THE MAGAZINE OF HUMAN RESOURCES THOUGHT LEADERSHIP | NOV/DEC 2011

HR PROFESSIONAL

DOWN TO THE CRUNCH

HR Metrics Service aims to become the standard

HR CHECK-UP:

METRICS FOR THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

ALSO: BILL 160 REVAMPS ONTARIO'S HEALTH AND SAFETY SYSTEM | HR AND INNOVATION | WORKPLACE BULLYING | ADOPTING TECHNOLOGY

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OCTOBER 2011

ADRIAN MIEDEMA

Adrian Miedema LL.B., B. Math, is a partner in the Toronto Employment Group of Fraser Milner Casgrain LLP. He advises and represents employers in employment, health and safety and human rights matters. He appears before employment tribunals and all levels of the Ontario courts on behalf of employers. Read his take on Bill 160 on page 29.

DR. DAVID S. COHEN

Dr. Cohen is president of the Toronto-based Strategic Action Group, www.sagltd.com, and is the author of *Inside the Box: Leading with Corporate Values to Drive Sustained Business Success*. Dr. Cohen is a thought leader in the design of integrated HR processes consistent with the vision, values, behaviours and business plan of each organization. He asks where have all the good leaders gone, on page 38.

VALERIE CADE

Valerie Cade, CSP, is a workplace bullying expert, speaker and author of *Bully Free at Work: What You Can Do To Stop Workplace Bullying Now!*, which has been distributed in over 100 countries worldwide. For more information, visit bullyfreeatwork.com. She discusses how bullies often target high achievers, on page 46.

PETER DE JAGER

Peter de Jager is keynote speaker, writer, consultant on issues relating to the rational assimilation of the future. He has published hundreds of articles on topics ranging from problem solving, creativity and change to the impact of technology on areas such as privacy, security and business. He helps you assess your organization's technology needs, on page 41.

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EDITOR'S LETTER

MEASURING SUCCESS

How do you measure results, or better yet, success? On a personal level, it may be as simple as making a particular level of income, achieving a desired job position or living in a safe community with lots of opportunities for those two active kids.

On a business level, however, we may *feel* that our departments are functioning effectively, and that the talent we hire, train and motivate is the best available. But, as writer Michelle Morra discovered, trusting our instincts is old school. Morra reports that the HR Metrics Service, founded by HR associations across Canada, is well on its way in the collection, compilation of and reporting on meaningful HR metrics. Meanwhile, Joel Kranc shares his interview with Marilyn Reddeck, vice-president of human resources and organizational development for Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre in Toronto, discovering that health care organizations in Ontario have also made great strides in benchmarking metrics.

And, while measurements are crucial, they won't take an organization far unless its leaders have the will to be innovative, the courage to follow company values and the vision to promote a culture that rewards those who reach for the heights. Read these insights from guest columnists Claude Legrande, David Cohen and Valerie Cade.

As always, I welcome your comments and suggestions.

Cheers,

Laurie

Correction: In the March/April 2011 issue, Sandra Clark wrote an article entitled, "The Importance of Internal Communication to the Practice of Management." Unfortunately, we omitted the reference to the original work. Here it is in full: Carrière, Jules and Bourque, Christopher. (2009) The effects of organizational communication on job satisfaction and organizational commitment in a land ambulance service and the mediating role of communication satisfaction. Career Development International. 14(1): 29 – 49. Dr. Jules Carrière is Associate Professor at the Telfer School of Management, University of Ottawa, 55 Laurier Ave E, Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5. If you wish further information on his research, you can reach him at jcarriere@telfer.uOttawa.ca.

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BY DAPHNE FITZGERALD, CHRP, SHRP

THE IMMIGRATION NUMBERS GAME

NUMBERS OF IMMIGRANTS ADMITTED INTO CANADA IS FALLING AT A TIME WHEN THE COUNTRY NEEDS TALENT—AND TAXPAYERS—FROM ABROAD

In July, the *Toronto Star* reported that Canada accepted 25 per cent fewer immigrants into the country in the first quarter of this year compared to the same period in 2010, with the number of permanent resident visas issued by Citizenship and Immigration Canada between January and March falling from 84,083 in 2010 to 63,224 this year.

With the report of this drop coming close to the time when the government was holding public consultations on immigration, it has sparked fears that the government may be eyeing restrictions on Canada's immigration levels.

Looking at Canada's future labour-force needs from an HR planning perspective, we need more skilled immigrants, not fewer, over the coming decades. In Ontario, much like the rest of the country, as baby boomers reach retirement age, the number of people turning 65 is projected to surpass the number entering the working-age group from 2017 until the early 2030s, according to the Ontario Ministry of Finance's 2010 *Long-term Report on The Economy.* As a result, immigration will be key to continuing growth in the working-age population and enriching the breadth of skills in Ontario's workforce.

Not only will we need a continuing, steady influx of the best and brightest from other parts of the world to support Canada's economic growth (Conference Board of Canada CEO Anne Golden reckons we'll need to boost immigration levels to 350,000 to support growth), we'll also need immigrants as taxpayers to help pay health care and pensions costs for an increasingly aged population (not to mention all the other public costs of maintaining our standard of living).

And we're not the only ones. Canada is competing with other advanced (and fast aging) economies across Europe and Japan for the same pool of skilled immigrants to help grow our economies, pay our taxes and look after us in our dotage.

Then, there are the costs to Canadian business. If we are to wean ourselves away from a manufacturing economy to a knowledge economy, and produce innovations in our resource sectors, we need skilled and highly educated immigrants.

Many Canadian organizations now rely on skilled immigrants as a source for talent, but I recall a specific example from my colleague Ruth Brothers, former vice-president of human resources at pharmaceutical firm Teva Canada and a one-time HRPA board member.

Speaking at a Canadian Council of Human Resources Associations (CCHRA) event a few years ago, she spoke about Teva's successes in recruiting specialized talent from abroad for R & D roles—especially from India. And closer to home, much of Teva's drug-making talent came from highly educated immigrants with pharmaceutical and medical backgrounds from their home countries.

All of this internationally educated expertise has been crucial to Teva's success in Canada.

Ultimately, keeping the flow of skilled talent coming to our shores is not only crucial from an HR planning and recruiting perspective and for keeping our tax coffers full, it will also attract international investment.

As globalization fuels more and more international trade, the ability to reach out to different markets, through international contacts, language skills and knowledge of cultures, will be a big asset to companies wanting a piece of the global market.

Canada's diverse and highly skilled workforce, representing almost every nation, ethnic and cultural group on the planet, is a key competitive advantage. And it's up to us, as HR professionals, to nurture and grow this advantage through training, mentoring new Canadian workers and helping internationally educated professionals to get the resources they need to start practising their chosen profession in Canada. HR

Daphne FitzGerald is the chair of the Human Resources Professionals Association (HRPA).

FIVE TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL REMOTE WORK SET-UPS

1. COMMUNICATION: KEEP REMOTE WORKERS IN THE LOOP ON THE LATEST NEWS ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT AND THE COMPANY. DON'T RELY SOLELY ON EMAIL; SCHEDULE REGULAR CALL AND IN-PERSON MEETINGS.

2. RESOURCES: ENSURE OFFSITE EMPLOYEES HAVE THE NECESSARY RESOURCES, INCLUDING NETWORK ACCESS.

3. PLANNING: ESTABLISH EXPECTATIONS AND GUIDELINES AT THE OUTSET SO YOU CAN MONITOR THE ARRANGEMENT AND ADJUST AS NECESSARY.

4. SECURITY: WORK WITH YOUR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PERSONNEL TO SET UP THE REQUISITE SECURITY PROTOCOLS.

5. TO ENSURE REMOTE WORKERS CONTINUE TO FEEL CONNECTED TO THE GROUP, INCLUDE THEM IN TEAM ACTIVITIES AND RECOGNIZE THEIR ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN FRONT OF THEIR COLLEAGUES.

Source: Accountemps/Newswire

BILL 168 OH&S VIOLENCE PROVISIONS PASS FIRST LEGAL TEST

"A labour arbitrator's recent decision—to uphold the City of Kingston's right to terminate a 28-year (long-term) employee for issuing a verbal threat against a co-worker—was based in large part on the arbitrator's view that 'the classification of threatening language as workplace violence' under Bill 168 represents a 'clear and significant change' to the law in Ontario," according to a recent *Strategic Insights* bulletin from David Hyde & Associates.

