fear not. Only nine per cent of respondents indicated that they will be reducing their HR headcount."

The full survey is currently available for free to all HRPAs members. To download the survey, visit the Resource Centre homepage found at www.hrpa.ca/resourcecentre, or email jsmith@hrpa.ca.

WHY DO EMPLOYEES QUIT?

Money, as the saying goes, makes the world go round. But it also may be what keeps employees in place. According to recent research from Robert Half, workers interviewed cited poor compensation as the primary reason they would leave their job.

The research also shows a strong disconnect between employers and employees on this issue. When chief financial officers (CFOs) were asked why people quit, limited opportunities for advancement was cited most commonly, with inadequate salary and benefits far behind.

The two surveys were developed by Robert Half, the world's first and largest specialized staffing firm, and conducted by independent research firms. The CFO survey is based on interviews with more than 270 CFOs from a random sample of Canadian companies. The workers survey includes responses from more than 400 employees 18 years of age and older who work in an office environment in Canada.

CFOs were asked, "Which one of the following is most likely to cause good employees to quit their jobs?" Similarly, workers were asked, "Which one of the following is most likely to cause you to quit your job?"

Their responses:

	CFOs	Employees
Inadequate salary and benefits	8%	30%
Unhappiness with management	7%	24%
Limited opportunities for advancement	41%	15%
Bored with their job	15%	15%
Overworked	9%	11%
Lack of recognition	2%	5%
Other/don't know	18%	0%

"CFOs should be aware that salary and benefits are playing a larger role than many executives think when it comes to employees leaving their jobs. Talented workers with in-demand skills who feel they aren't being compensated fairly know they have options, especially in the current hiring environment," said Greg Scileppi, president of Robert Half, International Staffing Operations. "It is important that managers regularly benchmark salaries to stay current with market trends. To remain competitive, compensation levels must be at or above market standards, especially for in-demand positions."

CANADIANS SAY THEIR BOSSES ARE STRONG LEADERS

Bosses often get a bad rap when portrayed on TV – think Michael Scott of *The Office* or Mr. Burns in *The Simpsons* – but, in reality, most people are impressed with their managers, according to a new OfficeTeam survey. More than three in four workers interviewed said their boss has strong leadership skills. In addition, 65 per cent believe they couldn't do a better job than their manager.

The survey of office workers was developed by OfficeTeam, a staffing service specializing in the placement of highly skilled administrative professionals. It was conducted by an independent research firm and is based on telephone interviews with more than 400 Canadian workers 18 years of age or older employed in office environments.

Workers were asked, "How would you rate your boss's leadership skills?" Twenty-seven per cent responded that they would rate their bosses as having very strong leadership skills, and 50 per cent said that they their bosses are somewhat strong leaders.

"Although workers may not regularly praise their bosses, many look up to their managers' leadership skills and acknowledge that supervisory roles can be highly demanding," said Robert Hosking, executive director of OfficeTeam. "Employees might not feel they could do a better job than their boss because they aren't interested in leading others or taking on the added responsibility and accountability that comes with executive roles."

ONLINE TOOLKIT DESIGNED TO HELP EMPLOYERS OF PEOPLE WITH EPILEPSY

A first-of-its-kind online toolkit is now available to provide training and resources to companies and organizations that have employees with epilepsy.

Developed by Epilepsy Toronto, the epilepsy@work toolkit was recently launched with the Government of Ontario, Epilepsy Ontario and CIBC. To see the toolkit, please visit: <http://bit.ly/1xmdA3F>

"The goal of the toolkit is to help employers and HR professionals better understand, address and manage the needs of employees living with a seizure disorder," said Tim Nourse, an employment consultant with Epilepsy Toronto.

The toolkit features information around accommodating employees with a seizure disorder and focuses on three primary areas: understanding epilepsy; seizure safety; and first aid, just-in-time resources for HR professionals, managers and occupational health and safety specialists.

Once on the website, co-workers, front-line supervisors and HR staff can take a 30-minute course to help them understand the condition and why having an employee with epilepsy is actually good for business.

"Generally, people living with epilepsy have a greater challenge retaining a job than finding employment. The information in epilepsy@work can be used to curb discrimination and guide employers to appropriate resources. People may choose not to disclose [that they have epilepsy], but when they have that first seizure at work, things get a little bit dicey," said Nourse. "For the person with epilepsy, they may not have a local [epilepsy support agency] that can help them, but they can steer their employer towards this website."

epilepsy@work is a resource that's long overdue, says Margaret Carter, an HRP certification and continuing professional development specialist who lives with a seizure disorder. "I encourage employers to think about individuals with epilepsy in the same manner that they would any other employee – as an individual, not as a labeled group. I also encourage an employer to foster an atmosphere of openness, as it is often difficult for individuals living with epilepsy to tell their employers. Using this resource to train staff and managers will create openness."



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HRPA SIGNS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND HR ASSOCIATIONS

The Human Resources Professionals Association (HRPA) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Australian Human Resources Institute (AHRI) and the Human Resources Institute of New Zealand (HRINZ) that initiates a closer working relationship

between the three organizations – including a potential mutual recognition of professional HR designations.

Last month, HRPA introduced a new, competency-based HR certification framework that creates three new HR designations in Canada: the entry level Certified Human Resources Professional (CHRP); the professional level Certified Human Resources Leader (CHRL); and the senior level Certified Human Resources Executive (CHRE).

The international agreement signals a commitment to building connections and strengthening the human resources profession through global networks – including potential partnerships on professional development programming, HR research, exchanges and study tours.

“We live in an increasingly interconnected world economy. While each country has its unique cultural and legal characteristics, the professionalization of HR needs exchangeable, valued and credible designations based on a global body of knowledge. Our understanding with Australia and New Zealand reflects this need,” said Bill Greenhalgh, CEO of HRPA.

“As the professional body for human resources practitioners and people managers in New Zealand, it is important that HRINZ has strong, broad and valuable connections and networks worldwide. We are honoured to be partnering with two such reputable and well-respected professional bodies. We are certain that this will have many benefits for our members as well

as for the HR profession as a whole in New Zealand and globally,” said Chris Till, HRINZ chief executive.

“It makes a great deal of sense for associations of like mind to work in unison to achieve common objectives. Representing the Australian HR profession, I am therefore delighted to be entering into a partnership with our HR counterparts in Canada and New Zealand to explore opportunities and synergies to work in collaboration for our mutual benefit,” said Lyn Goodyear, CEO of AHRI. ■

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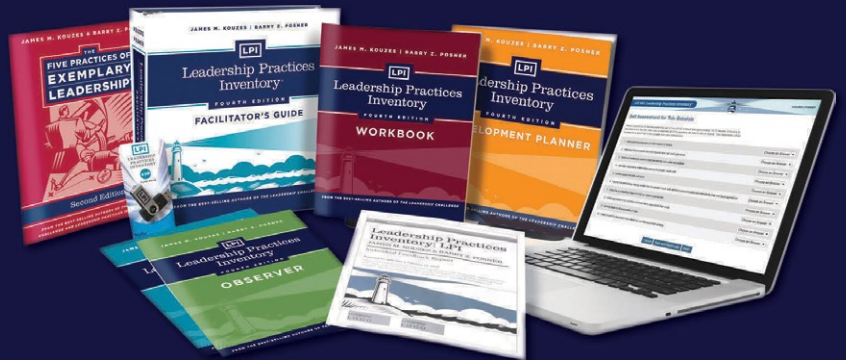




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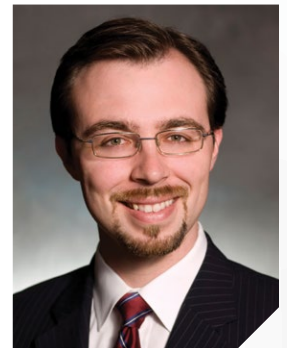


Information

Obligation

WHAT EMPLOYERS NEED TO CONSIDER WHEN EMPLOYEES MAKE CLAIMS FOR DISABILITY-RELATED ACCOMMODATION

By Malcolm MacKillop and Hendrik Nieuwland



You pick up the phone and hear this: “I just saw my doctor after returning from my trip to West Africa. She says there is a risk I might have Ebola. She instructed me to go into quarantine. Is the company okay with that?” Receiving a call like this is unfortunately a real possibility for human resources professionals these days. Telling the employee “Yes, you can stay away from work” in these circumstances is, of course, the prudent, sensible and compassionate choice. It is also the employer’s legal obligation (assuming the employee is telling the truth). While no human rights tribunal in Canada has had to rule on the matter, Ebola is definitely a “disability” under human rights legislation.

The fact an employee may have a rare illness does not fundamentally change the rules for accommodating that employee. It is well established that employers, employees and unions must comply with the duty to accommodate employees with disabilities. Employers are required to take an active role in investigating various forms of possible accommodation, unions have a joint responsibility to facilitate accommodation and, importantly, employees must provide sufficient information about the disability that requires accommodation.

So what does this practically mean for an employer faced with an employee claiming to have a rare illness, such as Ebola? Can

an employer ask for evidence that the employee has, in fact, been diagnosed with Ebola? Can an employer require proof that quarantine has been ordered? Can an employer require information on prognosis and a timeline for a safe return to work?

Fortunately, an employer can be confident in its right to make these inquiries due to the Ontario arbitration decision *Complex Services v. O.P.S.E.U., Local 278*, 217 L.A.C. (4th) 1 (“*Complex Services*”). *Complex Services* recognizes that without sufficient information from employees, it generally is not possible for employers to provide safe and appropriate accommodation in the workplace.

However, in many cases employees are reluctant to provide what they view to be confidential medical information, often citing privacy concerns. When this happens, it may not be clear to employers how to proceed. Can an employer impose consequences, such as refusing to continue benefits (like STD payments), or refusing to allow the employee to return to work? *Complex Services* tells us the answer is “yes”.

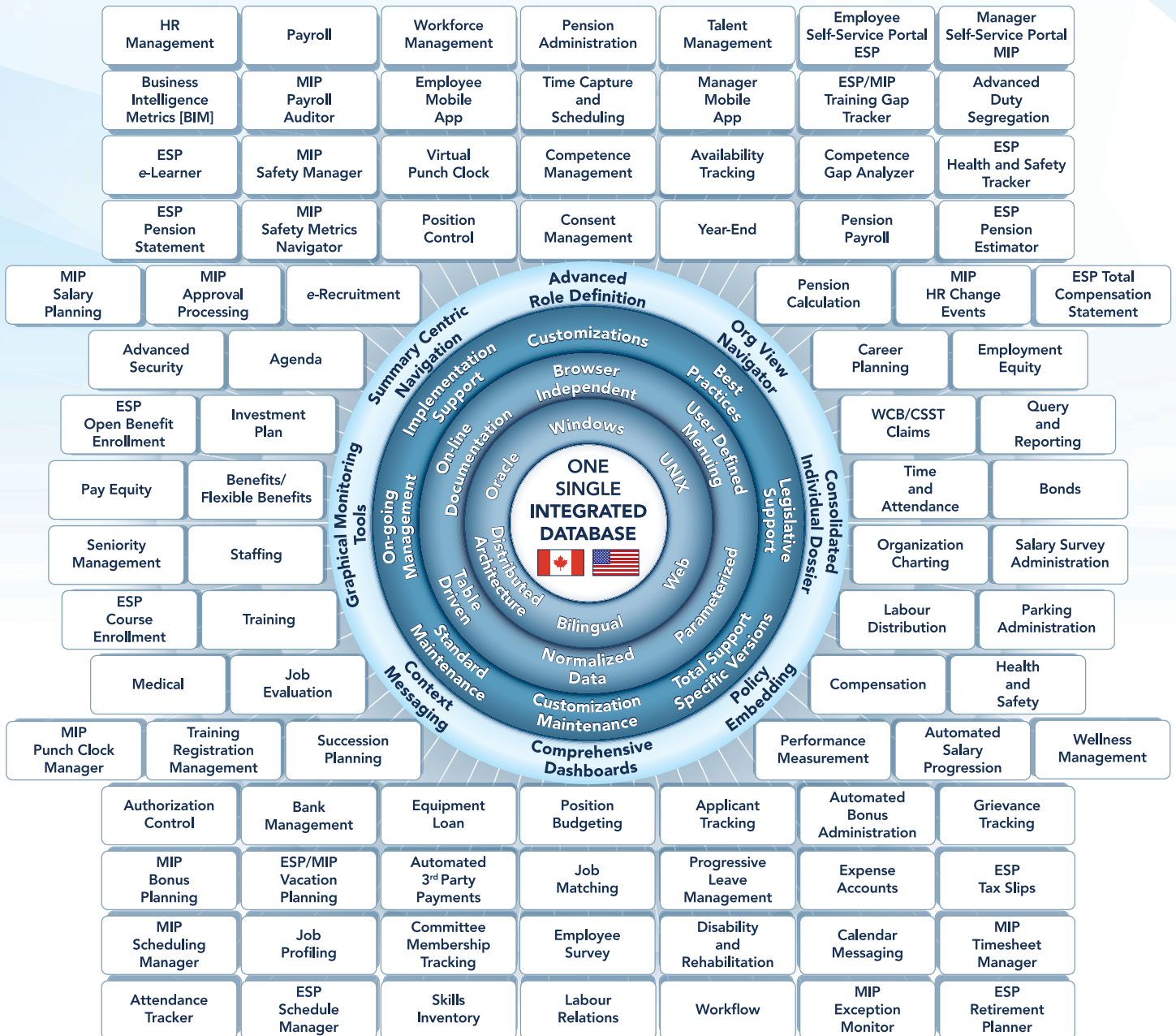
In *Complex Services*, the grievor had been on medical leave for a physical disability when she returned to work. Upon her return, the grievor claimed that her return to work plan required specific new accommodations that the employer had yet to provide. The

continued on page 15



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IN MANY CASES EMPLOYEES ARE RELUCTANT TO PROVIDE WHAT THEY VIEW TO BE CONFIDENTIAL MEDICAL INFORMATION, OFTEN CITING PRIVACY CONCERNS. WHEN THIS HAPPENS, IT MAY NOT BE CLEAR TO EMPLOYERS HOW TO PROCEED.

employer denied that the return to work plan required these new accommodations, and requested that the grievor provide medical documentation in support of her new claim. The grievor refused, stating that the duty to accommodate did not require her to release her confidential medical records. The employer made several additional requests for medical documentation, all of which were refused by the grievor. The employer eventually informed the grievor that she would not be allowed to return to work without providing the necessary medical information to support the request for further accommodation.

