THE MAGAZINE OF HUMAN RESOURCES THOUGHT LEADERSHIP | SEPTEMBER 2012

HR PROFESSIONAL

THE ROLE OF HR IN INNOVATION

ALSO: HR HERO | VERIFYING FOREIGN CREDENTIALS | BUILDING A CULTURE OF TRUST | HR & FINANCE | PRESENTATIONS | DIVERSITY


IDEAS DON'T COME FROM MACHINES.
++ THEY COME FROM PEOPLE.
FORTUNE
100 BEST
COMPANIES TO WORK FOR
2012

Queen's University

IRC 75 years

Learn. Apply. Transform.

Learn to manage and lead in 5 days or less with the help of Queen's University IRC, Canada's leading professional development centre for human resources, labour relations, and organization development. With open enrollment and customized programs, Queen's IRC can help you champion change, resolve disputes and align people with purpose.

Celebrating 75 Years of Industrial Relations at Queen's

Fall 2012 Programs

Labour Relations

Labour Relations Foundations/Sept. 23-28: Kingston
Change Management/Oct. 2-5: Calgary
Negotiation Skills/Oct. 14-19: Kingston
Change Management/Oct. 22-25: Kingston
Managing Unionized Environments/Oct. 24-26: St. John's
Managing Unionized Environments/Nov. 14-16: Fort McMurray
Negotiation Skills/Dec. 3-7: Victoria

Advanced Labour Relations

Strategic Grievance Handling/Oct. 16-19: Toronto
Mastering Fact-Finding and Investigation/Nov. 6-9: Toronto
Strategic Grievance Handling/Nov. 20-23: Victoria
Mastering Fact-Finding and Investigation/Nov. 27-30: Banff

Advanced Human Resources

Talent Management/Oct. 30-31: Calgary
Succession Planning/Nov. 1-2: Calgary NEW
Advanced Human Resources/Nov. 27-29: Calgary

Organizational Effectiveness

Building Smart Teams/Sept. 25-28: Kingston
Change Management/Oct. 2-5: Calgary
Developing Leadership Capacity/Oct. 10-12: Kingston
Change Management/Oct. 22-25: Kingston
Organizational Design/Oct. 30-Nov. 1: Banff
Organization Development Foundations/Nov. 20-23: Edmonton
Partnership Development/Nov. 27-29: Kingston

To register for a program call toll-free: 1-888-858-7838 or visit us on the web at: irc.queensu.ca

CONTENTS

HR PROFESSIONAL VOLUME 29/NUMBER 6 SEPTEMBER 2012

39

FEATURES

DEPARTMENTS

CONTRIBUTORS

SEPTEMBER 2012

HENA SINGH

After gaining experience at both a national Bay Street and a boutique employment law firm, Hena Singh started her own practice with the goal of providing practical and tailored solutions to employment and human rights issues. Singh is recognized for her effective use of alternative dispute resolution methods and negotiation skills to explore options, which often negate the necessity or reduce the risk of litigation. She is a certified workplace investigator, a certified compliance officer, is co-author of *Law of Termination in Ontario* and a frequent presenter on employment law and workplace investigation issues. She discusses gender discrimination provisions of the Human Rights Code, on page 17.

DR. CHRIS BART

Dr. Chris Bart, F.C.A., is a professor of strategic market leadership (strategy & governance) at the DeGroote School of Business, McMaster University, Hamilton, as well as the founder, principal and lead professor of The Directors College—offering Canada's first and only university accredited director certification program. He is associate editor of the *International Journal of Business Governance and Ethics* and the author of the Canadian business bestseller *A Tale of Two Employees*. Bart is also a chartered accountant. As in his book, Bart describes how leaders can bring their organization's mission to the frontline just by asking four simple questions, on page 24.