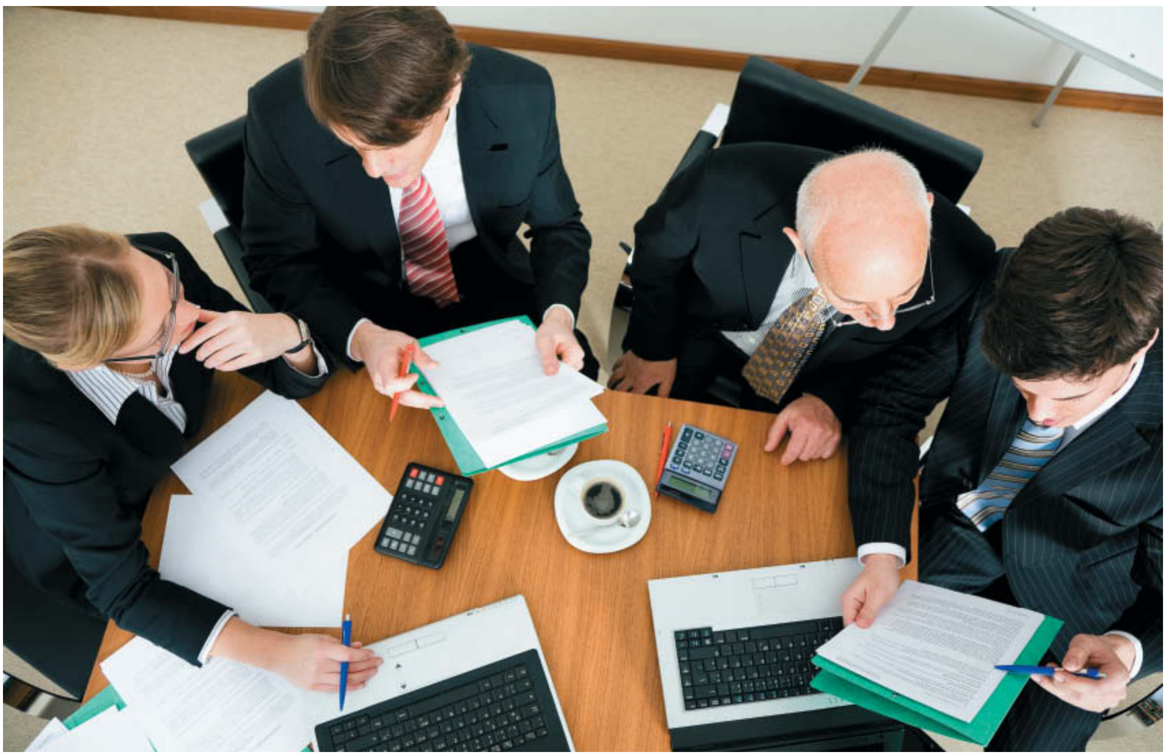
A public sector employee initiated a grievance when her employer terminated her employment after an investigation confirmed she had made a death threat against a co-worker and union representative. On her behalf, the union argued that the provisions in Bill 168 were new and that the employer should have adopted a proportional response to employee misconduct.

In her 68-page decision, the arbitrator issued lengthy reasons for dismissing the grievance, including: uttering a threat of violence can constitute an act of violence; this is true even if the person making the threat does not intend to carry out the threat; any worker who overhears the threat must report it; employers cannot ignore or dismiss these types of incidents; such incidents must be fully investigated; what must be considered when determining how to discipline a worker in these situations; and termination may be the correct course of action in some cases.

For complete details, read the full decision at http://canlii.ca/s/6l4br (Canadian Legal Information Institute) and the bulletin from David Hyde & Associates at www.davidhyde.ca/admin/pdf/215.pdf.

GENDER EQUALITY | YOUNG WORKERS

Women Still Missing From Senior Management Positions In Canada



The presence of Canadian women in senior management positions has stalled in the past two decades. Between 1987 and 2009, the proportion of women in senior management has changed little—men are still more than twice as likely to hold a senior executive position.

Since 1987, men have consistently been two to three times more likely than women to hold senior management positions.

A recent Conference Board of Canada report outlines nine good practices that successful companies are already using to increase the proportion of female senior managers:

1. Use accountable search techniques—ensure female candidates are on all short lists.
2. Identify talent and provide succession planning initiatives.
3. Set up mentoring and coaching programs.
4. Offer job rotation opportunities.
5. Ensure ongoing measurement.
6. Create an inclusive work environment.
7. Avoid putting women in precarious positions without giving them the support and preparation needed to succeed—a woman's failure in an executive role may be attributed to her gender rather than to the circumstances of the position.
8. Highlight role models and communicate success.
9. Ensure senior management support.

The report is available at www.e-library.ca.

Source: Conference Board of Canada

2011'S TOP EMPLOYERS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE ANNOUNCED

NOW IN ITS 10TH YEAR, THE CANADA'S TOP EMPLOYERS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE COMPETITION IS AN EDITORIAL PROJECT ORGANIZED BY THE CANADA'S TOP 100 EMPLOYERS PROJECT IN PARTNERSHIP WITH KPMG LLP. THIS SPECIAL DESIGNATION RECOGNIZES EMPLOYERS THAT HAVE EXEMPLARY PROGRAMS TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN YOUNGER WORKERS.

THIS YEAR, COMPETITION ORGANIZERS HAVE ALSO PLANNED TWO INNOVATIVE EVENTS TO HELP YOUNG PEOPLE CONNECT WITH THE WINNING EMPLOYERS FACE-TO-FACE. THE FIRST IS A CONTEST THAT BEGAN IN MID-SEPTEMBER, WHERE YOUNG PEOPLE CAN "WIN AN INTERVIEW" WITH MANY OF THE WINNERS FROM THIS YEAR'S COMPETITION. THE OTHER EVENT IS A HUGE NEW RECRUITMENT FAIR CALLED THE "NEW GRADS CAREER EXPO," WHICH COMPETITION ORGANIZERS HAVE BOOKED AT THE METRO TORONTO CONVENTION CENTRE FOR JANUARY 25, 2012.

FOR THE FULL LIST OF THIS YEAR'S WINNERS AND DETAILED REASONS FOR SELECTION EXPLAINING WHY EACH EMPLOYER WAS CHOSEN, VISIT WWW.CANADASTOP100.COM/YOUNG_PEOPLE.

CYBERLOAFING GOOD FOR BUSINESS

BROWSING THE WEB AT WORK, OR "CYBERLOAFING," CAN ACTUALLY HELP EMPLOYEES TO BE MORE PRODUCTIVE, ACCORDING TO A RECENT STUDY CONDUCTED BY THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE. IN FACT, SURFING THE INTERNET MAY BE BETTER THAN TEXTING FRIENDS OR SENDING PERSONAL EMAILS WHEN IT COMES TO ENHANCING PRODUCTIVITY, ACCORDING TO THE STUDY "IMPACT OF CYBERLOAFING ON PSYCHOLOGICAL ENGAGEMENT," BY DON J.Q. CHEN AND VIVIEN K.G. LIM.

"PEOPLE USUALLY CHOOSE TO VISIT ONLY THE SITES THAT THEY LIKE-- IT'S LIKE GOING FOR A COFFEE BREAK. BREAKS OF [THIS] NATURE ARE PLEASURABLE, REJUVENATING THE WEB SURFER," EXPLAINS DR. LIM. REPLYING TO E-MAILS ON THE OTHER HAND, IS MORE MENTALLY TAXING. "FIRSTLY, THE COMPELLING NEED TO REPLY TO A RECEIVED E-MAIL IMPEDES EMPLOYEES' PSYCHOLOGICAL ENGAGEMENT BY AFFECTING THEIR ABILITY TO CONCENTRATE," THE AUTHORS SAY.

THE RESEARCH ALSO FOUND THAT EXCESSIVE MONITORING OF THEIR WEB BROWSING MAKES EMPLOYEES DO IT MORE. THE RESEARCHED CONCLUDED BY ENCOURAGING EMPLOYERS TO ALLOW A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF TIME FOR STAFF TO BROWSE THE WEB AS IT ACTUALLY ENHANCES PRODUCTIVITY AND HELPS THEM CONCENTRATE BETTER AT WORK.