The grievor responded by providing the employer with very limited medical documentation, information that she had seen a registered psychologist, and a list of the mental illness accommodations that she alleged were required. Although the employer was in the process of accommodating the grievor's physical disability, this was the first request the employer received regarding the accommodation of the grievor's alleged mental illness. The employer requested additional information, and the grievor refused. The employer filed a grievance alleging that the union and the grievor

had not met their obligations with respect to the accommodation process. The union filed a grievance on behalf of the grievor alleging discrimination and harassment.

At arbitration, it was held that employees have an obligation to provide sufficient information, including otherwise confidential medical information, to establish the accommodation required. It was reasonable for the employer in this case to seek an independent review of the medical documentation supporting the grievor's assertion that she had a mental illness and that she required the specific accommodations that she requested, and it was unreasonable for the grievor to refuse to permit her medical information to be used for that limited purpose.

The arbitration board stated that although employees have a right to keep medical information confidential, where employees exercise that right in a way that thwarts an employer's efforts to comply with the duty to accommodate, employees must accept the consequences. The consequences may include the loss of disability benefits, a refusal to permit a return to work until the necessary information is provided and even the loss of employment.

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The arbitration board also discussed the impact of the Ontario Court of Appeal's recent decision in *Jones v. Tsige*. In that case, a limited right to privacy was established in Ontario. The arbitration board clearly stated, however, that *Jones v. Tsige* does not stand for the proposition that asking for, or even demanding, that employees disclose confidential medical information for legitimate purposes constitutes an improper intrusion into an employee's privacy.

Complex Services is an important and useful decision for employers. It establishes the following principles that HR professionals should bear in mind when faced with employees making claims for disability-related accommodation:

1. Legitimate requests for medical documentation to determine the appropriate accommodation for an employee with a disability will not be subject to an action for the invasion of privacy.
2. Employers are entitled to request the following otherwise confidential medical information, if necessary:
 - The nature of the illness and how it manifests as a disability (which may include diagnosis, particularly in cases of mental illness).
 - The basis for the medical conclusions, including the examinations or tests performed (but not necessarily the test results or clinical notes in that respect).
 - Whether the disability is permanent or temporary, and the prognosis in that respect (i.e., the extent to which

improvement is anticipated, and the timeframe for same).

- The restrictions or limitations that flow from the disability (i.e., a detailed synopsis of what the employee can and cannot do in relation to the duties and responsibilities of her normal job duties, and possible alternative solutions).
- The treatment, including medication (and possible side effects), which may impact on the employee's ability to perform her job, or interact with management, other employees or customers.

3. When an employee is unwilling to provide the necessary medical information, an employer may deny disability benefits, refuse a return to work or even (in certain cases) terminate employment.

Employers should be aware, however, that they may only ask for information that is necessary to accommodate the employee. An employer may not, in every case, ask for all of the types of information listed above. The proper scope of medical information that an employer can ask for is entirely case-specific. It is therefore prudent to seek advice from legal counsel if you are unsure whether you have the right to ask for particular information in order to accommodate an employee. ■

Malcolm MacKillop and Hendrik Nieuwland practise employment law with the firm Shields O'Donnell MacKillop LLP of Toronto.



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TRADE SHOW HOURS

Wednesday, January 21*

10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Thursday, January 22*

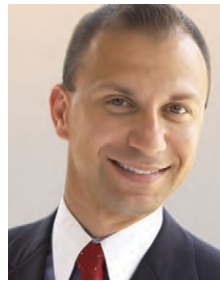
10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Friday, January 23

9:00 a.m. – 12:10 p.m.

*Power Hour: 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



DR. NICK BONTIS

8:15 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Wednesday, Jan. 21



INFORMATION BOMBARDMENT: RISING ABOVE THE DIGITAL ONSLAUGHT

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SCOTT STRATTEN

12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Wednesday, Jan. 21

UNSELLING THE EMPLOYEE

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DR. GINGER GRANT

4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Jan. 21

YOUR SECRET SAUCE – CORPORATE CULTURE AND CREATIVITY

It's a conundrum: most organizations claim to be innovation driven, but very few practice what they preach. So how, then, can any of us safeguard our creative and innovative capacities in this kind of environment? Interweaving narrative and imagery, Ginger Grant invites you on a heroic journey in search of ways to cultivate creativity. You'll learn that by protecting individual creative capacity, we can all help drive organizational change towards a brighter economic future.





FRANS JOHANSSON
8:15 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.
Thursday, Jan. 22

SEIZING OPPORTUNITY IN AN UNPREDICTABLE WORLD

In today's fast-changing world, the rules are morphing so rapidly that tried-and-true formulas for success are disintegrating. Basing this keynote on his provocative new book, *The Click Moment*, Frans Johansson obliterates some of the most recognized success stories as post-constructions that ignore the unexpected forces – the click moments – that are changing the game. His eye-opening argument makes a compelling case for you to embrace the unpredictability and mold your “click moments” into a winning strategy.



MIKE WALSH
12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Thursday, Jan. 22



THE CLOUD WILL DISRUPT THE FUTURE OF BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY

What does it take to lead a 21st century company? No doubt new platforms and tools will change our operations. But new technology is not only an opportunity to improve productivity, it invites us to ask a much bigger question: can we re-imagine the way we do business? Join futurist Mike Walsh to find out what's next – in particular, the way enterprise mobility and the Cloud will reshape how your teams collaborate.



STEPHEN J. DUBNER
8:00 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.
Friday, Jan. 23



THINK LIKE A FREAK

The *New York Times*-bestselling *Freakonomics* changed the way we see the world, exposing the hidden side of just about everything. Now, taking those concepts to the next level, this captivating keynote offers a revolutionary new approach to thinking. Promising to help you “retrain your brain,” Stephen J. Dubner offers insights into problem solving techniques for both your personal and professional life. Find out how to think more unconventionally and more creatively – to think, that is, like a Freak.



STEVE GILLILAND
1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Friday, Jan. 23

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

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Networking Night Grand Prize

TO THE TOP



WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO BECOME AN HR LEADER?

By Joel Kranc

There are few careers in the corporate world that get as wide a workplace perspective as a vice president of human resources. From working directly with C-suite executives to speaking with frontline workers, VPs of HR see all aspects of the business, from many angles and perspectives. Getting to that point in an HR leader's career is no easy feat and takes years of hard work, along with skills and knowledge (and patience) to get there.

In summer 2014, Hays Canada, a global recruitment firm, conducted a survey that focused on the "DNA of a VP of Human Resources" and interviewed more than 100 HR leaders with a title of VP or higher. Rather than a single path or direction taken by HR leaders, what emerged from the data is that getting to the highest levels of HR leadership takes varied approaches, routes, educational backgrounds and experiences, with no one approach being correct or incorrect.

One theme to come from the report, and this may be true for all HR professionals but especially at high levels, is the importance of building strategic partnerships.

HR leaders must form partnerships with other executives within their organizations. Rowan O'Grady, president of Hays Canada, says that companies like to promote a "people first" approach to doing business, but don't always make HR the main part of that function within the organization.



“It becomes up to the HR leader within the organization to be able to make that happen on a proactive basis,” he said. “HR leaders see that people should be a fundamental part of an organizational strategy, and I think it’s up to the HR leader to actually make that happen.”

YOU ARE HERE

Forming strategic partnerships takes a certain view of one’s self and how to work within the executive ranks. It is, therefore,

important to know what sets you apart from other high level management at your organization.

“Both my role and the CFO role are the only roles that can go anywhere within the organization,” said Suanne Nielsen, senior VP and chief talent officer with Foresters in Toronto. “If I believe we have a people-related issue, I can insert myself into it and it’s unusual by that nature.”

She says, however, that HR VP roles are also unusual in relation to other C-suite

executives because they act as a coach to the CEO in full support of the CEO’s mandate.

“There [aren’t many places internally that a] CEO can go to talk about concerns around people,” said Nielsen. “The CEO will need a confidential executive with whom to speak with about peer-related issues.” She recently supported a new CEO that was brought in from the U.S. by getting him up to speed and helped refresh his business strategy.

ALMOST 50 PER CENT OF HR LEADERS SURVEYED SAY THEIR PAST EXPERIENCES PLAYED A ROLE IN SECURING THEIR NEXT JOB, MORE THAN CREDENTIALS AND PERSONALITY FIT.



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Megan Paterson, director of human resources with Kinaxis in Ottawa, agrees that HR is a partnered advisor to CEOs.

"They've got concerns and questions and stress, and they need to be able to trust me and share it with me. So you have that insight as well," she said. Paterson also says that HR has a more difficult time showing direct value, since on paper, HR initiatives cost money. "I have to work harder to show my value. I can support the company, its goals and objectives; I can help us make more money, but I'm not going to directly do that [on paper]."

And because of that, she says, HR VPs must be creative when coming up with programs that add value. New programs must be "sold" by the HR leader to the CEO and CFO, and so HR leaders need the ability to convince other executives of the value of different initiatives.

BACK TO SCHOOL

Does relationship building and organizational support come with a certain educational background? According to the study, there isn't one particular educational path to HR leadership. Paterson, who received a B.A. in psychology, says it was not part of a larger strategy to get to HR.

"It's sort of related but it was never part of my plan," she said. Later in her career, Paterson received a certificate from the Rotman School of Business in Executive Management for HR. She's also earned her Certified Human Resources Leader (CHRL) designation.

While she says she was not even aware of specifically designed HR programs when she was in school, she thinks it's a good idea to explore those areas of study to see if HR is the right for the individual.



“[Success in HR] depends on the person more than their education,” said Paterson. “I’ve worked with people that don’t have a formal education, so I think the person is what makes you great at HR as opposed to how you got there.”

FROM HR PROFESSIONAL TO HR LEADER

In addition to various educational paths, experience really plays a strong role in the success of an HR leader, according to the survey.

“I strongly believe in the ‘70-20-10’ philosophy of learning,” said Nielsen. She says that 70 per cent of what HR professionals do comes through experience, 20 per cent through mentors or peers and 10 per cent from education.

It’s well-rounded knowledge that takes HR professionals to the higher levels and makes them great. The survey reports that a broad range of experiences and exposure to different aspects of the business is important. Almost 50 per cent of HR leaders surveyed say their past experiences played a role in securing their next job, more than credentials and personality fit. O’Grady says that being adaptive, collaborative, confident and able to communicate well are essential abilities.

“It’s not about being a safe pair of hands,” he said. “It’s having the characteristics of being a credible business partner and manager within the organization.”

Paterson says without key business knowledge, one cannot be a great HR leader.

“If you have that [knowledge], then every program you put in place is going to be supporting that,” she said.

She also says that when hiring, technical skills like understanding compensation and global benefits, for example, can be learned. It’s the softer skills of dealing with people and the enthusiasm for the job that she looks for and would expect from someone looking to move up the ranks.

In many ways, the road of an HR professional moving towards the executive ranks is uphill.

“Some companies struggle to differentiate between the fundamental basic role of human resources versus what human resources could actually bring to the achievement of the long-term strategy of the organization,” said O’Grady. “That’s why it’s difficult.” ■

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SPECIAL PARENTS



OFFERING HELP AND ACCOMMODATION ENABLES TOP PERFORMANCE

By Cathy Gallagher-Louisy

Darren and Mary are both parents of children with special needs. Darren works for the professional services firm KPMG in Canada. Mary – not her real name – also worked for a global firm, “XYZ Company”. They faced very similar struggles as working parents, but the impact of those struggles on their professional lives has been quite different. In fact, Darren Spreadbury has recently been promoted to partner at KPMG in Canada, while Mary left XYZ Company after more than 11 years to start her own business.