MARY JANE LOUSTEL

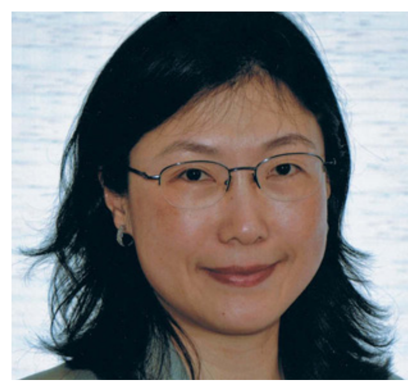
In her role as National Aboriginal Program executive, Mary Jane Loustel leads the IBM Canada National Aboriginal Strategy, designed to advance Aboriginal inclusion in the technology sector. Over her career, Loustel has worked in the economic development, post-secondary education, finance and business services sectors. A chartered accountant, with a bachelor of commerce degree, Loustel also holds a master's degree in Native Studies from the University of Manitoba. She discusses diversity and innovation, on page 21.

ERIC BERGMAN

Eric Bergman, BPA, ABC, APR, MC, has been a professional communicator for more than 30 years. His latest book, *Five Steps to Conquer 'Death by PowerPoint'*, is available from Amazon. To obtain copies of the audience manifesto to help change audience behaviour, or to download free workbook that has models to help presenters, please visit www.fivestepstoconquer.com. He discusses how to avoid a death by PowerPoint during your presentations, on page 45.

ANTON DIMNIK

Anton (Tony) Dimnik, PhD, worked as a radio talk show host and television weatherman in Regina before returning to university, earning a PhD. at the Ivey School of Business. He is the former director of the Queen's National Executive MBA Program and the founder of the Queen's Finance for the Non-Financial Manager Program. He is also president of Vednost Inc., a company that provides financial education with the belief that people who are financially literate are more engaged and effective. He has worked with such companies as Microsoft, Goldcorp, Flynn Canada, Stantec, Open Text, Shoppers Drug Mart, Bell Canada, Canada Post, CNR, Quicklaw and Cirque du Soleil. He discusses finances for the non-financial HR professional, on page 47.



CAROLINE YANG

Caroline Yang, CHRP, CCP, is a partner and HR consultant at MultiCultural Business Solutions. She has 15 years of human resources experience working with Nortel and Compaq in China and ATI (now AMD), TD Bank and MDS Inc., in Canada. She has worked with a diverse workforce and supported multicultural teams of highly skilled technical professionals. Providing services to a broad range of public and private sector organizations, Caroline has worked with GE Canada, Total E&P Canada, Scotiabank, City of Kitchener, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, University of Ottawa and Ontario Regulators for Access Consortium. She advises how to look beyond cultural differences, on page 51.

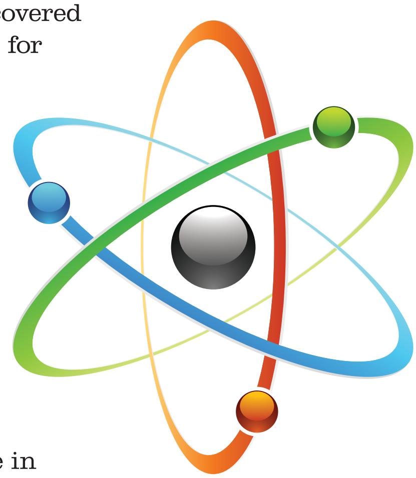
EDITOR'S LETTER

TALK BACK

In one memorable scene from TV's The Big Bang Theory, Penny, the girl next door, asks physicist Leonard, "What's new in the world of physics?" "Nothing," he says, proudly noting that not much has happened in physics since the 1930s.

But, with the early July discovery of the "Higgs Boson" particle at CERN, it looks as though even staid old physics can't be relied upon to remain in a constant state these days.

Einstein may have mused that the universe was comprehensible—and tried to prove it. But, as our writers discovered while researching articles for this issue, innovation, adaptability and mobility seem to the be the only constants as the natures of business and work metamorphosize at an almost incomprehensible rate.



Yet, we discovered a number of positive ways HR professionals can impact and play a role in business innovation. They can lead the way in sourcing and hiring those leading-edge innovators, they can assist in maintaining the structure and integrity of an organization to support innovation and they can lead the way in building a culture of trust where innovators and innovative thinking can flourish.

We're starting to plan our issues for 2013. We have already received some input from you, our readers—we always welcome more. Remember, you can contact me directly at lblake@naylor.com, or post on our Facebook page, at www.facebook.com/#!/HRProfessionalMag.