Source: International Business Times

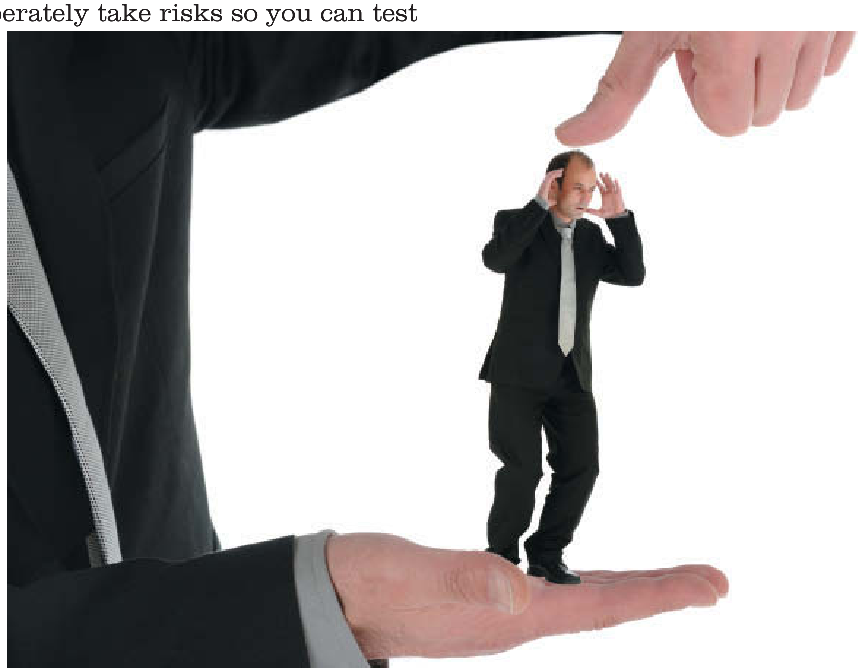
LEADERSHIP UNDER PRESSURE

In September, HRPA hosted the Better Under Pressure Leadership Symposium with former Stelco CEO and current Knightsbridge chair Courtney Pratt, HR leaders Gail St. Germain, Kim Forgues and Warren Bell and Justin Menkes, author of *Better Under Pressure: How Great Leaders Bring Out the Best in Themselves and Others*.

During the half-day executive event, Pratt talked about his own experience leading under pressure, using personal examples including leading Toronto Hydro during the great blackout of 2003 and his two-year odyssey leading the restructuring of Stelco Inc. Pratt ended his talk with the following lessons he learned from his experiences.

1. Have a higher purpose that everyone can believe in.
2. Crisis requires leadership, but it's a team game and the team needs to be ready and prepared to respond.
3. Be prepared for pressure. You have to deliberately take risks so you can test yourself. The best leaders test themselves all the time.
4. The CEO and the senior management team have to be role models. You have to be up and on all the time.
5. Honesty, trust and integrity is crucial to getting the trust you need from your people.
6. Develop a thick skin, but also listen to everyone. Put yourself in the shoes of various stakeholders so you understand where they're coming from.
7. Exercise. Pressure requires physical fitness.
8. Compartmentalize. Develop the ability to put things away in your mind when you need to focus on other things.
9. Family. A supportive family is key to leading under pressure.

For upcoming HRPA Executive Programs featuring more great speakers, please check out www.hrpa.ca/exec.



“5,000,000”

The number of Baby Boomers currently working across Canada who will begin to retire in 2011

You can’t ignore the numbers. With the first wave of Baby Boomers beginning to retire this year and millions more set to retire in the next few years there will soon be an unprecedented flood of Canadians leaving the workforce. Contact us today to learn how we can help your retirees gain the crucial health and dental coverage they need, so they can enjoy the same type of security they enjoyed while working – all at no cost to you and with no administration. After all they’ve done for your organization, you’ll feel better knowing that you’ve done the right thing for them. And, your bottom line.

As Canada’s leading agency for individual health and dental plans and the exclusive partner for Green Shield Canada’s Prism® programs, we offer a variety of insurance solutions for employees who will lose their group benefits or staff who are not eligible for group coverage because of their employment status, including:

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SOCIAL MEDIA
PREVENTATIVE STRATEGIES– PART 2

Employers who wish to minimize potential disruption arising from inappropriate Internet use should consider the following steps.

1. Monitor Usage: Employers should educate themselves about monitoring employee Internet usage and determine what amount of monitoring is appropriate for their workplace. For example, employers may wish to block certain websites or only monitor poor performers. If employees do not require Internet access to perform their duties, consider removing access altogether.

There may be privacy issues related to an employer looking through an employee's personal activities, even during work hours. Employees use the workplace to do everything from pay bills online to research divorce issues. While an employer may, technically, have a right to look at this usage, it nonetheless raises ethical and business implications. Excessive monitoring or restrictions on use may also negatively impact employee morale. Advise employees specifically that they have no expectation of privacy when using company resources.

2. Monitor the Internet. Take active steps to determine what is being said about your business on the Internet. Consider tasking your information technology or marketing departments with performing regular Internet searches. You may also consider using online technologies that allow a search to be set up, with regular updates sent automatically. However, if negative comments are posted anonymously and not through the company's server, tracing the perpetrator may not be cost-effective.

3. Review Your Workplace Policies to address:

- When and for how long employees may use the Internet at work;
- Which applications, personal e-mail, and other tools are permitted, blocked or discouraged;
- How, when and in what instances employees may disclose their own employment information or make use of the company brand, if at all;
- Employee obligation to refrain from any off-duty conduct that may harm the company or its interests, including social media usage;
- Appropriate use of company-owned laptops or handheld devices that are given to the employee for use at home and away from the office;
- Whether or not, and in what instances, Internet usage will be monitored;
- The dissemination of confidential information generally, and in particular on the Internet, whether the dissemination occurs during or outside of business hours. The same applies to harassment, insubordination, discrimination and defamation; and
- The discipline for each infraction.

4. Review Your Employment Agreements. Standard contracts for new employees should:

- Reference the employee policies and handbooks;
- Contain a clause stating that they cannot work at the company or have access to the Internet unless they sign off on the policies;
- Require employees to return any and all company property, including laptops and mobile devices, upon termination of employment or at any time at the company's request; and
- Advise that Internet-related infractions are dealt with as disciplinary issues.

5. Consider Departing Employees. Most employers already have a standard release for departing employees; review these to ensure that:

- Departing employees agree not to take, publish or otherwise disseminate confidential information, such as customer lists, trade secrets or marketing strategies, on the Internet, and that doing so will cause damages to the company.
- Departing employees agree not to publish anything disparaging on the Internet about the business, its employees or customers.

Damage control

If, despite your best efforts, you still find yourself facing a situation where an employee has posted damaging information about your company on the Internet, you need to act quickly. Engage appropriate experts including legal counsel and, if necessary, a public relations specialist. You may also wish to consider engaging technical expertise to assist with monitoring the spread of the damaging information and, where applicable, in investigating the source of the inappropriate posting. The remedies available to you will vary widely depending upon the nature of the incident but may include an interlocutory injunction, a civil action seeking damages or proceeding with disciplinary measures against the employee responsible for the inappropriate content. **HR**

Laurie Jessome is a partner with Cassels Brock & Blackwell LLP.

 BY CLAUDE LEGRAND

HR AND INNOVATION

After years of focusing on productivity, organizations need to grow again

As we come out of the economic crisis, leaders are struggling to restart the growth engines of their organizations. HR has a great opportunity to create the conditions for that growth to happen.

Before and during the recent crisis, most of the focus was on efficiency and productivity, making organizations lean and 6 Sigma efficient. The results, supported by strong HR efforts, have been very impressive and many organizations are now leaner than ever. As CEOs' agendas now turn again to delivering real growth, 6 Sigma is not the answer. The answer demands an entirely different approach and includes a very significant role for HR leaders.

Many organizations today find it difficult to achieve and sustain the high revenue growth their business plans call for. The reason is that, as we have moved from an industrial to a knowledge economy, the pace of change has accelerated. As well, most companies deal with more uncertainty and ambiguity than ever before, be it from new competitors or new delivery channels or increasingly knowledgeable and empowered consumers. Faster change, greater uncertainty and more ambiguity produce complex problems.

Complex problems also usually involve different stakeholders who need to work together effectively. Complex problems are similar. They include uncertainty that can't be eliminated—they change as you start resolving them. And you can't break them down nicely into distinct parts that different departments can address separately.

Organizations need new skills to solve complex problems

Solving complex problems demand skills that most leaders, managers and employees have never learned. It needs innovative intelligence, innovative problem-solving skills and teamwork. Where HR is critical to innovation is in integrating and supporting innovation practices into their organization's leadership behaviours, their culture and their organizational practices.