Mary was an experienced project manager who always exceeded expectations on her performance reviews. After working for XYZ Company for over two years, she got pregnant. During her maternity leave, Mary’s daughter Tanya was diagnosed with a neurological disorder. Tanya now uses a wheelchair as well as assistive devices for communicating.

“At first, it was rather overwhelming,” said Mary. “Being a new parent is challenging for anyone, but then you’re also faced with the daunting situation of having a child that has needs you don’t yet understand.”

XYZ Company had no supports for parents of special needs children, nor any formal policies for flexible work. Thankfully, Mary’s manager recognized that Mary could perform her job well

from anywhere – except when the job involved in-person meetings – so Mary was allowed to work from home two days a week and take her daughter to therapy on Friday afternoons.

This arrangement worked well for several years. Mary continued to perform her job exceptionally well, and always received excellent performance reviews. Then her manager left the company and things started to change. The new manager was not fond of telework and insisted that Mary come into the office every day. She tried to discuss the situation, but the manager was uncompromising. So, Mary discussed the issue with HR. Eventually, they agreed to let her work from home on Fridays so that Mary could take Tanya to therapy, but they asked her not to tell other employees about her arrangement.

Given the circumstances, Mary would have had grounds for an accommodation request and potentially a human rights complaint based on family status. However, she did not want to pursue that route and compromise her relationships at work. For over a year, she tried hard to make it work, but eventually had to admit that the situation was greatly impacting her ability to perform at her job and care for her daughter.

“Ironically, I would spend less time actually working because of the additional four hours I had to spend commuting,” she said.



“I felt guilty when I might not have time to help Tanya with her homework or read to her after making dinner, bathing her and handling all the other things that needed to be done at home.”

Mary finally decided to leave the company to start her own business doing exactly the kind of work she was doing for XYZ Company. Now she works from home every day, except when she has an in-person client meeting. She has more flexibility, and feels like she has more balance in her life.

“The situation could have been so much different,” she said. “There need to be standards and expectations for flexible work arrangements. I was not the only employee at XYZ Company that needed flexibility.”

In the end, XYZ Company lost a high performing, 11-year veteran, along with all of her institutional knowledge and relationships.

THRIVING IN A SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

Spreadbury works with the Global Mobility Services Group at KPMG in Canada. He’s also the father of two boys with autism, and at KPMG he found a very supportive environment.

The company has a number of innovative programs and policies in place that can provide support to parents of special needs children. For example, Personal Care Time: 50 hours of paid time off

annually, over and above vacation and sick time, to use for personal, family or community commitments.

KPMG also has several flexible work options that are available to all employees.

“The most commonly used is our Flexible Work Arrangements program, typically used for working from home or telecommuting,” said Elizabeth Reynolds, manager, Diversity and Inclusion at KPMG in Canada. “We also have other options like reduced work week or condensed work week.”

Additionally, KPMG has developed a number of guidelines and resources to help employees and their performance managers to successfully choose the appropriate flexible work arrangement.

“The performance manager’s role is to be an active partner,” said Reynolds. “With the guidelines and toolkits we have available, the majority of these arrangements are worked out between the employee and their manager. If either the employee or their performance manager need support, they can contact KPMG’s Employee Relations Service Team to help them choose the appropriate flexible work arrangement.”

In addition to Flexible Work Arrangements, KPMG has two innovative approaches that specifically support working parents of children with special needs. First, in 2009, they added questions

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**“WHEN WE FIRST LAUNCHED
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NETWORK, WE DIDN'T REALLY
KNOW HOW VALUABLE IT
WOULD BE. BUT NOW, IT IS
ONE OF OUR MOST ACTIVE AND
THRIVING EMPLOYEE RESOURCE
GROUPS, NATIONALLY.”**

– ELIZABETH REYNOLDS, MANAGER, DIVER-
SITY AND INCLUSION, KPMG CANADA

to their annual employee demographic census to determine if their employees had dependent care responsibilities for children, special needs children or aging parents. This allowed them to design relevant programs and resources. Second, in January 2010, they established an employee resource group for parents of special needs children.

“When we first launched the Special Parents Network, we didn't really know how valuable it would be,” said Reynolds. “But now, it is one of our most active and thriving employee resource groups, nationally.”

The network is comprised of employees from across Canada who have a monthly call with a guest speaker. For example, they recently had an internal speaker discuss setting up a trust for your child, and they had an external guest speaker who discussed how to advocate for your child at his or her school.

Spreadbury has been the chair of the Special Parents Network since Oct. 2013. He says the network is open and includes everyone from senior partners to first-year junior associates. Part of the value of the network is sharing experiences and lessons learned.

“For example, people in the network will share where they went on vacation with their child, what accommodations they requested and received, what worked and what didn't,” he said. “You get practical advice and learn from each other.”

The Special Parents Network and its support has made a big difference in Spreadbury's life.

“Every employee has to balance work and life,” he said. “The beauty of a company providing flexibility and support for parents like me is you don't feel like you have to break new ground at work. There's a policy and a process in place. So, I'm able to be very open about it and know that it's not going to be held against me or affect me adversely at work. That alleviates a lot of worries I would otherwise have to deal with.”

These stories show the impact that flex policies and resources could have in enhancing performance and engagement. ■

Cathy Gallagher-Louisy leads CIDI's Research and Knowledge Services portfolio.



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Compassionate Care Leave

GIVING CARE TO CAREGIVERS

By Jill Harris, Joel Kranc and Duff McCutcheon

Compassionate care is a benefit for employees needing to take a temporary leave to care for a gravely ill family member who has a significant risk of death within six months. While both the federal and provincial governments provide this employment legislation guaranteeing job-protected compassionate care leave for workers, many organizations are going a step further by implementing top-up compassionate care leave policies in order to provide comfort to employees while boosting engagement and retention at work.

With Canada's aging population, employees are in greater need than ever before to take leave and care for loved ones at end of life; yet, at the same time, maintain peace of mind knowing their jobs will be there when they return. This increasing need for flexibility is part of an ongoing conversation about how companies should approach and offer compassionate care leave.

"Organizations are nothing without their people, and employees shouldn't have to choose between their job and caring

for a critically ill loved one," said Tracy Lapointe, vice president of human resources at GSK Canada, one of the first organizations in Canada to introduce a compassionate care benefit in 2002.

COMPASSIONATE CARE SURVEY

To find out more about the compassionate care landscape in Canada, the Human Resources Professionals Association (HRPA) and the Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association (CHPCA) wanted to capture some of the different attitudes and policies of HR leaders. After speaking with 692 HRPA members between June and July 2014, opinions and trends emerged.

For example, larger companies are more likely (82 per cent of organizations with 5,000-plus employees) to offer compassionate care leave than smaller companies (46 per cent of organizations between 50-199 employees). Also, unionized organizations are more likely to have a formal compassionate care policy than a non-unionized environment.

And besides the moral need to provide these benefits to employees, HR and businesses are seeing other positive results as well, in the form of more engaged employees who better reintegrate after an absence and are more likely to stay with their organization long-term.

What develops is an organizational landscape where compassionate care makes sense not only on a personal level, but also on a business level.

WHAT'S YOUR POLICY?

Employee benefits have evolved over the past several decades. Recognizing the changing demographics of the workplace, the amount of leave and health services available to employees have changed, and these are now more prevalent benefits than they once were.

GSK's compassionate care benefit provides up to 13 weeks of leave over a two-year period, and for eligible employees with at least three years of service, they receive 13 weeks pay at full salary.

"When GSK introduced the compassionate care benefit 12 years ago, it was



groundbreaking,” said Lapointe. “We’re pleased to have provided the foundation and catalyst for these programs. From a human perspective, lending a hand to those that need it most is simply the right thing to do.”

And as the population ages and the “sandwich generation” finds itself caring for children and elderly parents, the need for compassionate care benefits has grown further.

“Medical advances, in addition to their many benefits, have helped establish the need for compassionate care benefits,” said Lapointe. “On the plus side, modern medicine has made great strides in helping us live longer and healthier lives. Those advances have also helped create the sandwich generation. While several Canadian corporations have policies to support employees with parental care responsibilities, the compassionate leave benefit is a logical extension of that.”

EMPLOYER RATIONALE

There are obvious reasons to provide a compassionate care policy at work.

Employers should strive to make sure their employees know their company supports them in difficult situations, including taking time to care for a loved one if needed.

“The reduction in stress [for the employee] will have a positive impact on productivity when he or she returns, and for their team during their absence,” said Lapointe. Survey respondents agreed, adding that having a policy makes it easier for employees to return to work and reintegrate into the working environment after caring for a loved one.

“Providing accommodations for employees caring for family members at end of life is one of the ways to reduce caregiver stress and avoid burnout,” said Bill Greenhalgh, CEO of HRP. “Workers who are supported through situations like this are [also] more loyal and are more likely to stay with the company.”

In fact, 61 per cent of HR professionals said compassionate care policies increase employee engagement and provide other benefits, including preventing leave caused by stress or mental anguish.

“This is an important leave to have, as

when employees are struggling with a family illness and trying to maintain a ‘normal’ work life, it can take its toll and could potentially cause an employee to go off on stress leave,” said another HR leader who responded to the survey. “The compassionate care leave allows an individual to take the needed time off work to care for their loved ones.”

FORMAL VS. INFORMAL POLICIES

According to the survey, a majority of companies offer some kind of compassionate care benefits to their employees; however, a general trend is to allow employees to take leave whether there is a formal policy in place or not. Seventy-five analyze

Lapointe, however, makes the case for creating a formal compassionate care leave policy.

“From the perspective of the organization,” she said, “the certainty and predictability of a [formal] compassionate care program makes it easier to plan a smooth transition for customers, partners and other team members during the leave of absence.”

feature

Sharon Baxter, executive director of CHPCA, insists that a formalized policy is a must.

“This formal policy ensures the accommodation is applied consistently across the organization,” she said. “Anecdotally, when it’s *ad hoc*, we see people closest to the leadership team getting time off. A written policy ensures fairness for all employees.”

Alison Sargent, senior HR advisor at Canada’s Research-Based Pharmaceutical Companies, recommends spelling out the qualification period, qualifying conditions (both of which typically mirror government legislation) as well as the process to request the leave.

“And then there’s financial support – whether or not an employer provides top-up [above the employment insurance provided by the federal compassionate care leave legislation]. Of course it is up to the employer, but it can help alleviate stress for an employee and improve the opportunity for the employee to come back to work,” says said Sargent.

“And then there’s financial support – whether or not an employer provides top-up [above the employment insurance provided by the federal compassionate care leave legislation],” she said.

Ultimately, the compassionate part of a compassionate care policy is the key element – and that means being flexible.

“Flexibility is the number one consideration – it’s why you offer a policy in the first place,” said Sargent. That means providing flexibility to extend the leave beyond the government maximums, or even flexibility to continue working if that’s what the individual wants.

“Some people want to stay engaged with work during these times, but they require flexibility to take half a day to take someone to an appointment or to recover after providing overnight care to somebody,” said Baxter. “A compassionate employer provides flexibility to allow employee/caregivers to do their work in other ways and then to have some time away when they need it.”

CONTINUING COMPASSIONATE CARE

Undoubtedly, HR leaders believe in some form of compassionate care policy. It may take the form of minimum ESA standards or it may be more robust as a top-up measure, but most believe recognition on behalf of the employee is needed.

Whether companies offer it in a formal manner or not, compassionate care leave is becoming part of the roster of benefits employees are growing accustomed to.


“Since the inception of the Compassionate Care Benefit at GSK Canada, we’ve supported approximately 160 employees – equivalent to almost nine per cent of our Canadian workforce – through some of the most devastating periods of their lives,” said Lapointe. “As an employer, it’s incredibly rewarding to know you helped someone through their darkest days. Further, every time the benefit is used, an employee ambassador for the organization is born.” ■



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Using the Standard

WORKING TOGETHER FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

By Mary Ann Baynton, M.S.W., R.S.W.

It's been two years since the release of the National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace (the Standard). The voluntary standard provides a framework to help guide employers as they work toward psychologically safe and healthy work environments.

The Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) is now one year into a three-year national case study research project to determine how Canadian employers

are using and working toward the Standard. Results will help in the development of practices, programs and educational tools and processes to help more organizations adopt the Standard and promote psychologically healthy workplaces.

While participation in the case study is closed, monthly updates and participant questions and answers are posted publicly and are available to everyone on the MHCC website.

The following are insights, successes and challenges from some of the HR professionals taking part in this study.

GETTING STARTED

Cathy Weaver, vice-president of human resources for Great-West Life, London Life and Canada Life, says it was a natural fit for the companies to support the development of the Standard and to become involved with the case study.