Cheers,

HR PROFESSIONAL

VOL. 29, NO. 6 September 2012

Editor: Laurie J. Blake
Publisher: Robert Phillips
Legal Editor: Malcolm MacKillop, Partner, Shields O'Donnell MacKillop LLP
Contributors: Daphne FitzGerald, Alison Adam, Jocelyn Bérard, Melissa Campeau, Jennifer Campbell, Scott Bury, Ian Turner, Stephanie Messier, Stephen Murdoch, Alyson Nyiri, Peter Fairlie
Sales Manager: Bill McDougall
Project Manager: Alana Place
Marketing: Rebecca Wentworth
Art & Design: BK Publication Design
Publication Director: Wayne Jury
Advertising Sales Representatives: Cheryll Oland, Maria Antonation, Norma Walchuk, Tracy Goltsman, Lana Taylor

HRPA

Chief Executive Officer: William Greenhalgh
Vice President, Finance and Administration: Gary Monk
Vice President, Professional Development: Marta Pawych
Vice President, Marketing and Membership: Chris Larsen
Vice President, Regulatory Affairs / Registrar: Claude Balthazard, PhD, CHRP
Vice President, Public Affairs: Scott Allinson
Vice President, HR Research and Development: Kristina Hidas

HR PROFESSIONAL is published eight times per year for the Human Resources Professionals Association (HRPA), 150 Bloor St. West, Suite 200, Toronto, ON, M5S 2X9, tel. 416-923-2324, toll-free 1-800-387-1311, fax 416-923-7264, email info@hrpa.ca, www.hrpa.ca. As the premier HR association in Canada, HRPA is internationally recognized and sought out for its knowledge, innovation and leadership.
With more than 19,000 members in 28 chapters in Ontario, and other locations around the world, HRPA connects its membership to an unmatched range of HR information resources, events, professional development and networking opportunities.

HR Professional magazine is published by Naylor (Canada), Inc. 1630 Ness Avenue, Suite 300, Winnipeg, MB R3J 3X1, Tel. 1-800-665-2456; Fax 1-204-947-2047.
www.naylor.com

SUBSCRIPTIONS (Prices include shipping and handling) $49 per year in Canada; $79 per year in the United States and International.

Published articles and advertisements do not necessarily reflect the views of HRPA.
ISSN 847-9453
HRPA is proud to be a founding member of the Canadian Council of Human Resources Associations.
PUBLISHED September 2012/HRP-H0612/7486

naylor

This publication is printed on recycled, FSC-certified paper stock.
The polybag this magazine came in is 100 per cent recyclable.
CANADIAN PUBLICATIONS MAIL PRODUCT SALES AGREEMENT #40064978
Postage Paid at Winnipeg

BY DAPHNE FITZGERALD, CHRP, SHRP

THE POWER OF VOLUNTEERING

I recently came across an inspiring story that perfectly illustrates the opportunities people can unlock by volunteering their time and talents.

Cristina Ricciardi is a high-achieving young HR student who is currently finishing her studies at the University of Guelph. She joined the Human Resources Professionals Association and its local chapter as a student member and quickly began volunteering as the chapter's webmaster.

"That paid off fast," she says in an HRPA video she recently produced (see it here: bit.ly/PqqZAe). She started to build her professional network by getting to know some senior HR professionals at the chapter, and more importantly, got a chance to show off her skills and talents by volunteering alongside them.

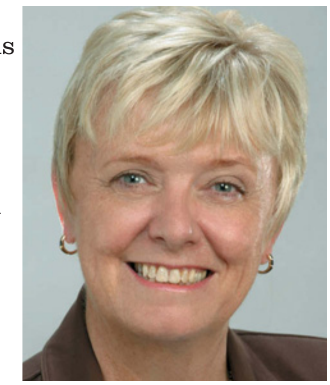
When Growmark (a big US agricultural company) came calling at the chapter looking for a summer HR intern, senior members immediately recommended Cristina for the job. "They made introductions for me, I got an interview and the next morning they called and offered me a great internship."

Cristina's experience is a great example of the benefits of volunteering: building networks, getting career guidance, finding mentors—and, often, finding jobs.