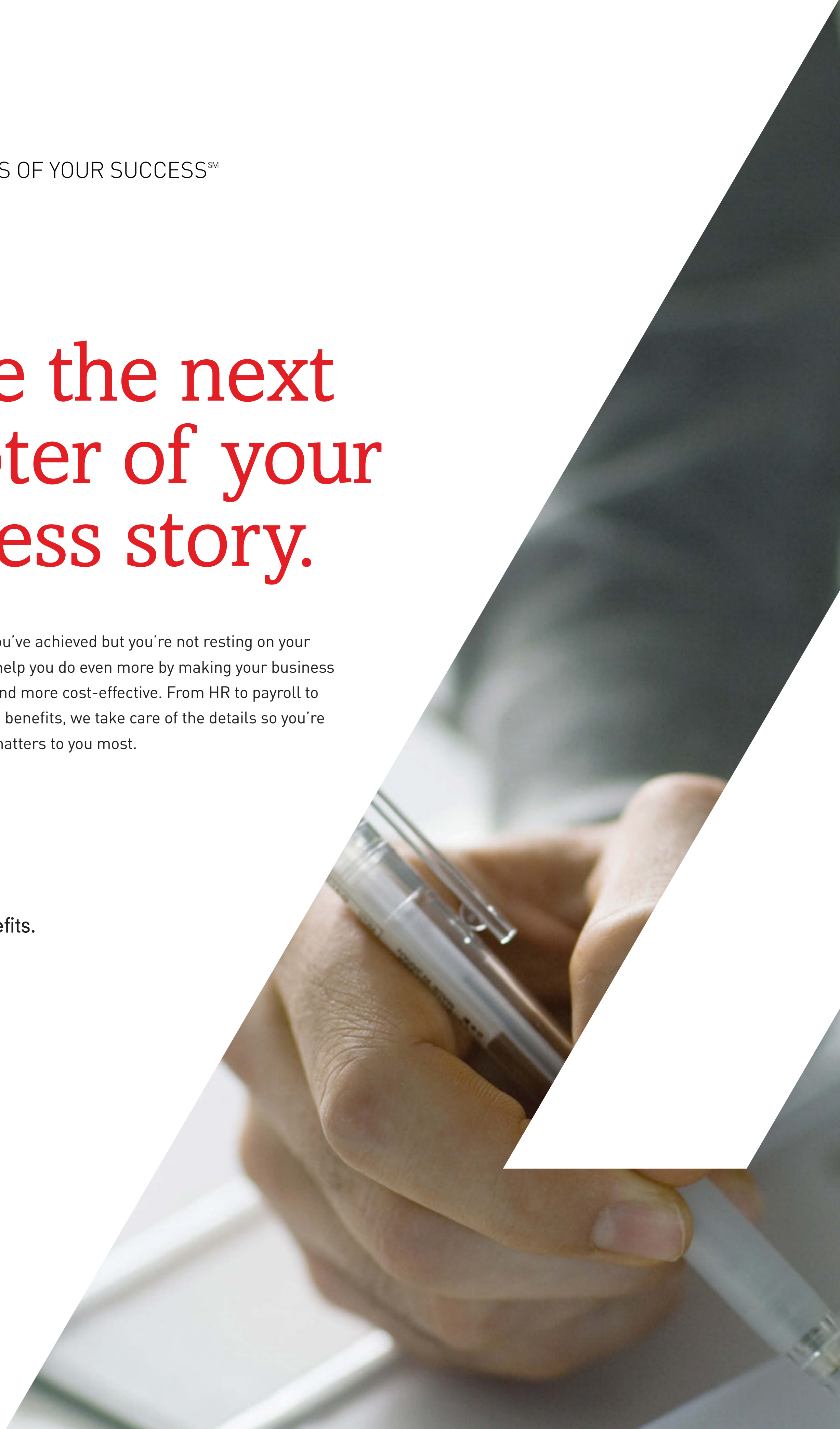
The following is a checklist that HR leaders can use to identify where they need to focus to create an innovation- and, therefore, growth-ready organization:

- **Leadership**: Does every leader and manager understand why innovation is critical and how they can reinforce and role-model it in their team? Today, innovation and creativity are often considered liabilities when leaders are selected. We need a balance of action and innovation focus on leadership teams at every level.
- **Training**: Does every manager and employee have the innovative thinking skills to solve complex problems?
- **Teamwork:** Is teamwork effective within teams and across departments?
- **Talent**: Is talent recruited, promoted and trained for their ability to lead and manage innovative problem solving?
- **HR Practices**: Does each job description and performance objective include the mandate to manage and promote innovation?
- **Culture**: Does your organization have a culture that supports innovation, especially in the areas of diversity of thinking styles and in the tolerance for smart mistakes?
- **Organizational Practices**: How do your organization's practices support or prevent innovation?

Every one of these areas is within the purview of HR leaders. By reviewing organizational practices through an innovation lens and making appropriate changes, you can have a significant and strategic impact on your organization's ability to close the gap between its actual and desired growth objectives.

Interested in learning more about building an innovation culture in your organization? Join me for the upcoming HRPA Executive in the City event, *Create a Culture of Innovative Intelligence*, November 30, 2011 at the HRPA Learning Centre in Toronto. For more information and to register, visit www.hrpa.ca/innovation. **HR**

Claude Legrand is managing partner of Ideaction (ideaction.net), a leading consultancy in the area of innovative thinking and innovative organizations. He is the co-author, with Dr. David Weiss, of Innovative Intelligence*, published by Wiley in January 2011.*



 BY BERNIE KEIM

FRINGE BENEFIT PACKAGES CARRY HUGE FINANCIAL IMPACT

Human resources professionals understand that company pension plans and other retirement incentives, as well as benefit packages, such as medical and dental expenses, are generally held in high esteem by employees. In fact, enhancements to an employee benefit plan can sometimes be more appreciated by individual employees than an increase in salary.

But HR personnel must also understand how a benefits compensation package impacts their organization from a financial standpoint. Employee costs usually constitute the largest single expense of an organization—and those costs consist of both salary and benefits.

Changes to compensation can therefore have a huge impact on the financial bottom line. Moreover, salaries and benefits are not entirely mutually exclusive. A raise in employee salaries can also mean a proportional increase in certain benefits, such as life insurance, which can be set at, say, one to three times salary.

> "If you're talking to **financial people**, you'd better have your numbers in place."

"When we look at the cost of employees, we recognize there are certain things that are very easy to quantify. Some of them are referred to as hard costs that are known to us. We know whatever their wage or salary is. We can easily determine the employer's share of statutory elements, such as vacation pay, or CPP and EI as a percentage of wages," says Michelle Causton, MBA, FCGA, a professor of accounting at Canadore College in North Bay, ON.

"But individual organizations also have benefit packages they offer to employees, and usually there's an employer-paid portion of that. Portions of the benefit package, such as the pension plan, are unique to an individual company," she adds.

Good financial modelling can help firms determine the true cost of an employee from the company's standpoint. For instance, as an employer, "if I say I'm going to pay an employee $40,000 a year, there will be a sizable gap between what the total cost is to me, and what the actual take home pay is for the employee. This is as the result of statutory and other deductions, which reduces the take home pay and the employer-paid portion of statutory and employer-sponsored benefit packages, which increases the employer cost," explains Causton.

To extend that argument, "If an employee comes along and says, 'I want a $1 an hour raise, it's not hard to figure out what that means on an annual basis taking into account pure salary. That's about $40 a week, or $2,000 a year. But then you have to add in all these other costs, taking into account the impact on benefits, to calculate the true value of that $1 an hour raise from the company's vantage point. So the final price-tag can be considerably more," says Causton.

There are, however, additional personal considerations to determine how cost effective certain benefits really are to the organization. In other words, will employees value elements of their benefit package in such a way as to justify how much it is costing their employer?

"Finding that optimal connection between what your employees value and what it's costing you can be a really eye-opening experience for employees, and employers," says Causton.

HR professionals can be instrumental in determining whether an existing benefit package satisfies that requirement and, if not, whether other elements or changes might be more cost effective toward maintaining or improving employee satisfaction. This could, in turn, have some impact on employee production.


The future lies ahead.
What's the best route to get there?

"I think most HR people are very familiar with the cost of turnover—that it's extremely expensive to replace employees," notes Causton. "So to the extent you want to keep your good employees, you want to look at that. All of these metrics are signals."

To that end, "I think a lot of companies are trying to look very carefully at different types of benefits employees might value more," she adds.

For example, says Causton, one company allotted a certain number of sick days per year, but that only sparked resentment from healthy employees who didn't get the extra days off, and that was having a negative effect on morale. The company did its research and replaced those sick days with personal days available to all employees; no questions asked. The end result: they got much happier employees, with not much difference in cost to the employer.

Have your numbers in order

Arguably the HR professional could be best positioned within the organization to understand the interconnectedness between the personal and financial aspects of employee benefits. This well-rounded knowledge can also provide additional leverage around the corporate table with respect to key hiring decisions.

"If you're talking to financial people, you'd better have your numbers in place. You'd better do your research, because you will not get a finance person to move without that information. Even if they understand what you're saying, they're going to have to see the numbers, so make sure you provide them," warns Causton.

Bernie Keim, vice-president, member services and regulatory affairs, at CGA Ontario.

DOWN TO THE CRUNCH

HR Metrics Service aims to become the standard

BY MICHELLE MORRA

No matter how great a "people person" you are as an HR professional, important company decisions cannot be based on what your "gut" says. Rather than be "almost sure" of doing the right thing you need to back it up with numbers.