STEPS TOWARDS PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Review the National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace.
- Get senior leadership buy-in.
- Gather champions for implementation. Establish advisory or tactical teams with a cross-section of leaders and employees.
- Leverage the free resources identified in the Standard Annex.
- Conduct an assessment of your current psychological health and safety status.
- Share data to get buy-in, support and participation.
- Analyze results and set measurable goals.
- Reach out; share ideas and challenges with colleagues and associates.
- Review policies and procedures.
- Develop and implement a plan.
- Communicate progress.
- Train and support managers.
- Set up a system for continual improvement.

“We have supported research and projects in mental health in the workplace for over a decade, including the establishment of the Great-West Life Centre for Mental Health in the Workplace in 2007, so we welcome this innovative collaboration,” she said. “MHCC has done an excellent job in bringing the case study participants together so that we can learn from one another and share our experiences more broadly for the benefit of other organizations.”

When the Standard was first announced, the HR community expressed concerns about the resources and time that would be needed to implement psychological health and safety in the workplace.

Some also worried that if their organization was going to proclaim to be a psychologically healthy and safe workplace, there would be a perception that employees didn't have to work as hard or that management couldn't ever be firm.

“Psychological health and safety is not about making sure work conditions are always ‘nice’ for employees,” said Weaver. “Rather, it is about maximizing the capability and potential of all employees by supporting them to do their best work.”

Yvone Defreitas, manager, HR at the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS), shares that CCOHS recognized the value of adopting the Standard – both as an employer and as part of their mandate as a health and safety organization to take a comprehensive approach to workplace mental health. It established a Mental Health at Work team, comprised of a cross-section of staff based on their interest in contributing.

“From an HR perspective, we understand that there's legislation that tells us we have to keep our employees healthy and safe. Having this technical expertise in place is helping to create programs and policies that are all encompassing,” she said. “This includes gaining an understanding that employees' concerns aren't always physical or visible.”

Jennifer Lombardo-Seib, corporate wellness specialist for the Regional Municipality of York, works closely with a newly-established Psychological Health and Safety Advisory Committee whose membership will change based on needs and priorities.

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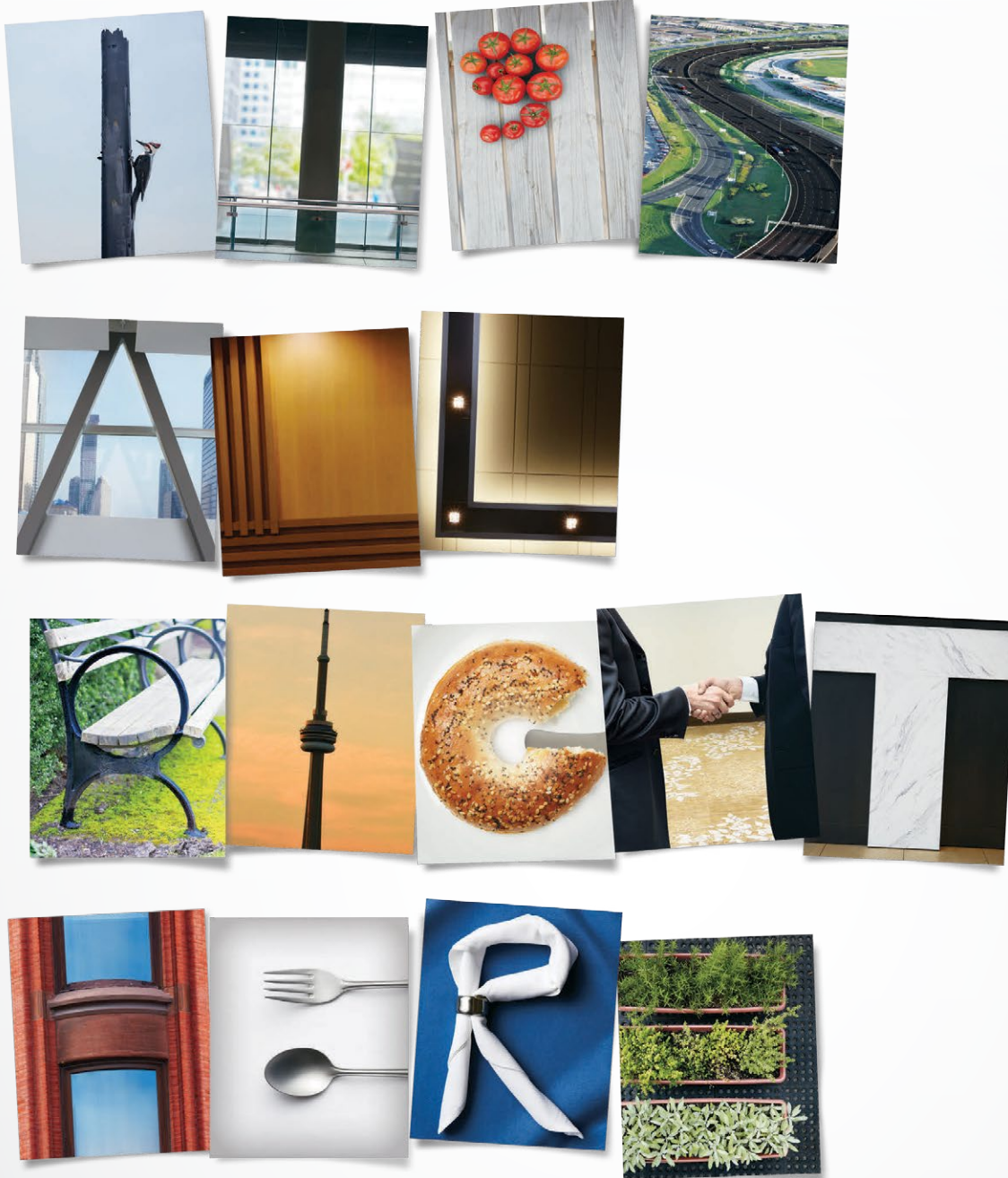
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LOOK CLOSER.





“IT REALLY IS ABOUT TAKING ONE STEP AT A TIME. THE REALITY IN MOST ORGANIZATIONS IS THAT THERE ARE ALWAYS A LOT OF PROGRAMS ON THE GO.”

— JENNIFER LOMBARDO-SEIB, CORPORATE WELLNESS SPECIALIST, REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF YORK

“Right now a lot of the groundwork is being done in HR, but there’s also a level of change involved that made it important to have other employees including the unions on board,” she said.

Lombardo-Seib says engaging unions alongside highly visible senior leadership support is making implementation more manageable across York Region. A wellness website features the CAO’s commitment to psychological health and wellbeing, as well as a broad range of resources that are available through the region’s new Mindful Health Initiative.

For those worried about time and resources, Lombardo-Seib advises using the Standard, which provides a framework with excellent free resources to help organizations get started.

“It really is about taking one step at a time,” she says. “The reality in most organizations is that there are always a lot of

programs on the go, and many could be interwoven with others, including those related to health, safety and wellness or other HR programs.”

Carol Sinclair, director of HR and labour relations at the Royal Ottawa Health Care Group, says that she and her organization’s psychological health and safety tactics team are excited by the opportunity to advance organization practice of a critical mental health initiative in the workplace.

“We have two years of data from our engagement surveys which provided some good information to start with,” she said.

Sinclair offers advice for organizations with “resource-constrained environments” that are looking to adopt the Standard: “Share the data that you’re able to pull together. For our organization, this includes data on safety and labour fronts, from absenteeism rates, benefits utilization data and long-term disability claims to employee

assistance program statistics and extended healthcare claims. We’re gathering this quantitative data along with qualitative data from employee engagement surveys and cross referencing it all against the 13 psychosocial factors that are known to impact psychological health at work.”

The surveys are available at no cost from www.guardingmindsatwork.ca. Psychosocial factors are elements that impact employees’ psychological responses to work and work conditions, potentially causing psychological health problems. They include factors such as psychological support, organizational culture, civility and respect, clear leadership and expectations and work/life balance.

In reviewing the data, Sinclair says, “a clear picture is emerging” to help guide their planning activities.

SHARING THE RESPONSIBILITY

Barbara Mildon, vice president, Professional Practice, HR and Research and chief nurse executive at Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences, encourages employees who are tasked with the responsibility of implementing psychological health and safety to reach out to peers to achieve a broader view.

“Working in this way is helping to add rigour to our implementation, processes and to our outcome evaluation,” she said, emphasizing the need to be strategic and results-focused. “We are absolutely motivated to achieve results, and not in just in a token way. We want the results to be robust and meaningful.”

Drawing on CCOHS’s experience and total health mandate, Defreitas challenges the mindset that ensuring psychologically healthy and safe workplaces is an “HR thing.” She said, “Workplace health and safety is everyone’s responsibility, only now it includes mental health.”

Mildon agrees: “It all comes back to that notion of responsibility and accountability, which we need to have in place on a day-to-day basis.”

SUCCESSSES AND CHALLENGES

Mildon says her organization has successfully mapped each of the psychosocial factors outlined in the Standard against its most recent employee engagement survey results, which has helped them determine the areas on which they need to focus.

She reaffirms the importance of having the support of senior leadership.

“The project gets direct oversight from our senior management team, which includes directors and vice-presidents,” she said. “That means that it is discussed at a high level and decisions are made collectively, with CEO support.”

Defreitas says the CCOHS team had worried they might run into “survey fatigue” when they used Guarding Minds @ Work early in the implementation phase of the

Standard as a means of assessing current workplace psychological health.

“We managed to carve out a two-week window for the survey and saw an 83 per cent response rate,” said Defreitas. “Clearly this is important to our employees. This has opened up a healthy dialogue and we’re seeing increased employee engagement and decreased social stigma associated with mental health issues.”

SUPPORTING THE JOURNEY

The HR professionals who were interviewed agree that sharing these findings is an invaluable step in helping other organizations either get started or continue on the journey toward psychologically healthy and safe workplaces.

Sinclair and her colleagues all express their appreciation for being involved in the case study.

“This takes implementation of the Standard to a whole new level,” she said. “It’s setting the path for others to succeed.” ■



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PASSING THE TORCH

HR SHOULD PLAY
AN INTEGRAL ROLE
IN SUCCESSION
PLANNING

By Lisa Gordon

Succession planning is often compared to a game of chess – the outcome will be determined by your ability to plan the next several moves in advance.

In the entrepreneurial environment, succession planning is likened to the elephant in the room. In fact, according to a September 2014 article in *Canadian Business*, a recent Deloitte family business survey found that just 17 per cent of companies surveyed have a formal leadership succession strategy in place.



strategy

That doesn't surprise Jerry Cukier, managing partner of Chartered Professional Accounting firm Crowe Soberman LLP. He specializes in assisting clients with leadership transition planning. It's a process that needs to be tackled head on, rather than avoided.

"This is not done over a week, a month or even over a year – it's actually done over several years," he said. "It takes a lot of thinking and honest self-examination. Most people look at succession when

someone dies or there is an emergency, but it's an issue that needs to be dealt with much sooner rather than later."

HR professionals play a key role in helping management develop a successful exit strategy while ensuring the continued success of their business. In fact, says Cukier, HR's role in succession planning starts from the day an employee is hired.

"You have to look at them to see if that person could be a leader," he said. "Assessing someone early on is very

important. Leadership comes in many different forms, but everyone who is hired must be evaluated for their leadership potential."

Since HR builds company policies from hiring to retiring, the department must work closely with management to clarify the succession vision, and to ensure a plan is in place to meet those objectives. In the case of a family-owned business, the next step is tricky because it involves an honest assessment of each family member's skills.

"In a family business, there is an overlay of emotions," said Susan Hodkinson, Crowe Soberman's chief operating officer. "It's a difficult position for entrepreneurs to be in. They need to think about what the future of the business looks like, and also about staff competencies and how they have evolved. Are their children really ready to take over?"

She added that it can often be hard to keep the next generation engaged while they await their turn at the helm.

"That is very challenging, particularly if it's a family member who has been involved for a very long time," she said. One of the factors complicating this situation is Ontario's removal of the mandatory retirement age.

"We've always had a runway with age 65," she said. "Now, this interrupts the natural flow of promotion, and we don't have the predicted turnover any more. How do you deal with someone in their 40s who is ready to step up, but there is someone else who is showing no signs of retirement?"

MANAGING THE TRANSITION

HR professionals need to be "at the table" when it comes to succession planning.

"HR needs to remind leaders that they need to be thinking several moves ahead in the chess game that is leadership transition," said Hodkinson. "Succession takes time. You can't always find someone who is ready to take over a business. You must invest in having those successors in place before you need them."

Human resources can help outgoing leaders establish a timeframe for the succession, and work to define a plan for knowledge transfer. Often, this involves

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“In most businesses, there is a yearly business cycle, so it may make sense to start the shadowing process one year before the formal succession date,” said Hodkinson.

Keeping the former leader involved with the company can be beneficial, but it’s also tricky.