Giving back

Of course, people volunteer for all kinds of different reasons; a really important one is the personal satisfaction of giving back—of helping to improve the profession for those to come.

Consider the experience of Tom Holmes, an HR professor at the University of Toronto's School of Continuing Education and a long-time HRPA volunteer. Since joining the association in 1976, Tom has served on the board of directors, as well as on the bylaws, registration and certification committees—including contributing to the development of the Certified Human Resources Professionals (CHRP) designation.



His volunteer work helped build "a professional designation that would be valuable for others in the field," he says in a recent HRPA video around volunteerism (see it here: bit.ly/MzplgK). "Yes, I gained a lot, but over the years hopefully I have given a lot that others can benefit from."

I can only echo Tom's comments—the rewards of volunteering are certainly different for the senior HR professional than for those in the earlier stages of their careers. As a volunteer board member myself, I can personally attest to the fact that volunteering my time to the profession has been one of the most rewarding of my career. In all of my various volunteer roles that come with position of HRPA Chair, the opportunity to give back to the profession and to work alongside so many other dedicated volunteers has been tremendous. Not only has it given me a greater appreciation of how far we've come and how far we still must go, as a volunteer there is also the first-hand opportunity to be an active contributor in helping us reach that next milestone and having an impact on how the profession will progress in the years to come.

If you have considered volunteering in the past but for whatever reason had to forego doing anything about it, I hope you will reconsider or at the very least pencil it into your career plan for some time in the future.

Speaking from experience, you'll be glad you did!. **HR**

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

Both Company and its Director Fined Over 2009 Scaffold Collapse

Metron Construction Corporation, a Toronto constructor, and its director, Joel Swartz, both pleaded guilty to violations of the Occupational Health and Safety Act, which resulted in the deaths of four workers.

On December 24, 2009, six workers were on a suspended work platform, also known as a swing stage, at a construction project on Kipling Avenue, in Toronto. The swing stage collapsed and fell 13 floors, killing four of the workers and seriously injuring another worker. The only worker properly attached to fall protection was held by the lifeline and pulled to safety.

A Ministry of Labour investigation found that the deceased workers had not been properly tied off to a lifeline, and had not been properly trained in the use of fall protection. The swing stage had been overloaded and it was later determined to be defective and hazardous.

The fines were imposed by Judge Bigelow of the Ontario Court of Justice. In addition to the OHSA fines, the court imposed a 25% victim fine surcharge, as required by the Provincial Offences Act. The surcharge is credited to a special provincial government fund to assist victims of crime.

However, a recent blog from Toronto management lawyers Stringer LLP, notes: "The Crown had sought a fine of $1,000,000 but the Court surprised many observers and imposed a fine of $200,000." The blog also notes that the prosecutor has the right to appeal the judgement, posting, "We would not be surprised if an appeal was filed."

Predictably, labour is not happy with the decision, with Sid Ryan, president of the Ontario Federation of Labour, calling on the Crown to appeal the fine. In a press release, Ryan says the ruling, "…is disgraceful. It says that a worker's life is worth no more than $50,000 and many bad bosses across the province will simply chalk it up as the cost of doing business."

Other defendants facing charges stemming from this incident are still before the court.

No Layoffs Predicted

When asked: "Do you anticipate there will be employee layoffs in any of your organization's business units in the next six months?" Most Canadian companies surveyed said, "no."

	Canada	Global Average
No layoffs at all	82%	78%
A normal level of layoffs	11%	13%
Moderately more layoffs	1%	2%
Significantly more layoffs	2%	1%
Don't know	4%	6%

Source: Manpower Employment Outlook Survey, Right Management. A survey of 14,931 employers in 41 countries and territories.

Vast Aboriginal Worker Pool Unrepresented and Poorly Supported

Integrating more of the aboriginal population into Canadian workforces will require improving educational outcomes—especially high school completion rates—and providing better opportunities to gain work experience. By 2026, more than 600,000 aboriginal youth are expected to enter the Canadian labour market.

A new Conference Board of Canada report, "Understanding the Value, Challenges, and Opportunities of Engaging Métis, Inuit, and First Nations Workers," provides recommendations on the steps that employers, aboriginal organizations and businesses, as well as policy-makers, can take to ensure that Aboriginal Peoples both join the workforce in greater numbers and succeed in the workplace.