This single message has resonated across the industry for years now: metrics give the high-level view and show whether you're making a difference. Yet, when provincial HR associations set out to make that data available to their members, they found very little. The British Columbia Human Resources Management Association (BC HRMA) first saw a gap three years ago.

"We recognized that business intelligence in most functions of the organization, such as computer systems or finance, had and used data to get budgets and resources, present to the executive and demonstrate their results. This was sorely lacking in the HR field," says Ian Cook, director, HR Metrics Service.

There were expensive systems for large corporations, but none truly applicable to Canada and its many small- to medium-sized enterprises. At the other end of the spectrum were a variety of free HR metric websites, but the user had no way of knowing whether the information was audited or credible. Technology, too, was an issue. Until recently the data was rarely presented in a format useful to human resources.

HR metrics have always lacked consistency. It was hard to get any standard, common way to do comparative measures.

"In financial reporting, GAAP (Generally Accepted Accounting Principles) and IFRS (International Financial Reporting Standards) state categorically how certain numbers must be treated," Cook says. "HR didn't have the same kinds of standards. We had five ways of looking at turnover. Which was the right number?"

To address these issues, the BC HRMA set out to build a quick, efficient, accurate and user-friendly metrics service for human resources. A collaborative venture by HRPA, the BC HRMA, the Human Resources Management Association of Manitoba (HRMAM) and the Human Resources Institute of Alberta (HRIA), this all-Canadian metrics subscription service lets organizations benchmark their own HR stats against competitors and peers in their industry sector and geographic region. The not-for-profit, shared service also allows them to compare against the best-in-class across all industry sectors for key measures.

HOW IT WORKS

Organizations that subscribe to the service provide quarterly data on a minimum of 20 key HR statistics, via an easy-to-use online questionnaire. These include productivity, retention, workforce demographics, compensation, revenue per full-time equivalent (FTE), labour cost per FTE, vacancy rate, first-year turnover, diversity ratio and more. HR Metrics Service crunches the numbers, identifies flows and patterns, and generates customized metrics and benchmarking reports every quarter.

"What we've built is a set of standards that's trackable and audited," Cook says. "You've got the whole backstory, so it's hard for someone to say it's wrong."

He gives the example of a credit union in B.C. The company discovered through HR Metrics Service that after it invested in 18 months of complex training for new employees, many of those younger workers were leaving for higher paying jobs. Knowing that trend allowed HR to look at retention and ongoing incentives for that particular age group.

"It's not a question of *'We think these folks are leaving'*," he says. It's *'Here's what the data says: these folks are leaving.'* It's black and white, no debate."

Definitive answers are a welcome shift for HR, which has traditionally tried to make its business case with the much "softer" data that comes from intuition and anecdotes. At a time in HR history when every sector is braced for imminent, mass retirements in the baby boom population, having hard numbers makes difficult HR decisions easier.

EARLY OPTIMISM

The strength of HR Metrics Service is its ability to benchmark against the results of companies with which you compete for talent. External comparisons provide a much broader understanding of what a metric means. If your average sick-leave hours equate to 10 days per year, per person, that's fine if you compare one department to another. But is that a good or bad number in your industry? How do you know?

Moneris Solutions Corporation has long been tracking metrics internally, but HR Metrics Service is the first comprehensive source of external metrics they can track and use as a comparison for productivity measures and other lead indicators.

"Understanding how other organizations compare gives a sense of whether or not we have a serious issue. It gives just that much more information with which to make better decisions," says Ken Jacobsen, the company's senior manager, executive and company compensation.

A large North American payment processing company, Moneris is very interested in how its turnover and first-year resignation rates compare with other organizations, particularly in the mission-critical areas.

At this early stage of using the service—just two quarters in—HR is still in the process of determining at what level of detail the rate becomes relevant to benchmark externally. HR Metrics Service results will go to the broader executive team of Moneris once HR can report trends of its externally benchmarked metrics and have confidence in exactly what they're reporting.

The City of Ottawa, which has long been using internal metrics such as employee health and wellness, is another subscriber to HR Metrics Service. It fills a statistical gap in a previously under-measured area for the city: talent management.

"We've been missing statistics on things like retention and turnover," says Robert Vincent, Ottawa's CGA program manager, HR systems and reporting. "This particular survey seems to concentrate on these types of metrics. We're very interested in participating with a group that will give us some feedback in terms of how we're doing in those areas."

While Vincent is hopeful that the service will provide more depth in terms of talent metrics than they currently get, he needs better comparators. It's hard to compare HR in a municipality, where there might be up to 120 business lines and up to 14 bargaining units, to an institution or a private sector company that might have only one or two business lines and bargaining units.

"In a city the size of Ottawa you've got a lot of people doing a lot of things for a lot of purposes," Vincent says. "It creates a little bit of a discrepancy when you're attempting to compare yourself, even to a private sector company of similar size. Are we really comparing apples to apples?"

He hopes HR Metrics Service will attract other participants from municipalities to allow for logical comparisons. Meanwhile, he is encouraged that the service has people looking at HR in new ways.

"At this point, the most important change that has come from the HR Metrics Service is that it has invited more in-depth conversations about the drivers of our business success, the value HR provides to the organization and how we can measure both in meaningful ways," he says.

THE MORE THE MERRIER (AND MORE POWERFUL)

Just as Vincent hopes to see other municipalities enter their data into HR Metrics Service, the more companies participate in the low-cost service, the more effective the data will be. At the time of writing there were close to 80 organizations participating, including large companies such as Moneris, Grand & Toy and Cineplex, as well as SMEs in the public and private sectors, hospitals, and more. Every quarter the service gains 10 to 15 new subscribers.

HR in Canada might finally have its standard terms and measures. Jacobsen likes the fact that the service comes from HR associations. "Because it's these HR groups for the different provinces, who are basically the standard-bearers anyway—they set educational and other standards for the industry—having this service through them means we're all talking the same language."

The service also has his team thinking of new metrics they might like to implement in the future. For example, promoting from within is part of Moneris' employee value proposition so it's important for them to know their internal promotion rate; but promotion for its own sake may be a disservice to the company and the employee—which is why Jacobsen would like some sort of "readiness index" in the future. He would also like to benchmark, externally, voluntary turnover rates of employees with critical skills or within mission-critical areas. He might even suggest these metrics to the HR Metrics Service in future—the administrators are very open to input from subscribers. HR

Michelle Morra is a Toronto-based freelance writer.

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BY ADRIAN MIEDEMA

THE BILL 160 "REVAMP" OF ONTARIO'S HEALTH AND SAFETY SYSTEM

In what the Ontario Ministry of Labour calls "the largest revamp of Ontario's worker safety system in 30 years," the Ontario government has passed Bill 160. The bill has made significant amendments to the *Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA)* resulting from the recent report released by the Expert Panel headed by Tony Dean. The bill received Royal Assent on June 1, 2011, however many of the updates will not become law until April 1, 2012 or the date proclaimed in force by the government.

BILL 160: KEY CHANGES

Prevention: Responsibility for prevention of injuries and accidents has been transferred from the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board to the Ministry of Labour (MOL), which now has a new prevention arm separate from its enforcement arm. The transfer of responsibility for prevention has been criticized by some trade unions on the grounds that employers will be reluctant to co-operate with the MOL's prevention officials for fear that they will pass information to the MOL's enforcement branch that could lead to charges.

Chief Prevention Officer: On August 30, 2011, the Ontario government announced the appointment of George Gritziotis as the first Chief Prevention Officer (CPO). Gritziotis was most recently the founding executive director of the Construction Sector Council and has worked as a director of human resources.

Prevention Council: At least one-third of this council's members must represent trade unions or provincial labour associations. The MOL has already appointed an interim Health and Safety Prevention Council headed by Paavo Kivisto, a former deputy minister of labour. The council is responsible for advising the CPO about preventing workplace injuries and on any significant proposed changes to the funding and delivery of services for the prevention of workplace injuries and occupational diseases. The prevalence of union and employee representatives on the council suggests that unions will play a greater role in shaping Ontario's health and safety management and enforcement system in the future.

Training standards for workers: Where the OHSA or the regulation requires that training be provided, the CPO has been given the authority to establish standards for that training—and to approve training providers. The government has the power to make new regulations requiring training programs, in which case the CPO may establish standards for such programs. Some training programs currently required by regulation include the use of stilts on construction projects; designated substances; logging safety; mining safety; and window cleaning using suspension equipment.

ILLUSTRATION BY MICHAEL EDDENDEN

Training standards for certified members of safety committees: The CPO may establish standards for the training of all certified members of joint health and safety committees. As such it's likely that in the near future, employers will be faced with new certification standards for joint health and safety committees. Those who are already certified when responsibility for prevention is transferred from the WSIB to the MOL—which will be on a date to be proclaimed by the government, but no later than April 1, 2012—will be "grandfathered." For smaller workplaces, Bill 160 also gives the government the power to impose training requirements for safety representatives.