“You use the outgoing leader for wisdom and as a sounding board early on,” said Cukier. “You have customer relations to maintain, and you have a lot of skills there. But, they must realize there is a time to step in and a time to stay back. They key is to ensure the outgoing leader knows his or her place. It’s not easy – it’s one of the toughest areas.”

As for managing the expectations of a family business’ “next gen,” Cukier recommends having an open family meeting about the succession plan.

“As the owner, you can’t leave your kids to take care of it after you’re gone; that’s where conflicts happen. Plan it out, and then there’s no question about what mom or dad would have wanted.”

Hodkinson also emphasizes advance preparation as critical to succession planning.

“Be sure to plan early, allow enough time for shadowing and make certain that communication is handled properly within the company,” she said. “There needs to be enough time to pass the baton; but once it’s been passed, the outgoing leader needs to step aside relatively quickly.”

As for HR professionals who find themselves challenged with the thorny issue of succession planning, there is a silver lining. If they do it right, there is a real opportunity to ensure the company’s legacy will live on – in effect, they will be building a bridge between the generations. ■

COMMON PITFALLS OF SUCCESSION PLANNING

HR professionals have an important role to play in succession planning. Open discussion with outgoing leaders will clarify their expectations for the future, while helping to avoid uncomfortable situations like these:

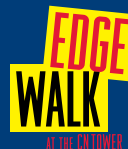
- The leader hasn’t accepted the fact that it’s time to make the transition.
- In the case of a family business, the leader believes all his children are equal, including those in and out of the company.
- There’s nothing in writing – with no written game plan, no one really understands their roles.
- Owners fail to realize their children may not be the best managers, and that outside talent may be required.
- There’s no formal communication about the forthcoming leadership change – staff are left to fill in the blanks, and they’re often wrong.



TEAM BUILDING
DOESN'T HAPPEN
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BIG DATA

Applications in Recruitment

DATA ANALYTICS CAN STRENGTHEN THE HR DISCIPLINE

By Mark Bania

Human resources and data analytics, at first glance, seem like diametrically opposed concepts. Big data is raw, dispassionate and objective. HR, meanwhile, is the shepherd of the organization's culture and the perpetual process of attracting and retaining top talent. Its core functions are rooted in empathy and a keen understanding of complex interpersonal dynamics. In the recruitment world, specifically, some assume big data will ultimately become a proxy for the "human" in HR.

Fortunately, research detailing the early adopters of human capital data analytics tells us that the science is a complement, rather than a replacement, for the decades of carefully maintained insights and best practices. It is a tool that makes the HR discipline stronger.

What's clear, however, is that after years of experts hailing the arrival of big data in HR, there are many skeptics still questioning its relevancy.

A summer 2014 CareerBuilder.ca and Harris Poll survey of more than 400 Canadian hiring and HR managers found that a vast majority of employers are not on the big data bandwagon, at least when it comes to talent acquisition. In fact, 83 per cent said they never or rarely use data analytics as part of their recruitment strategy. Asked why, half of this group responded that big data is simply not applicable to talent acquisition, a response that led "inaccessibility" of big data (20 per cent) and its "overwhelming nature" (23 per cent) as the top reasons.

The hesitancy to adopt data analytics is in spite of the fact that nearly half of Canadian companies have open jobs for which they cannot find qualified candidates. Extracting meaning from large and unwieldy datasets is a legitimate challenge for many HR departments running up against staffing and budgetary constraints. The



recruitment

large number of those citing lack of applicability, however, suggests that the intended benefits of data analytics have yet to diffuse the HR community.

So let's go over what those potential benefits of big data are, based on the one in six Canadian employers who "always" or "usually" use analytics as part of their recruitment strategy:

- 70 per cent say it lowers their cost per hire
- 66 per cent say it lowers time to hire
- 49 per cent say it helps them hire more candidates for specialized fields

Big data analytics is boosting recruitment efficiency, and for many, increasing access to elusive, high-skill candidates. To these advocates, it is empowering recruitment in meaningful, bottom-line enhancing ways.

DETAILS ON DATA

But what data is being used, and how is it implemented?

The item at the top of many organizations' list of recruitment challenges is a lack of top-level candidates applying to open positions. By using a variety of tools that leverage government and online recruitment data, companies can determine whether or not their challenge is simply a matter of the supply of available and qualified talent falling short of regional demand. These tools crunch millions of data points – resumes, job postings, labour force surveys – that were previously unavailable to recruiters just a few years ago. For example, if there is an undersupply of workers in one area, a company can

choose to target job advertising in nearby metros and relocate ideal candidates. Or, the data may convince companies to scale back job requirements and consider instituting a training program for the occupation in question.

Similarly, recruiters can access market-specific compensation data to compare how their salary ranges stack up against competitors. In situations where a skills shortage is present, market logic tells us that raising salaries above the median should attract more qualified candidates to the open job, and subsequently, signal more workers to acquire the requisite skills for that profession over the long-term.

Thirdly, companies are becoming increasingly savvy at analyzing their current and past workforce to inform future hiring decisions. In the book *The Talent Equation*, by Matt Ferguson and professors from University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School and New York University's Stern School, the authors crunched nearly 33 million resumes and found that when companies increase their number of sales workers who hold college degrees by just 10 per cent, it is associated with about \$31,000 (U.S.) in value added per employee. This is no small amount for a large organization. Companies are capable of doing these types of high-level statistical analyses using the trove of workforce data sitting on their own servers and using the results to implement systemic realignments of their recruiting goals.

Finally, companies can significantly improve upon recruiting time-to-hire and cost-per-hire by using analytics to evaluate their own talent acquisition processes. The average large company invests in dozens of recruitment sources to attract job applicants. These include everything from company career sites, job boards, social media and staffing agencies. Over the course of a year, these services generate a mountain of performance-based data that if aggregated and analyzed, can answer whether recruitment dollars are being spent most advantageously.

Note that in all of these examples, data does not diminish the role of the recruiting expert – it enhances it. Adopting data analytics is the next step of HR's long transformation from administrative-focused roles to consulting-based, talent advisory roles. Data won't dehumanize HR and talent acquisition; rather, it will empower recruitment leaders to find the right person, for the right job, at the right time more efficiently than ever before. ■

Mark Bania is the managing director of Canadian operations at CareerBuilder.

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Global Navigation

STRATEGIES FOR WORKING EFFECTIVELY AROUND THE WORLD

By Erin Meyer

Today, whether we work with colleagues in Dusseldorf or Dubai, New York or New Delhi, we are all part of a global network (real or virtual, physical or electronic) where success requires navigating through wildly different cultural realities. Unless we know how to decode other cultures and avoid easy-to-fall-into cultural traps, we are easy prey to misunderstanding, needless conflict and deals that fall apart.

Canadians working with colleagues from other countries can employ simple strategies that help navigate a cultural divide more smoothly.

BUILD TRUST FROM THE HEART

In task-based cultures such as Canada, the U.S., Australia or Germany, trust is cognitive: it is built through work. If you do good work and prove to be reliable and effective, you are more likely to be viewed as trustworthy. In a relationship-based society such as China, Turkey or Argentina, trust results from spending time getting to know each other at a personal level. Although slightly more relationship-oriented than the U.S., Canada is still one of the most task-based parts of the world, and much more task-based than many emerging markets.

As one Canadian manager said, "The first time we bid for business in Turkey, we worked hard to get the presentation just right and the brochures perfect. But we didn't invest the necessary time to develop a personal bond with the people we would be working with. We lost the business, and learned that we needed to spend just as much time sharing meals and building a friendship with our counterparts as we did showing our product was top of the line."

SOFTEN THE BLOW

All cultures believe criticism should be given constructively, but the definition of "constructive" varies greatly. In Israel or the Netherlands, a colleague may say, "Your work was unacceptable," while in Ghana or Saudi Arabia, they are more likely to say, "This is good. You might possibly think about doing this part a little differently." Canadians can be at risk of being too direct when giving negative feedback to certain cultures. One Canadian manager who had recently moved to Thailand lost several employees in his first month on the job by giving feedback in a way they perceived as blunt and disrespectful.

EYE OFF THE CLOCK

Many Canadians approach tasks in a sequential fashion. They avoid interruptions, focus on deadlines and stick firmly to the schedule set in advance. Employees watch the clock closely and being organized and structured is held at a premium.

In most Asian cultures (with the exception of Japan and Singapore), as well as across the Middle East and Latin America, flexibility and reactivity are more important than meeting a deadline and following a timeline. As one Brazilian manager said, "We are more flexible in Brazil. Because we grew up in a society where currency wasn't always stable and governments could change regulations on a whim, we learned to value flexibility over linear planning. But Canadians, like Americans and Europeans, are more rigid. They expect us to work by carefully closing one box before opening the next." When working with these flexible-time cultures, try ignoring the clock and focus instead on meeting your clients' needs at that particular moment.

workforce management

SIT DOWN AND LISTEN

In the Canadian school system, there is often a participation bonus: the participants who speak up the most receive credit for that, and it boosts their grade. In the workplace, it's not just appropriate but desirable and expected that employees make their voices heard. In many Asian cultures, on the other hand, the importance of waiting carefully for your counterparts to finish their sentences before you speak demonstrates valued listening and communication skills.

The first global team one Canadian managed comprised six Canadians and two Malaysians. He noticed quickly that during these meetings, the Malaysians hardly spoke while the Canadians were pushing to have their voices heard. Later, he pulled one of the Malaysian members aside and asked how she felt things were going. She responded that she found it difficult to participate because the Canadians were constantly interrupting and talking on top of one another.

When leading a global team, don't mistake a lack of participation for a lack of something to say. Build an opportunity for each person to contribute into the agenda. At the end of the meeting, go around and ask each person for a last reflection. You might find at that those who were quiet throughout the meeting have something important to offer.

FOLLOW THE LEADER

The level of respect and deference shown to a boss varies dramatically from one part of the world to another.

Scandinavia, the Netherlands, Australia and Israel are some of the most egalitarian parts of the world. There, the boss is one of the team and treated as facilitator among equals. Canadian culture tends to be more hierarchical than these environments, but much less so than BRIC cultures and other emerging markets. In Brazil, Russia, India and China, there is more respect and deference shown to the authority figure. People avoid disagreeing openly with their boss in public, or suggesting that they know more than their boss knows.

In today's global business environment, it is not enough to know how to lead in an egalitarian culture or in a hierarchical culture. Managers need to develop the flexibility to manage up and down the cultural scale. Often, this means going back to square one. It means watching what makes local leaders successful. It means explaining your own style frequently. But, ultimately, it means learning to lead in different ways in order to motivate and mobilize groups who follow in different ways. ■

Erin Meyer is the author of The Culture Map: Breaking Through the Invisible Boundaries of Global Business.

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EMPLOYER CONSIDERATIONS UNDER THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT FOR CANADIAN COMPANIES WORKING IN THE U.S.

By Sibyl Bogardus

Many Canadian companies may be unaware of the full impact of the American Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) or how it applies to them. But with the next major deadline coming up soon, that is about to change.

As of January 1, 2015, employers with 100 or more full-time workers in the U.S. must offer affordable, comprehensive insurance – or face penalties of \$2,000 per full-time employee. In 2016 and later years, the number of employees triggering the obligation drops to 50.

To put it simply, it is not only American companies that must comply with the law. Foreign companies with operations in the U.S. also must comply. The law is all about improved access; the law is going to urge everyone living in the U.S. – push them, as that penalty increases – to have health insurance.

MEDIUM- AND LARGE-SIZE COMPANIES

In 2015, medium- and large-size companies with more than 100 U.S. employees must offer health care to full-time employees. Canadian companies that have operations in the U.S. should pay attention to the total number of employees working in U.S. locations. Several smaller offices that together total more than 100 employees will need to offer health insurance in 2015, even if the parent company is Canadian. These smaller offices can represent different locations of the same business or different businesses owned by a common parent company. It is the total number of full-time U.S. employees that is relevant.

Canadian companies with fewer than 50 employees working in U.S. locations won't be required by law to provide coverage to their U.S.-based employees. However, those employees may still need to prove to the IRS that they have health insurance, so they may demand insurance or larger salaries to enable them to purchase their own insurance. In other words, to stay competitive, small businesses may have to compensate in other ways.

FULL-TIME WORKERS

Under the legislation, there are three categories of workers:

- Full-time
- Seasonal
- Variable hour

It's important to know which employees fall under each of these categories, as it will impact the way the company's compliance with the law will be judged. Employees should be notified in writing at



benefits

the time of hire which specific category they fall under. "Seasonal" means the position is filled around the same time each year and for less than six months. The law vaguely refers to the employer having a "reasonable belief" that the variable employee will be working under 30 hours per week. A designated position provides a stronger defense later in the event of an audit or lawsuit.

In addition, companies must track the hours of "variable" and "seasonal" employees. This type of documentation will support that companies had a "reasonable belief" and that those employees are working fewer than 30 hours per week and don't need to be covered.