While many Canadian businesses agree it's important to bring Aboriginal Peoples into their workplaces, challenges remain. High school completion rates are a key area requiring improvement, particularly in northern and remote communities. According to the 2006 Census, 34 per cent of the aboriginal population, aged 25 to 64, had not completed high school or obtained another diploma or certificate, compared to 15 per cent of the non-aboriginal population. The 2006 Census also found that 44 per cent of Canada's aboriginal population had completed post-secondary studies, compared with 61 per cent of the non-aboriginal population.

The report outlines strategies that can help to bolster the recruitment, hiring, and retention of Aboriginal Peoples in Canadian workplaces. These include:

- **Improve educational outcomes:** Beyond high school, aboriginal workers also need greater access to educational programs that allow them to learn or upgrade basic skills. Employers can offer mentoring, internships, and job-shadowing opportunities.
- **Simplify points of contact between aboriginal organizations and employers:** Better coordination among aboriginal organizations to simplify points of contact for employers would make it easier for them to find and engage potential aboriginal workers.
- **Raise awareness of aboriginal cultures:** Cultural awareness programs can help to overcome negative stereotypes, racism and misunderstandings in the workplace.
- **Increase opportunities for the sharing of best practices among aboriginal employment organizations:** Increased opportunities for Aboriginal Skills and Employment Strategy (ASETS) Agreement Holders to share information and best practices among themselves and with other organizations would strengthen their ability to provide services to both workers and employers.

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

Energized Canadian Workers are Key to Productivity

A new "Global Workforce Study" by Towers Watson shows that the majority (67%) of Canadian workers are not fully engaged in their work and are frustrated by insufficient support from their organizations. After almost a decade of pressure to do more with less, the study suggests that Canadian workers are finding themselves unable to sustain the kinds of positive associations with their employers that lead to greater productivity.

The study notes the equation for sustainable engagement is the sum of three distinct elements:

1. Traditional engagement, or employees' willingness to give effort to their employer.
2. Enablement, which means having the tools, resources and support to get work done efficiently.
3. Energy, defined as a work environment that actively supports physical, emotional and interpersonal well-being.

According to the study, virtually all (95%) of highly engaged Canadian employees believe that they have the work tools and resources they need to achieve exceptional performance—compared to only 20% of disengaged employees. Similar disparities appear with regard to the ability to sustain energy throughout the workday (97% vs. 32%), and sense of personal accomplishment at work (99% vs. 33%). However, amongst all Canadian survey participants, only a third (38%) believe that their organization and senior leaders encourage and support a healthy workforce and just 39% think that senior leaders have a sincere interest in their well-being.

The study identifies specific attributes of the work environment that are critical to traditional engagement, enablement and energy, highlighting actions employers can take to improve engagement and increase productivity, putting solutions directly within companies' control.

"There is a real imperative for change right now," says Ofelia Isabel, Towers Watson's Canadian leader for talent and rewards. "The world has changed, but have our programs and practices changed with it? The risks of continuing to manage the traditional way are just too great from a performance perspective. And everyone in an organization has a role to play in helping to facilitate sustainable engagement—from leadership, to first-line supervisors, to human resources to employees themselves."

To view the study, visit www.towerswatson.com.

Disability Outcome Measurement Tool Available for Free

The DASH Outcome Measure is a popular clinical tool developed by Toronto-based Institute for Work & Health researchers. It's a 30-item, self-report questionnaire that measures physical function and symptoms in people with musculoskeletal disorders of the upper limb. The tool gives clinicians and researchers the advantage of having a single, reliable instrument that can be used to assess any or all joints in the upper extremity. DASH stands for "Disabilities of the Arm, Shoulder and Hand."

A shorter version called the QuickDASH is also available. Both tools are valid, reliable, responsive and can be used for clinical and/or research purposes. However, because the full DASH Outcome Measure provides greater precision, it may be the best choice for clinicians who wish to monitor arm pain and function in individual patients.

You can download both, for free, by visiting www.dash.iwh.on.ca. The tool is available in languages other than English.