Codes of Practice provide more protection to employers: Codes approved by the minister may now be used to prove compliance with the OHSA itself (for instance, employers' general duty to take reasonable precautions) rather than with the regulations only (for instance, guarding requirements in the Industrial Regulations).

Co-Chair of JHSC may make recommendations to employer: Bill 160 states that if a joint health and safety committee has failed to reach consensus about making health and safety recommendations to the employer, either co-chair of the committee has the power to make written recommendations to the constructor or employer. The employer must then respond to those recommendations. This change will likely, over time, increase the number of recommendations to which employers must respond as employees may attempt to funnel safety issues through the employee co-chair in order to force a response from the employer.

Inspector may file reprisal complaint on behalf of employee: Where the employee consents, an MOL inspector may now refer a reprisal issue to the Ontario Labour Relations Board, instead of requiring the employee to file a reprisal complaint, alleging that he or she was punished for raising safety issues him or herself. Although, with this change, MOL inspectors may feel empowered to recommend to employees that they bring a reprisal complaint, it is questionable what practical effect this change will have.

Expanded mandate of Offices of Worker and Employer Adviser: The minister may assign the Office of the Worker Adviser and the Office of the Employer Adviser the authority to advise workers and employers with fewer than 100 employees, respectively, on health and safety matters, rather than simply on workers' compensation matters. This change could provide a real benefit to small business owners.

Health and safety associations: The MOL will also be given oversight power over the province's health and safety associations.

OTHER CHANGES COMING?

Ontario's Minister of Labour, Charles Souza, has said that the Liberal government intends to implement all 46 recommendations of the Expert Panel within the next five years. Employers should pay attention to some of the panel's other key recommendations, which have not yet been implemented:

Administrative monetary penalties: Perhaps because it is an election year, the government has not yet implemented the recommendation that might have concerned employers the most: giving the MOL power to impose monetary penalties without laying charges in the courts. Other provinces, such as Nova Scotia and British Columbia, have given their health and safety officials the power to impose "administrative monetary penalties" without a court trial; these penalties may be appealed to an appeals tribunal.

New health and safety poster: The panel recommended that the MOL work with the Prevention Council to develop a health and safety poster that helps workers understand their rights relating to safety, including how to contact a Ministry of Labour inspector. The panel also recommended that it be mandatory to post that poster in the workplace.

Mandatory health and safety awareness training for all workers: The panel recommended that a standard should be developed to establish a health and safety awareness program for all workers and that employers be required to give this information to all employees "at the entry level" before being exposed to hazards.

Mandatory health and safety awareness training for supervisors: According to the panel, a standard should be developed to establish a health and safety awareness program for all supervisors who are responsible for frontline workers. Such awareness training would be mandatory for those supervisors. Both these latter programs may be useful for many employers and, arguably, such awareness training is already required by the OHSA under the "competent supervisor" requirement.

More tickets coming: The panel stated that tickets can be an effective deterrent to non-compliance with the OHSA, suggesting that the use of tickets could be expanded to impose fines for offences such as not performing workplace inspections. Safety violation tickets, like traffic tickets, allow the offender to plead guilty and pay a fine without appearing in court, unlike other OHSA charges that risk higher fines and for which the accused company must attend court.

Court charges for reprisals: The panel recommended that the MOL develop guidance for inspectors as to when to lay charges against employers for reprisals against employees for exercising their rights under the OHSA, provide support to employees who have been the victim of reprisals, and that the reprisal complaint process be expedited. As a result, employers should be even more vigilant when disciplining or dismissing workers who have raised health and safety issues in the past; if these recommendations are adopted, reprisal complaints will likely become more common and would be more likely to lead to reinstatement of the worker and charges in the courts.

Government procurement, screening of safety record: The panel recommended that the Ontario government develop procurement policies that screen the safety record of companies seeking to sell products or services to the government. Companies that do business with the government should take note.

One thing about Bill 160 seems clear: the level of safety regulation in Ontario has increased—and will likely continue to increase. As a result of the bill, the ministry will likely become more involved in the lives of employers through prevention programs and training requirements; training requirements for workers and certified members will become more specific; employees will be more empowered to make safety recommendations (through the employee co-chair of the safety committee); and reprisal complaints will be more frequent and riskier for employers.

Employers are advised to review their current training programs and to follow this publication and the Ontario MOL website closely for updates on training requirements and future changes to Ontario's health and safety system. **HR**

Adrian Miedema is a partner with Fraser Milner Casgrain LLP, Toronto.

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BY JOEL KRANC

HR CHECK-UP

Sunnybrook's Marilyn Reddeck discusses how the OHA and partners develop metrics for the health care system

The health care sector is as a prime example of managers and HR doing more with less. With that comes the need to benchmark and create metrics around issues to better deploy resources that are already thinly spread.

In 2009, the Ontario Hospital Association (OHA) partnered with PricewaterhouseCoopers to establish a provincial HR benchmarking program for health care. An HR benchmarking survey and report for OHA members were launched in March 2010 and included standardized HR benchmarking indicators and definitions.

An OHA provincial HR strategic planning committee was created and subsequently a sub-committee was formed to look at other metrics such as how to deal with span of control problems. One of those people on the committee and sub-committee was Marilyn Reddeck, vice-president of human resources and organizational development for Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre in Toronto. Reddeck oversees organizational development, approximately 2,000 volunteers, the onsite pharmacy (both patient and retail), payroll and HR.

HRP: What triggered the the health care community to study span of control and metrics?

MR: Most of us who sit on this committee sit on the OHA Strategic HR Provincial Leadership Council, which the OHA runs. From that discussion, we were talking about the two things that we want to move forward on. One of them was just benchmarking and trying to do it more as a collective group. The other was this ongoing concern in health care about the management ranks decreasing. We are all struggling with budget funding gaps and the span of control getting larger and larger—in particular for the middle management section and, more particularly, for patient care managers. How do they manage the diversity and complexity of the work on the floor?

HRP: Once the committee was created, what were the first things you discussed?

MR: This isn't a new topic. When the health care financial crunch hit back in the mid-90s a lot of the assistant-manager-type roles had been eliminated in health care so now you just have the manager.

The manager may have team leaders and other people helping but that whole assistant manager role within the middle management layer has been eliminated in many hospitals. So what we wanted to know was, do the statistics still hold? Are we looking at a wide span of controls, as we have in the past? Is there a correlation to staff morale, to turnover, to staff and patient safety on the floors and so on? And that's why the experts were asked: a) to put together a resource list of research that was already underway, and b) to pull from all of that work some of those key findings.

We could certainly find a correlation with turnover and morale. Staff needs attention, staff need mentoring, staff need coaching and how can one leader with 100-125 reports meet everyone's needs. So that was from the HR point of view—what we were worried about and what can we do to help them.

HRP: Does Sunnybrook have a span of control metric?

MR: We don't have a span of control metric. We certainly have controls in place for the number of nurses per patient and all of those patient care issues. But we don't have a metric that says, as a manager, you can't have more than 100 people in the department.

No hospital has the money to put some arbitrary line in the sand. And some leaders, quite frankly, are highly effective and have no problem managing 100 people. It really depends on the leader. So what we try to do, rather than set arbitrary standards in place, is to look at leadership overall and give our leaders the skills to be effective.

We have a Leadership Institute here, and one of the programs I am implementing in January 2012 is exactly that kind of program. It's a program to talk to our leaders about the difference between giving the direction you give in a normal day, being a coach and being a mentor. What are those three different roles and how can we give you the skills to really excel in those three different roles? So, the whole Leadership Institute program is geared around helping them, talking with them and giving them the skills to do that.

HRP: What did you learn from the span of control report?

MR: I think the report verified that it is still an issue and that there is a correlation between safety, morale and so on. What people are always doing, and this report might have spurred people forward a bit, is to always be aware of what can we do to relieve the pressure on our middle managers.

For example, one of the things I am doing, and we are just in the procurement stage right now, is to purchase an online job performance measurement system. So they can create roles, measure roles and they can store the information and for somebody that might have to do 50 performance appraisals a year. This will make it so much easier.

The Leadership Institute was another example of trying to help our leaders. Rather than sending our leaders at great expense out to various conferences, courses or degrees, we partner with Schulich or Rotman School of Business to bring the program here. We have our people learn together and we found it far more effective.

HRP: What are the metrics you use day-to-day?

MR: Some of the kinds of things I look at on a very regular basis are: our breakdown of staff in terms of age, gender and race—to make sure we are as diverse and we're giving people opportunities.

I also want to look at each department and where staff is in terms of their generation. Are they a Baby Boomer, a Generation X or Y? We break that down so that when I design new programs I have to meet their needs. We find the different generations have very different needs.