Full-time employees, on the other hand, must be covered. Any employee who works a minimum of 30 hours per week is considered full-time. Initially, just 70 per cent of eligible employees must be covered. Although companies cannot exclude specific employees by name, they can exclude certain categories of employees.

The legislation requires employers to offer coverage to the employee's children – including adult children up to age 26, whether they are living in their parent's home or not. However, plans are not obligated to offer coverage to spouses.

Canadian employers should note that there is no exception under the legislation for employees who are not U.S. citizens. If a full-time employee is based in the U.S., that employee likely must have access to health insurance.

AFFORDABLE CARE

The law emphasizes providing affordable insurance for everyone. In order to achieve this goal, the rules are about shifting some of the expense of more universal coverage to employers.

Health insurance can cost \$8,000 for an individual and up to \$19,000 for a family, and even higher in certain areas of the U.S.

However, there is a kind of "glitch" in the law. This glitch allows companies to offer "skinny" plans that cover preventive care only. These plans offer no coverage for hospitalization or drugs, among other things, yet they still let an employer avoid the main health reform penalty.

These kinds of plans can be much less expensive for employers, and they are still legal today. However, companies must be careful. Employees must be aware of what these plans do and do not cover – and companies should be careful to retain proof that they've provided the information.

The new law can be complicated, and getting the details right can be a challenge. The main point is this: Canadian companies with more than 100 full-time employees in the U.S. must provide affordable care options to those employees. It is advisable to obtain a legal opinion to ensure your company is compliant. A good legal expert can be invaluable in helping you align your company with U.S. health reform – both now and in the future. ■

Sibyl Bogardus is chief compliance officer for Hub International.

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Implementing a Sustainable Leadership Plan

YORK REGION BRINGS INNOVATION TO MUNICIPAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

By David Szeptycki and Lauren Edwards

Public sector organizations are rarely viewed as drivers of innovation, however those in the business know there has never been greater pressure to do more with less – and with adversity comes innovation. When the budget axe falls, training dollars are often sacrificed, which can have long-term consequences on the resiliency of an organization and its ability to drive and sustain a culture of continuous improvement.

Recognized as one of Canada's Top 100 Employers, The Regional Municipality of York strives to be a leader in public service delivery and fosters a culture of continuous improvement. In 2013, the Environmental Services department held focus group sessions with staff to identify critical areas for leadership development to help build more cohesiveness and align day-to-day actions with strategic priorities. Feedback from these sessions identified three main areas for improvement: the need for better

communication across the department; increased opportunities for collaboration to strengthen relationships and break down natural silos; and additional opportunities for staff development.

Borrowing concepts typically used in the private sector, York Region's Environmental Services department acted on staff feedback and have started implementing a three-year Sustainable Leadership Program that builds on in-house talent, reinforces personal accountability and integrates an element of friendly competition.

Through a more progressive and strategic approach to training, the new leadership plan is midway through its first year and is unlike most training programs typically found in the public sector. The plan uses unique engagement approaches, internal and external development tools and demonstrates that when it comes to employee skills development, there is plenty of room for innovation.

training & development

DEVELOPING THE PLAN

Erin Mahoney, York Region's Commissioner of Environmental Services, wanted a leadership development program that promoted continuous growth and improvement across the management team. She also wanted a program that would facilitate better succession planning and drive more alignment through the department to achieve strategic goals.

The Sustainable Leadership Plan blends formal and informal learning programs, and includes semi-annual leaders' sessions in the form of half-day classes where the employees are introduced to topics by professional facilitators, exposed to management theory concepts, led through practical case studies and encouraged to complete follow-up work in smaller groups.

After the formal learning sessions, the participants are expected to put their learning to use by incorporating new tools and techniques into their daily work.

"The program has not only provided me with a number of management tools I can use in my day-to-day management, but has made me more aware of the difference between being a manager and a leader," said James Steele, manager of engineering for the department.

LEARNING MODEL

The plan spans three years, with each year having a specific area of focus – communication for the first year, collaboration for the second and innovation for the third. Additionally, the plan is closely aligned with larger corporate programs, such as performance objectives and strategic HR goals.

To further enhance sustainability and encourage collaboration, the department implemented a peer-mentoring model. As part of this model, leaders were divided into teams of three, or triads. Triads were created purposefully, with employees from different branches across the department and different levels in the organizational structure. By organizing triads this way, participants have an opportunity to influence, interact and learn from colleagues facing different day-to-day challenges. As well, those in senior positions bring extensive management and life experience, integrating an authentic sense of coaching to the program. Triads are shuffled every six months (timed with the delivery of the semi-annual leaders' sessions), giving participants the opportunity to work with different individuals across the department throughout the three-year program.

Triads are required to meet three days, three weeks and three months following each semi-annual leaders' session to complete small tasks called Leadership Challenges.

Leadership Challenges have been designed to help reinforce formal learning, develop new skills and create reflection time for leaders to think about how they are impacting their team.

To reinforce accountability for participating in triad discussions, a scribe is elected by each triad to post a summary of their reactions to the Leadership Challenge to an internal website. Posts are submitted to a discussion forum for the entire group of leaders to view on the website, which was developed specifically for the program.

"It's been helpful to read responses from other triads, and the fact that everyone posts responses shows they appeal to everyone," said Mark Payne, program manager for monitoring and enforcement.

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A recent Leadership Challenge asked triads to read an article on the importance of recognizing different communication styles within the workplace and then implement one of the strategies within the teams they manage the next time they faced a difficult interaction with a colleague or external stakeholder. After putting the communication strategy into practice, the triads reconvened to discuss their findings, then posted a summary of their discussion to the program's website to share with the larger group.

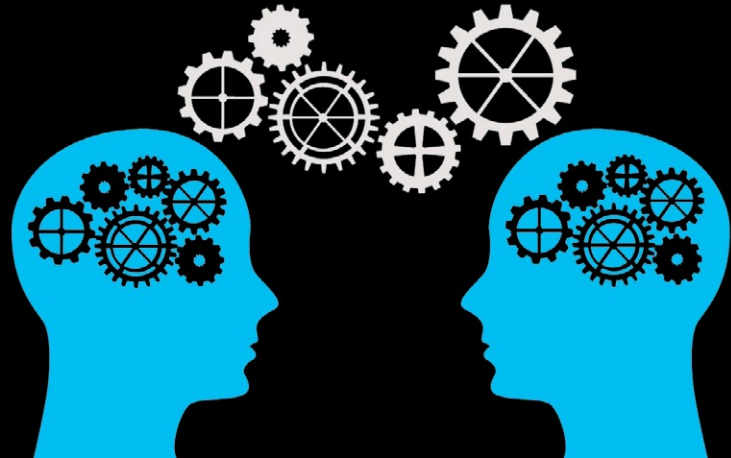
In addition to providing a safe space online for leaders to discuss their experiences, the information posted to the site becomes a barometer for evaluating the program impact on organizational culture and gauging the uptake and relevance of the Leadership Challenges.

Facilitators developed an awards and point-based system to maintain engagement and facilitate the seamless and successful integration of a gamification concept into the Sustainable Leadership Program. Predetermined scoring criteria is applied for each Leadership Challenge and scores are calculated for responses posted by the triads. Points are then tracked and the top scoring triads are listed on the program's website at the end of each six-month phase. As recognition for earning top scores, triads receive ribbons with their name and program title.

HR COMMITMENT

From the outset, the vision for the program was to reach well beyond training delivery approaches used in the past and to look across multiple industries at best practices from both

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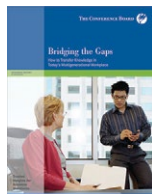
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THE PLAN IS CLOSELY ALIGNED WITH LARGER CORPORATE PROGRAMS, SUCH AS PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIC HR GOALS.

private and public sector organizations. The goal was to develop a fun and engaging approach to leadership that would achieve lasting results.

Involving York Region's HR department was an important step to ensure integration with centralized leadership development and reduce duplication of effort. An HR representative who had been working closely with the department for a number of years and who had a strong rapport with the management team joined the program as a coordinator.

Having an HR professional involved in the leadership training provided an opportunity to gain a greater, hands-on understanding of the Environmental Services department's business and training needs while directly supporting HR's desire to create more on-the-job learning and stretch opportunities.

"While the program is still in the first year of rollout, we're already seeing some impacts on the culture of our department," said Wendy Kemp, manager, Business Support and Continuous

Improvement for Environmental Services. "It's sending a strong signal that leadership does matter."

WHAT NEXT?

"To say we are pleased with how things have unfolded is an understatement," said Mahoney. "I am proud of everything the team has accomplished. The foundation is set; all we're doing is providing the tools and framework to maximize the team's strengths."

Building on strengths within the organization is a key testament to the approach taken with the Environmental Services' Sustainable Leadership Program. As the program moves toward the second year of implementation, social media and other collaboration tools may be included to further enhance leadership impact in York Region. ■

David Szeptycki is head, Strategy, Liaison and Policy Implementation and Lauren Edwards is the sustainable leadership coordinator at York Region.



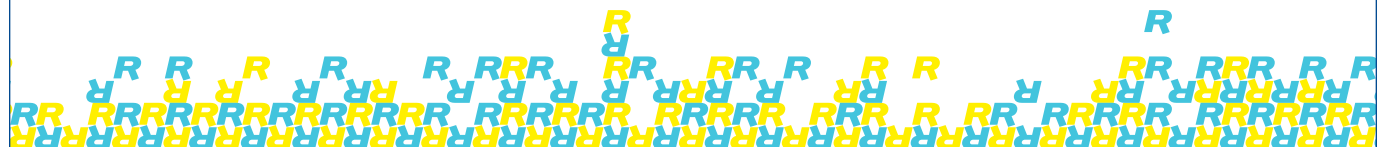
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HR CAREER PATHS: Simon Parkin

RECRUITMENT EXPERT

By Lisa Kopochinski



A career in human resources did not immediately come to mind for Simon Parkin. Even after graduating from McMaster University with a degree in economics and political science, it wasn't until a friend convinced him to enroll in the post-degree HR program at Sheridan College did he find his calling.

"I knew on the first day that human resources was a great fit for me," he said. "The profession offered a great opportunity for working with people and businesses in achieving their goals and successes."

Since that time 20 years ago, Parkin – who grew up in Thornhill, Ont. – has built a strong career as an HR, recruitment and talent leader. He started his career at Accenture, where he was initially responsible for providing employee relations support to HR business partners and leaders.

"After a few years, I had the opportunity to move into a recruitment strategy role helping to shape and execute their progressive vision of recruitment," he said.

From Accenture, he was approached by American Express to develop and lead an in-house recruitment model focused on acquiring quality talent in the Canadian market. After successfully building that model, Parkin continued to develop and lead recruitment functions for American Express markets across the globe, becoming their global talent acquisition leader.

He then decided to open his own full-service HR consulting firm and formed the Talent Company in 2011.

HR Professional caught up with Parkin to discuss why he loves this industry – and particularly recruitment – so much.

What is your role as senior recruitment transformation advisor and practice leader?

Simon Parkin: I am focused on projects ranging from developing and enhancing key components of our client's recruitment practices to a complete review, analysis and transformation of their function.

We have a number of high-growth clients who have asked us to build their HR and recruitment practices. Many mid-sized clients come to us with a challenge – not just to solve an issue – but also how to evolve as a recruitment function and become more proactive.

What do you love about your job?

SP: I love the great people I work with. I have been fortunate to build a great team of experienced professionals who share the same focus of quality and innovation with me and are also fun to work with.

We work with so many great organizations of all sizes across many different industries and regions around the globe that I

"I ALSO MAKE IT A POINT TO NOT TAKE MYSELF TOO SERIOUSLY. IT'S VERY IMPORTANT TO HAVE A SENSE OF HUMOUR AND APPRECIATE THAT WE ARE IN A HUMAN BUSINESS."



career paths

continue to learn about businesses I have never been exposed to previously. The one common theme among all of our clients is the desire to improve the way they recruit and manage talent.

What skills do you possess that make you a great fit for your position?

SP: I would say some of my core skills that have contributed to my success are problem solving, perseverance, influencing, partnering, networking, learning and understanding, as well as my upbeat style of communication. I also make it a point to not take myself too seriously. It's very important to have a sense of humour and appreciate that we are in a *human* business.

What does a typical day at work for you look like?

SP: There is rarely a typical day at work for me, which is one of the great things about my role. Every day often begins with a new challenge with a new client and an opportunity to improve the way they recruit and manage their talent. To be successful, an organization like ours cannot have an "off the shelf" or "one size fits all" approach to developing the right solution for our clients.

What are some of the challenges you experience on a day-to-day basis?

SP: It often has to do with an organization's poor level of investment in their recruitment practices. I work directly with our clients to ensure they have the right level of education, investment,

training, tools, measures and data to properly equip the business and the recruitment team to be successful. My philosophy is centered around the premise that every open position is an opportunity to upgrade your talent and positively impact your organization's bottom line.

What are your ultimate career goals?