I also want to look at how many people have been promoted from within. Are we walking the talk in our succession planning, in our ability to coach and mentor our staff?

Age and retirement span of our staff is also an area I look at. When are staff retiring, why are staff retiring and how many of them are going to retire within the next 10 years from any certain department so that we are assured that we have a continuation of senior level talent?

I look at recruitment and turnover in terms of who is going after the first 90 days—it just isn't working for them, and why is that? And who is leaving after the first year, or between one and three years and five and seven years and that sort of metrics, so that I can get a handle on why this must be happening.

HRP: How often do you revisit your metrics and programs?

MR: We do it annually. We belong to the OHA-PricewaterhouseCoopers Saratoga HR Benchmarking Program. So, it's an annual process. It doesn't mean I will do each of them every year. But if they are easy for us to obtain we probably will because it just gives me a handle on if we are getting better, where we are the same, or if we are getting worse.

HRP: Have specific programs changed as a result of the metrics?

MR: I guess the age analysis was one. When we looked at the Baby Boomers—they are 33 per cent; Generation X is 54 per cent—which is huge—and Generation Y is 11 per cent. If I'm creating a quality of work and life program I'm going to really look at what does each generation needs. And when we looked at our Baby Boomer generation one of the things we did was to put together retirement classes.

Our average age at Sunnybrook is 42; that triggered us to look further at some of the ages of our nurses on the floor—who is going to retire in the next 10 years? Do they have specialized skills that we need to start to develop people in-house to take on those roles?

HRP: What other metrics do you use?

MR: When we look at the metrics of when people leave and why they leave, one of the things that we've done is to put in different orientation programs for different levels of staff and different professionals. We can then say we've done a good job of bringing them in, on-boarding them and getting them integrated into our life here. **HR**

Joel Kranc is owner and founder of kran(c)ommunications in Toronto focusing on business and marketing communications, particularly in pensions, benefits and finance.

BY DR. DAVID S. COHEN

THE VALUE OF COURAGE

Where does leadership courage come from?

It's easy, during prosperous times, to see the clarity and decisiveness of business leaders as courageous. Acquisitions, new products or new strategies get lauded as bold moves. Similarly, political candidates often make courageous pronouncements when they campaign. But in bad times where does that business leader's courage go? Why are they afraid to hire more workers, make decisive moves or take on new investments? The timidity can't be explained merely by economic cycles. Similarly, why does the political candidate often seem to dither, waffle, compromise or fail to deliver when in power and facing the actual challenges of governing?

As citizens or employees we sense the difference between easy and difficult times, and we long for leadership that has the backbone or fortitude to actually bring us through trouble.

In a recent *Globe and Mail* article, "Wanted: Political Leadership and Courage," Scott Clark and Peter Devries raise this very point. Discussing the economic crisis in Europe, they note how German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Nicolas Sarkozy met and acknowledged the urgent need for greater political integration, but agreed that it would be too difficult to attempt. Both are fighting for their own political survival in their respective governments.

Where's the courage? During adversity, political and business leaders seem to put their own preservation and personal success ahead of the companies or communities they run. All too often, narcissism, deceit, greed and fraud are at the root of the organizational failures we experience.

I'm no political expert, but I do see the absence of leadership courage in organizations with some frequency. Occasionally, I have even had the opportunity to see leaders rise through the ranks only to put aside what made them successful when they take charge. Suddenly, the leader comes to drive his or her own agenda regardless of what seems right to the organization.

Ask a leader why they've changed and they'll say, "It's for the good of the company." Or, they'll complain that people who don't lead don't understand the pressures and demands of leadership, the need for hard or unpleasant choices, the way the scrutiny of Wall Street changes priorities.

I believe this is particularly deflating and off-putting for an employee, shareholder, customer or fan because the leader's behaviour and actions are usually in conflict with the values of the corporation. When leaders look to short-term success (or profits) they often make decisions that are at odds with, if not in violation of, the very beliefs for which the organization stands. Cynically enough, violations that proffer short-term wins seem to pad the CEO's annual bonus at the expense of the company's longer-term viability.

Compare the average self-sustaining CEO with the courage of Apple's recently resigned CEO, Steve Jobs. Jobs is almost a cliché of leadership that goes against the grain, and wins big. But, consider: the characteristic that most clearly defines him is not charisma, genius, vision, or innovation but risk-taking and guts. Jobs has been extraordinarily courageous as a leader.

As Alan Deutschman, author of *Walk the Walk: The #1 Rule for Real Leaders*, puts it, "Apple has been so innovative because Jobs takes major risks, which is rare in corporate America. He doesn't market test anything. It's all his own judgment and perfectionism and gut."

Industry believed in low-cost, vanilla products, but Jobs believed in distinctive, aesthetically pleasing luxury items. The industry believed in the sanctity of market share, but Jobs believed in the security of profitability. The industry believed you give customers what they're asking for, but Jobs believed you give customers what they don't know they need.

There were times during his double tenure—most famously when he was ousted—that Jobs' courage seemed foolhardy and narrow-minded. But in the end it was that very boldness and tenacity that made Apple one of the most valuable, iconic and influential companies the world has ever seen.

Not every CEO can be a Steve Jobs but I believe that the foundation of Jobs' courage, and his commitment to the long-term success of his organization and products, were based on values—the values he brought to Apple, the values Apple employees, customers, shareholders and fans embraced, and the values the company continues to demonstrate without fail.

Stick to values and courage is easier

In the face of our need for leadership courage, and the scarcity of it, what can the humble HR leader do? Confronting a CEO's lack of courage may not be the wisest career move, though it may sometimes be the right thing to do. More effective in the long run is the work the HR leader can do to distill, articulate, spread and encourage the active demonstration of the organization's values.

When values are surfaced and embraced by the organization they become more transparent measures of the rightness or wrongness of a leadership decision. When a leader talks of specific values in speeches and annual letters, and when the leader knows that employees are being evaluated on these values themselves, it becomes more difficult to violate them, even when Wall or Bay Streets beckon with their mix of temptation and threat.

Hire people according to company values. Promote them according to the values. Make sure every strategic decision is checked against the values. Celebrate when the values are demonstrated, even when failure is the result. Tell stories that articulate the values at every opportunity.

It is possible to provide a leader with the courage he or she needs, to subtly cajole and embarrass that leader if necessary, to make it socially difficult not to be courageous, to give him or her plenty of positive reinforcement for doing what's right. Even if it feels a bit like false courage at first, a leader will learn where success really comes from, and embrace the boldness that we need. **HR**

Dr. David S. Cohen is president of the Toronto-based consulting firm Strategic Action Group Ltd.

BY PETER DE JAGER

7 STEPS TO ADOPT A TECHNOLOGY

It's ubiquitous (and it's everywhere as well): if you're not using the latest and greatest product, then you're falling behind. This "you're not keeping up" sales pitch effectively strikes at the heart of our insecurities: Am I falling behind? Won't it make me more productive, more efficient, and even more attractive to the opposite sex? How could I possibly live without it? Here's my credit card.

Before asking, "How should we adopt a new technology?", we must understand what we're trying to accomplish. To decide on a product to improve our organization, we need to do more than submissively accept the carefully chosen blather of the advertising wordsmiths.

What problem are we trying to fix, since "technology" by itself doesn't do anything? *How* exactly are we going to *use* a technology to change things? More precisely, how exactly will department 'X' change because of the purchase? Finally, in excruciating detail: *What* benefit do we expect to reap from our investment?

That's a lot of work, but it's necessary work, unless we wish to add our organization to the long list of embarrassing examples of how we shouldn't implement technology. Once we've done all of the above, then and only then are we ready to start looking at what's available.

> "There's a lot of pre-purchase research to do, but it's **necessary** work, unless we wish to be added to the long list of **embarrassing** examples of how not to implement technology"

Phase 1.0: Trade publications will provide our first truckload of information. Note that all of the ads and most of the articles will paint the rosiest of pictures. According to what we read, everything works as intended, and is as effective as was

promised. At this point, every product claiming to address our problem is a possible candidate.

Phase 2.0: Grab a pot of your favorite brew and head to the Internet. The websites associated with the products you're researching will provide the details they could not put in the ads. By now, you will have rejected at least a few of the products found earlier.

Phase 3.0: Refill the coffee pot and head back to the Internet. This stage is informative, even entertaining. Visit the forums where users discuss the real world functionality of the product or service, as well as their pet peeves, delayed releases, known bugs, problems, anomalies and general experiences. You'll find some of these forums on the product sites, others you'll have to hunt down—start in the discussion groups of HR associations. If you don't see the answers you need, post questions and wait for responses. For any product there are dozens, if not thousands, of existing users with product experience. They are a goldmine of experience. Mine them.

After reading just a few product discussions, you'll have trimmed your list down to a more manageable size.

Phase 4.0: Do any of your associates use the products? Get on the phone and arrange a meeting. Spend an afternoon with them. What problems have they encountered? What benefits have they gained?

Have you noticed you've not even spoken to the vendor yet? Yet, by now you should have only a handful of products in mind.

Phase 4.9: Buy some insurance. Rent a technical consultant who knows more about technology in general and this product category in particular than we'll ever need to know. They're the hired gun who will accompany you to vendor meetings and demos. Their role? Just by introducing who they are and then sitting quietly in the back of the room they're going to keep the vendor honest. If necessary, they'll ask the relevant 'hard' technology questions; they'll ensure that the demos presented to us are 'real' and not simulations of what the product might do someday.

This companion is a vendor's worst nightmare in any demonstration, that alone justifies having them along for the ride.

Phase 5.0: Demo the products on your short list. Narrow that list even further, and then make no commitment until you've had the chance to experiment with a pilot project, using your data, people and environment. Does it work as expected? Are you getting the benefits you hoped for?

Phase 6.0: There is obviously a technical component to this search. Will the product you're purchasing operate within the context of your existing infrastructure? Will it handle the expected workload? Will you need to hire experts? How available are these experts and at what cost?

Congratulations, you've selected a new technology. All you have to do now is 'implement it, but that's another story. **HR**

Peter de Jager is a keynote speaker, writer, consultant on issues relating to change management; visit him at www.technobility.com.

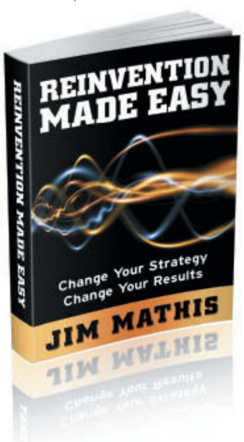
BY ALYSON NYIRI

WHAT'S WORTH READING

Reinvention Made Easy: Change Your Strategy Change Your Results

Morgan James Publishing, 2011

By Jim Mathis

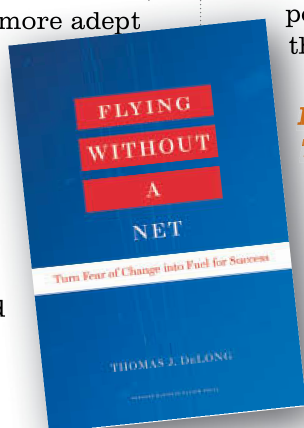


Jim Mathis is an International Certified Speaking Professional and is the president of The Mathis Group in Atlanta. He has been consulting for more than 30 years. *Reinvention Made Easy* is his third book.

Mathis' book is directed to professionals interested in improving both their business acumen and leadership abilities. Written after the recent recession, Mathis offers straightforward tips for professionals to reinvent their professional and business purpose using observations of changes to business, customers and industry as a result of the financial crisis. In the Appendix, for example, he offers 50 changes in customer behaviours and expectations today. Customers are savvier than ever before, know more, are more adept at finding information and have far less patience with poor treatment. According to Mathis, the business game has changed and the customer is dictating what is and isn't in business.

Reinvention Made Easy challenges commonly accepted business norms. In his chapter "Reinventing Management," Mathis describes teamwork in what he calls the Old World (before the recent recession). Two models predominate: internal teams competing with each other or the company as one team competing with its competitors. Both models have their drawbacks, such as social loafing or CEOs with unclear direction. Mathis offers an alternative, a world of community at work. Rather than setting up an enemy against which to compete, he recommends fostering a culture of loyalty. Teamwork, he argues, has run its course. Individuals are fed up with leaders who try to treat everyone fairly on teams, when the players aren't all playing.

Other chapters include habits that block reinvention, reinventing your company, your management, your sales, customer service, brand and your target market. While you may find *Reinvention Made Easy* short on blueprints and checklists, the questions posed are intriguing and thought-provoking.



Flying Without a Net: Turn Fear of Change into Fuel for Success

Harvard Business Review Press, 2011

By Thomas DeLong

Thomas DeLong is the Philip J. Stomberg Professor of Management Practice at the Harvard Business School. He teaches MBA and executive courses focused on managing human capital, organizational behaviour, leadership and career management.

In his new book, DeLong focuses on what he calls "high-need-for-achievement" personalities. Using personal stories of how various high-need-for achievement personalities (HNAP), DeLong offers strategies to enable these personalities to be vulnerable to change in a way that allows them to embrace it and push through the inevitable instances of failure that accompany change. This process, as DeLong puts it, involves "adopting counterintuitive practices that give you the courage to *do the right things poorly* before doing the right things well."

When DeLong worked for Morgan Stanley earlier in his career, he tells us that when John Mack hired him, he did so based on intuition. Mack did not want a typical human resources viewpoint; he wanted someone who would give him insights into his blind spots and would be a truth speaker. But as most of us know, speaking the truth and challenging high-need-for-achievement personalities carries considerable risk for human resources professionals. However, what DeLong offers in his book is a step-by-step career development plan that encourages HNAPs to engage themselves in an unflinching account of the three anxieties preventing them from making change (purpose, isolation, significance), the four traps that keep them from change (busyness, comparing, blame, worry), and offers tools for turning fear of change into fuel for success.

What is uniquely helpful for human resources professionals is DeLong's description of HNAPs. He describes 11 professionals, some of which include: being driven to achieve the task, obsessing about getting the job done at all costs, avoiding difficult conversations, swinging from one mood extreme to another, and taking only safe risks. If you have these types of personalities in your organization or you are one yourself, DeLong's book will be enormously helpful. There are no charts or checklists, just plenty of hard questions and examples from other driven professionals who have found balance or a new career path.

Alyson Nyiri, CHRP, is a freelance writer, researcher and consultant specializing in HR and career development issues.

INDEX TO ADVERTISERS

BY VALERIE CADE

HIGH ACHIEVERS: A BULLY'S PRIME TARGET

Have you heard of the "Tall Poppy Syndrome"? In Australia, poppies for the most part grow to the same height. Every once in a while, one poppy grows higher than the rest. What do you think they do? You got it: they come along and chop the poppy down to match all the others. This is the same methodology a bully will take with a superstar or high achiever. Superstar employees are frequently the targets of bullying at work.

When competent, bright, self-assured people enter the domain of workplace bullies, their bullying strategy is to attack rather than avoid. This gives them a sense of power and control, convincing them that despite their deep inadequacies they still rule.

Bullies at work use a myriad covert methods to sabotage the competent employee. They spread rumours, misrepresent the accomplishments of the target and often take credit for the target's work. They gossip about the individual. All of this chicanery is used to prop up their need for feeling "better than." They may have worked very hard on a project or assignment only to be snubbed by a bully, or maybe they were put down with a comment such as "stop taking the limelight" or 'there are other people who want to contribute here, tone it down.' This is not an effective leadership strategy! No one does better when we think less of them.

Bosses who are bullies at work will frequently constrain the work of their employees. How? By piling unreasonable amounts of work on a target, restricting budget, constantly criticizing and anything else to undermine the target's success and sense of competency. Being in control by wielding power is an addiction for workplace bullies. They will be unreasonable in their demands, so they can witness the failure of someone else, giving them a sinister rush as they witness the failure of one who is more competent.

Workplace bullies assume the role of overlord as they demand that the target produce something out of nothing. Workplace bullies enjoy watching the target "sweat under the load."

By constantly criticizing competent employees, workplace bullies don't feel so lonely in their haunting self-criticism. In undermining the competent employee, workplace bullies convince themselves that they are still able to subjugate another, despite their brutal self-perception.

Some workplace bullying targets are savvy enough to see through the bullying game and find ways to outsmart their nemesis. Eventually however, they are likely to look for greener pastures, refusing to endure the aggravation.

However, others, who do not recognize the game or choose not to compete with the bully, are not so fortunate. They will try harder and harder to please, but to no avail. Eventually they will be worn down by the bully and begin to sustain severe psychological damage.

Competent employees who become targets of bullying in the workplace are very often ethical, just, fair and honorable people. Naively, many of them expect the same of others as well. Sadly they become fodder for hungry workplace bullies waiting to satisfy their compulsion for control.

Workplace bullies need to be "brought to heel" by exposing their Machiavellian tactics and seeing them for who they are. Leadership cannot afford to ignore this workplace epidemic any longer. They must act now to protect their brightest and best from unnecessary and deliberate ruination.

If you are a superstar, or know of a superstar who feels they are becoming a target of bullying in the workplace, know that a superstar has every right to continue being that high achiever. Make sure your workplace has a process for recognizing and dealing with bullying. HR

Valerie Cade, CSP, is a workplace bullying expert, speaker and author of Bully Free at Work: What You Can Do To Stop Workplace Bullying Now.

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