SP: My goals are all related to progressing and elevating the recruitment and talent acquisition function in Canada. I see very few organizations in Canada making the appropriate level of investment into their recruitment and talent acquisition functions, and I will continue to be an advocate for new, progressive and innovative approaches to hiring the best talent for an organization.

What advice do you have for others interested in pursuing a career in recruitment?

SP: Join a great organization where HR is viewed as a true business partner. Work hard and build relationships across the organization and opportunities will continue to come your way. Always look for an opportunity to add value in your role.

A great HR leader once gave me what I consider the best advice I ever received. He said, "Never be afraid of stepping outside your comfort zone. That is the only way you will ever truly develop."

I have been looking for ways to step out of my comfort zone ever since and have learned a lot about myself along the way. ■

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Module 4 - March 31: Terminating the Employment Relationship: Minimizing Your Legal Exposure

Module 5 - April 8: The Workplace in the Social Media Age: Confronting the Challenges / Afternoon Group Exercise: Pulling it All Together

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SYSTEMS THINKER





MEET THE HR INFLUENCERS: Sandra Smith, MA, CHE, CHRE

By Lisa Gordon

Sandra Smith likes to step back and look at the big picture.

As vice president, Our People and chief human resources officer (CHRO) at Southlake Regional Health Centre in Newmarket, Ont., Smith never loses sight of how human resources decisions impact the entire organization. It's a useful thing to remember in her role, where she oversees people policies that affect the hospital's 3,000 staff members, 600 physicians and 1,000 volunteers.

Smith sat down with *HR Professional* to discuss lessons learned during her 15-year career in human resources, and shared her thoughts on the continuing evolution of the profession.

HRP: How and when did you decide upon an HR career?

Sandra Smith: I've had a few careers, but when I started nursing I became involved with the union leadership. I was interacting with human resources on a regular basis, and learned a lot about the role of HR.

In fact, it was the director of that HR team who talked to me about careers in human resources. So, my career evolved from my work in a union leadership role.

HRP: What was your first HR job?

SS: I was an HR generalist at Trillium Health Centre, providing the full suite of HR services plus a sub-specialty in compensation and benefits. I had worked on the floor as a Registered Practical Nurse (RPN) for about six years, and then moved into HR for nine years. Having worked on the units delivering care to many patients, I truly understood the business of the hospital. I think that differentiated me as an HR leader in that industry.

HRP: Describe your job today.

SS: At Southlake Regional Health Centre, I am responsible for all people practices across the organization, including overseeing HR, occupational health, safety, wellness, diversity, community relations, privacy and organizational development. I am also the executive liaison for our 200-bed long-term care facility, Southlake Village.



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HRP: What do you love about your job?

SS: I love the ability to impact peoples' environments. It's really about the connection with people, and creating policies and practices that make this a better place to work, to practice, to volunteer. That's really my passion.

HRP: What are the challenges of your job?

SS: One of the biggest challenges in health care is the lack of funding. You have to be really creative as an HR leader to design and implement programs and approaches that are fiscally responsible. We don't have access to large budgets. We have to work together and collaborate with our partners in health care to ensure better outcomes. Separately, I think a general challenge for all of us is to continue to build HR as a strategic business partner. How do we contribute to our organization's success while demonstrating HR's value proposition?

HRP: What's the key to leading HR during a difficult time for a client organization?

SS: Remember to look at things with different lenses. One is at the individual level, such as the people who work there, and also the team level and the organizational level. In challenging times, we need to step back and think from a systems perspective, but also be able to bring it right down to the individual level. As well, it's important to ensure the majority of your work is transformational. Use the same principles and apply them consistently for better effectiveness across the organization. In my past, I've been very transparent about sharing the principles we use, and that helps people understand how we influence and impact change.

HRP: What skills are important for success in HR?

SS: The three specific leadership competencies I would highlight are developing coaching skills, understanding systems thinking and business acumen – all are critical for any HR professional in today's world.

Continued on page 68



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IN A NUTSHELL

First job: I was a librarian's assistant at the New Toronto Library when I was 12.

Childhood ambition: I wanted to be an accountant because I loved numbers. Originally, I started to follow that path and then early on, I realized I wanted to move into nursing.

Best boss and why: I've been very fortunate in my career. I've had a number of great bosses, and the thing they all had in common was that they were excellent coaches and helped me develop professionally. I continue to stay in touch with all of them.

Current source of inspiration: I think my current source of inspiration is really about making a difference. Where I am in my career, I have a great opportunity to develop and impact other people. It's inspirational for me to see other people succeed and grow.

Best piece of advice I ever got: One of my previous bosses, Caroline Brereton, advised me to always think from a systems perspective. Apply a systems lens – step back and look at it, and understand the impact of your decisions at a systems level.

Favourite music: I was at a Jim Cuddy concert recently. My favourite band is Blue Rodeo.

Last book you read: *Finding Our Way: Leadership for an Uncertain Time* by Margaret Wheatley. I am reading it again for the second time – I always have a leadership book going, to be honest.

How do you spend your time away from work? I spend it with my family – my husband and two sons. We try to get out and golf, see Blue Jays games and spend time together.

HRP: What tips do you have for new grads or those in entry-level HR jobs who want to move up the ladder?

SS: There are two key learnings I would like to pass on. First, ensure you have a mentor who can help you develop as an individual professional. Second, work to develop a network of peers and keep up to date with your profession – tap into your network, learn from it and share. Both of those things have really supported my success throughout my career.

HRP: What's the future of HR?

SS: The HR profession continues to evolve. I'm not sure we've been able to fully demonstrate that concept of HR as a strategic business partner across all industries yet. I think we'll see that developing as we continue working side by side with leaders to contribute to an organization's success. HR is truly making strides when it comes to impacting business. It continues to transform as a profession. As a senior HR executive in Ontario, I have seen a difference in the last 10 to 15 years in terms of the ability of HR to influence organizations. ■

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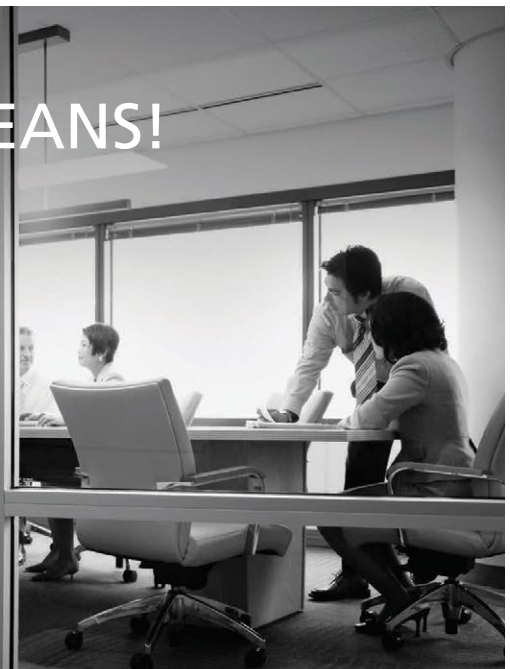
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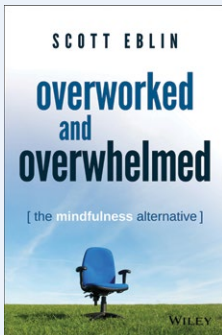


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Cooperating in building the future

OFF THE SHELF

By Alyson Nyiri, CHRP



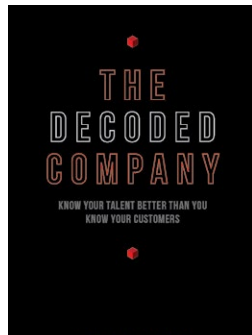
OVERWORKED AND OVERWHELMED: THE MINDFULNESS ALTERNATIVE

Scott Eblin
Wiley, 2014

How you are at your best is the foundation for the mindfulness alternative. Knowing how you are at your best is the benchmark and reference point for creating the outcomes in the three largest areas of your life: home, work and community. Drawing on psychologist Csikszentmihalyi's psychology of flow, Eblin outlines what he calls Life GPS, a personal planning model designed to identify and operate from your best.

Talking point

While mindfulness means being in the present, it also means being able to look ahead, make plans and pursue goals.



THE DECODED COMPANY: KNOW YOUR TALENT BETTER THAN YOU KNOW YOUR CUSTOMERS

Leerom Segal, Aaron Goldstein, Jay Goldman and Rahaf Harfoush
Penguin, 2014

Amazon has developed clever tools to learn everything about their customers. What if we took these tools and obsession with customers and applied it to our talent? Using a custom, dedicated software system called Genome, the authors have built their company Klick Health using employee data to create a data-driven, talent-centric company culture. The data collected allows organizations to personalize training and deliver it when it's needed, offer real-time information and tools and foster engineered ecosystems based on transparency, connectedness and community.

Talking point

Privacy and surveillance issues are key considerations. If those concerns were addressed, would you use Big Data to increase employee performance?



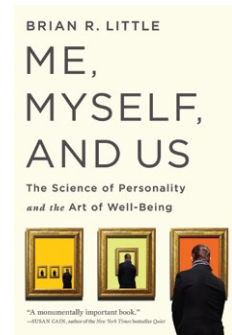
MIGHTY MIDSIZED COMPANIES: HOW LEADERS OVERCOME 7 SILENT GROWTH KILLERS

Robert Sher
Bibliomotion, 2014

Midsized companies with revenues between \$10 million and \$1 billion face unique challenges that smaller and bigger firms do not. Very little is written about midsized companies and not many consultants specialize in them. Sher identifies seven silent growth killers and strategies for overcoming each: letting time slip away; strategy tinkering at the top; reckless attempts at growth; fumbling strategic acquisitions; operational meltdowns; liquidity crashes; and tolerating dysfunctional leaders.

Talking point

Terminology such as driving for results or incentivizing behaviour are quickly becoming outdated because they miss the mark; they fail to capture the people's energy, creativity and wellbeing, which we now know is critical for people to flourish.



MY, MYSELF AND US: THE SCIENCE OF PERSONALITY AND THE ART OF WELL-BEING

Brian Little
Harper Collins, 2014

Personality psychology has evolved since it emerged in the 1930s. Little takes us on an engaging journey into new and optimistic ways of viewing our capacity for meaningful lives and outlines the art of wellbeing – the creation of a distinctive, singular way of reflecting on our lives. Our personal constructs and our personal projects become self-defining commitments of our lives and provide a deep sense of meaning for us.

Talking point

Our personal projects offer unique opportunities to engage with life in a way that allows us to move beyond our fixed traits and constraining environments and, indeed, provide possibilities for a better and happier life. ■



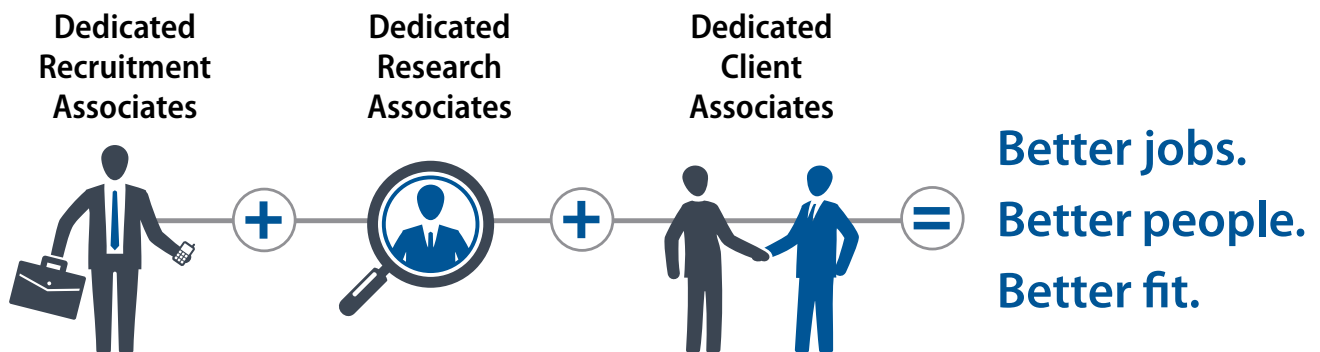
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Attribute-Based Hiring

HOW TO HIRE AND RETAIN TOP TALENT

By Sherri Wright-Schwietz

Do you remember your worst hire – that one individual you questioned hiring because they didn't quite fit in with the rest of your employees? Even after hours of training and job shadowing, you still had to let that person go. It's the goal of every HR professional to hire, train and retain the strongest employees that "fit." However, this is much easier said than done. The question on everyone's mind: how do you weed through the field of applicants to find the people who will thrive in your organization?

In an extremely competitive market, implementing creative and innovative hiring processes can help you find the best person for your organization. By focusing more on behavioural attributes, rather than traditional work experience and skill sets, you can drastically increase employee satisfaction and retention.

IDENTIFY CULTURE AND DNA

Every company has a unique organizational culture. And within the company, there is a set of DNA for each critical role. The key is to identify which roles inside your company are most critical and determine the DNA for those specific roles. Start by interviewing your team's top performers and ask them why they believe they are successful. Also look to those individuals' colleagues and managers and ask them the same questions. Practice the same exercise with your bottom performers and see what sorts of feedback you receive. You'll start to notice consistent language and traits emerge from these conversations, from both the top and bottom performers. These identifiers are the foundation for the role's DNA.

IDENTIFY THE ATTRIBUTES

Based on the research garnered from the interviews with top performers, you will start to notice recurring traits and competencies. These are the attributes and traits that you can't train for, but rather those that make up an individual's personality DNA. These are the attributes that you will want to find in potential new hire candidates. Every company will have a different set of attributes and competencies that they find valuable. While some may focus on independence, change resiliency and creativity, others may need employees who are collaborative and risk-tolerant. By clearly identifying specific DNA, you will be able to find people who will be successful inside your company culture and who fit well with the values of your organization.

FIND THE BEST PEOPLE

Once you've identified the attributes you are looking for, a hiring process will need to be developed to help find these individuals. Use a combination of behavioural and non-behavioural questions to help identify the attributes you are looking for. Scoring guides are helpful tools to assist hiring managers and recruiters to know what to look for during the interview process. Demonstrable attributes are the hardest thing to examine, but it's up to the hiring manager to watch for these behaviours during the interview process.

HELP YOUR TEAM BECOME MASTERS

Once you have found the best people for your company, it's time to focus on retention. Start by creating a culture where there is aspiration for excellence and a passion to truly master the skills of the job. Help your employees find value in the work they do and clearly outline your performance metrics. When a culture provides employees the opportunity for continued growth and development through coaching, practice and feedback, these individuals will thrive as they are aligned with the company's purpose.

REDEFINE YOUR STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE

Just as it's important to have the best employees, so is ensuring your clients or customers know that as well. Try asking your clients and customers why they love working with your company and what they value most. To make sure your customers are fully satisfied, base your standard of excellence on what they think is important, not just what management thinks is. ■

Sherri Wright-Schwietz is head of talent and mastery for ATB Investor Services.

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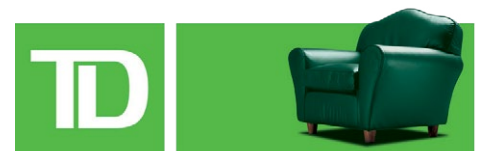
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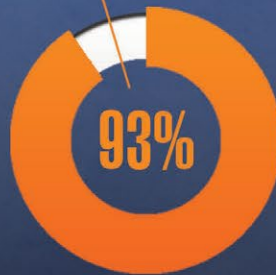
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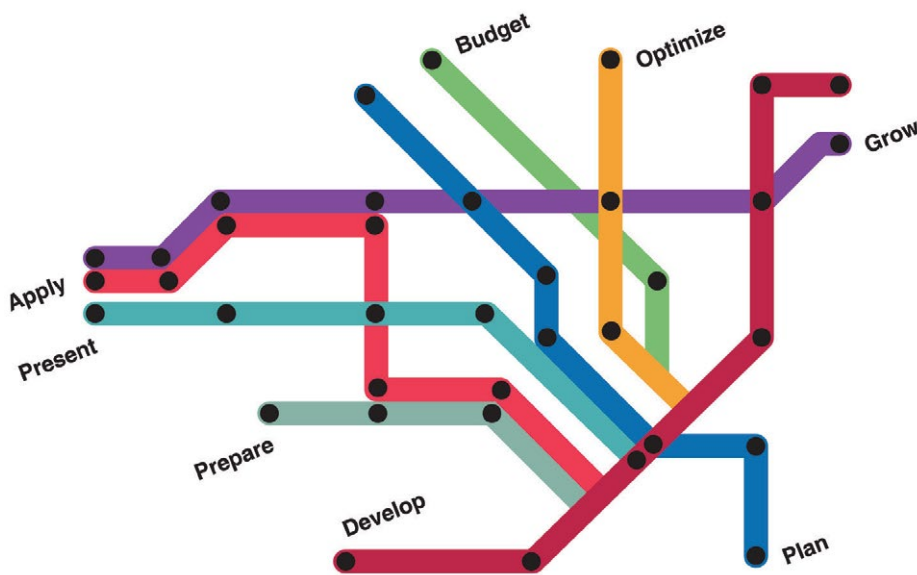
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AODA Fast Facts: Building Your Multi-Year Plan

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) seeks to create an accessible Ontario by 2025. Accessibility Standards have been developed in five key areas of daily living: customer service, information and communications, employment, transportation and built environment.

All Ontario organizations with one or more employees have compliance requirements under the Customer Service Standard.

Sections 3 and 4 of the Integrated Accessibility Standards regulation (IASR) of the AODA require that all public sector organizations and private and not-for-profit organizations with over 50 employees develop accessibility plans and policies. By law, those plans and policies should be developed, available to the public and posted on organizations' websites.

Organizations are also required to have publicly posted statements of commitment.

Your multi-year accessibility plan:

- Demonstrates your organization's commitment to accessibility and to the AODA
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- Explains how and under what circumstances you will remove current barriers and prevent future barriers from arising in the future

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- Accessible Design in print materials

AODA EMPLOYMENT STANDARD

March 27, 2015 from noon – 1pm

The AODA Employment Standard is closely aligned with the Ontario Human Rights Code and its accommodation requirements. The regulation provides organizations with flexibility on how to implement the requirements. Hear from the Conference Board of Canada on how to use their Employer Toolkit and create policies suitable to your organizations policies and processes.

CONSULTING PEOPLE WITH DIFFERENT TYPES OF DISABILITIES

April 24, 2015 from noon – 1 pm

In order to meet AODA regulatory requirements, public sector organizations are required to consult with people with disabilities when developing their multi-year accessibility plans. While not required of the private and not-for-profit sectors, consulting with employees or customers with disabilities is a best practice.

The Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA) has a long history of consulting with people with disabilities and has produced a guide to assist organization to have productive and effective consultations.

To register for these webinars and learn more about AODA compliance, please visit: hrpa.ca/AODA



HUMAN RESOURCES PROFESSIONALS ASSOCIATION

2015 BOARD ELECTION



Exercise your right to vote for the 2015 candidates for the HRPA Board of Directors. Voting Members can vote online between January 19, 2015 and February 27, 2015 at 5:00 p.m.

This year, there is one position open; the position has a three-year term that runs from 2015-2018.

Nominated candidates are listed in random order:

- 1. Roxanne Chartrand**
- 2. Janet Brooks**
- 3. Bonnie Seidman**
- 4. Robert (Bob) Canuel**
- 5. Vito Montesano**

HRPA has procured a secure third party Internet-based voting service for the election of members to the HRPA Board of Directors.

In order to establish strict confidentiality with the online voting system, voting members will receive a confidential "VOTING CODE" which is required to access the online voting system.

The deadline for Ballot is February 27, 2015 at 5:00pm.

HRPA.CA/2015BOARDELECTIONS

HRPA 2015

ANNUAL CONFERENCE & TRADE SHOW

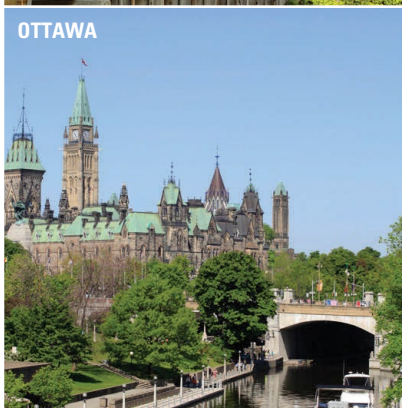
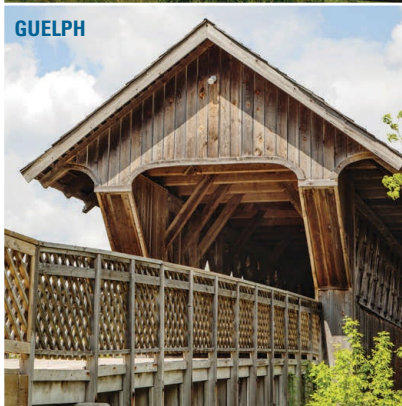
Voting is also available onsite at the 2015 HRPA Annual Conference and Trade Show.

HRPA 2015

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TOUR

HRPA IS TOURING SEVERAL POPULAR PROGRAMS:

- **ACCESSIBILITY CERTIFICATE**
Certify your knowledge around Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) requirements.
- **WORKPLACE INVESTIGATIONS CERTIFICATE**
Learn the law, psychology and best practices around conducting fair and comprehensive workplace investigations.
- **LABOUR RELATIONS CERTIFICATE**
Learn strategies to engage, motivate and develop positive labour and workplace relationships in a unionized environment.
- **SUCCESSION PLANNING (1 DAY)**
Prepare your organization for the future with this comprehensive workshop on systematic succession planning.



Register for one or more of these select programs* at a location near you:

WINDSOR • LONDON • GUELPH • TORONTO
OTTAWA • SAULT STE. MARIE • THUNDER BAY

Learn more about future programs and register at HRPA.ca/PDtour

* programs offered depend on location



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**Hire a Canadian Registered
Safety Professional (CRSP)[®]**



Integrity • Knowledge • Leadership





Invest in your Organization... Hire a CRSP

Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Expertise

Increasing health and safety hazards in the workplace, mounting employer obligations and the financial impact associated with occupational incidents means that your organization cannot afford anything less than a Canadian Registered Safety Professional (CRSP)[®].

A CRSP Adds Value to Your Organization

A CRSP offers in-depth knowledge of OHS principles and practices and applies this knowledge to develop systems in order to achieve optimum control over hazards in your workplace. A CRSP will represent OHS matters at all levels and will interact with other business leaders in the interest of your organization's performance.

An OHS Professional with a CRSP Designation can Provide the Following Returns on Your Investment:

- Offering management proactive health and safety solutions
- Driving injury reduction and loss prevention through OHS management
- Engaging stakeholders across all levels of your organization in building a positive OHS culture
- Leading your organization's processes for monitoring, measuring and evaluating OHS performance
- Exemplifying professional credibility because of the high standard required to obtain and maintain certification

To find out more visit www.bc



Canadian Registered Safety Professional (CRSP)®

Why Hire a CRSP?

The CRSP designation is the mark of an OHS professional and a nationally recognized level of achievement within the OHS field.

As an employer of safety professionals, you can be confident that a CRSP has demonstrated their integrity, knowledge and commitment to safety principles and leadership. CRSPs are also committed to the principles of risk management.

CRSPs Demonstrate Leadership Through:

Proven Expertise. OHS professionals who pursue the CRSP designation must meet the qualification requirements including having completed formal education, demonstrated professional practice experience and demonstrated competency through the successful completion of an examination covering a broad scope of OHS subject matter.

A Commitment to Continual Learning. In order to maintain the CRSP designation, CRSPs are challenged to continually update their knowledge and skills through a robust recertification program. This ensures you always have qualified, up-to-date professionals managing your health and safety interests.

Compliance with a Code of Conduct. CRSPs commit themselves to a high standard of ethical behavior in agreeing to and signing the CRSP Rules of Professional Conduct (Code of Ethics). The Code covers a range of important professional issues including confidentiality, conflict of interest, professional growth and more.

The Board of Canadian Registered Safety Professionals (BCRSP)

sets the standard for the certification of occupational health and safety professionals in Canada to create the healthiest and safest workplaces in the world. Professionalism, high standards, continuous learning, and an established Code of Ethics drive the BCRSP.

BCRSP is the only ISO 17024 accredited organization for occupational health and safety in Canada. The CRSP designation is a widely accepted form of recognition by industry and government. The BCRSP has also received the ISO 9001 certificate of registration for their Quality Management System.

A Strategic Choice

"...our business demands high standards in everything we do with safety being integral in the delivery of our services and results. Our prevention programs require strong safety professionals supporting our business leaders to set and maintain high safety expectations across the organization. The CRSP designation is our credential of choice when placing candidates in key environmental, health and safety roles. It's good for business!..."

A. Harrington, P.Eng., MBA
Vice President, Enbridge Inc.

"The CRSP designation establishes credibility in the development and presentation of a corporation's health and safety programs. Individuals holding the designation have the skills to take such programs to the "best in class" level, where the results generally speak for themselves, which in turn, creates buy-in. There is no doubt in my mind of the value a CRSP brings to our organization.

At Thunder Bay Hydro our current and previous lead health and safety professionals have held the CRSP designation and over the past 15 years the health and safety programs developed at the utility have resulted in our best ever results. Not just lost time, but overall improvements in all measures, significantly reducing costs in terms of real and untold dollars. Just as important, if not more so, the success has created a culture of awareness and doing things right and staying healthy. I'm confident in stating that our success would not be as great without the expertise a CRSP brings to the table."

A. Covello, CHRP, SHRP
Vice President, Human Resources & Safety, Thunder Bay Hydro

Looking for qualified occupational health and safety professionals for your organization?

Advertise your career positions for OHS professionals on the BCRSP website.

Visit www.bcrsp.ca for more information.



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