ABILITY:
THE POWER TO PERFORM
Research and ideas for your business success
"The right question leads to the right design."
- Cameron McNeill, Consulting Actuary, Buck Consultants
Visit www.buckconsultants.com/ability to download Cameron McNeill's article, *Do you really need a pension plan?* or any of the other articles, surveys, guides and reports in our "Ability" ideas series.

 BY HENA SINGH

CHANGES TO THE ONTARIO HUMAN RIGHTS CODE: GENDER IDENTITY AND GENDER EXPRESSION

On June 19, 2012, only days after a monumental celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Ontario Human Rights Code (which was originally enacted on June 15, 1962), Bill 33 received Royal Assent. As a result, immediate amendments were made to the Ontario Human Rights Code to prohibit discrimination and harassment on the basis of gender identity and gender expression. The bill, entitled "Toby's Act (Right to be Free from Discrimination and Harassment because of Gender Identity or Gender Expression)", was named after Toby Dancer, a transgendered musician who was born a male but believed he was truly a woman.

The bill was also passed shortly after the release of the April 2012 Human Rights Tribunal's decision in *XY v. Ministry of Government and Consumer Services*, which recognized transgendered persons as a historically disadvantaged group that requires protections under the Code-protected grounds of sex and/or disability. With the passing of Toby's Act, gender identity and gender expression are now independently protected grounds, thereby eliminating any ambiguity of the protections available for transgendered persons.

The amendments apply to all heads of human rights protections including:

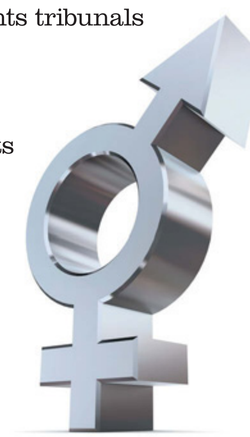
- Employment;
- Housing;
- Goods, services and facilities;
- Contracts; and
- Membership in a vocational association, such as trade unions, trade or occupational association or a self-governing profession.

While "gender identity" and "gender expression" are not explicitly defined in the Code, the Human Rights Commission's October 1999 Discussion Paper, "Toward a Commission Policy on Gender Identity," defined gender identity as:

> *…those characteristics that are linked to an individual's intrinsic sense of self that is based on attributes reflected in the person's psychological, behavioural and/or cognitive state. Gender identity may also refer to one's intrinsic sense of manhood or womanhood. It is fundamentally different from, and not determinative of, sexual orientation.*

Gender expression, as an extension of this definition, would be an individual's physical and biological appearance, dress, expression, behaviour or conduct, as it relates to their gender identity.

The amendments provide protections against discrimination and harassment for transgendered individuals or those individuals who may not identify with their birth-assigned sex and may dress and/or conduct themselves inconsistently with their birth assigned gender identity, including transsexuals, transvestites, intersex persons, cross-dressers and drag queens. These changes are consistent with a widely cited 1999 decision, *Meorin*. In this seminal case, the Supreme Court of Canada described an employer's obligations to design and uphold standards in the workplace that provide equal treatment to individuals. It is also worth noting that these standards are directly in line with Canada's diversity model and continue to be proudly upheld by human rights tribunals across the country.



Update Policies and Practices

In keeping with the human rights tribunals' practices, and the cases that interpret the Code, it can be assumed that the terms "gender identity" and "gender expression" will be broadly interpreted to ensure protections consistent with the purpose of the Code.

As a result, it is critical that Ontario employers ensure that their policies and practices are up-to-date with respect to the above-mentioned amendments to the Code. More specifically, employers should update their policies by outlining that "gender identity" and "gender expression" now accompany the previously existing prohibited grounds of discrimination and harassment (i.e., race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, record of offences, marital status, family status and disability). Apart from organizations that fall under the extremely limited exceptions for special interest organizations—e.g., religious organizations, where there is a rational connection between the exclusion and the purpose of the organization—employers should have policies and practices that demonstrate that candidates or employees will not be treated differentially as a result of their gender identity or gender expression.

Further, employers are required to ensure they accommodate transgendered individuals as required, up to the point of undue hardship. While such accommodations can take many different forms, the most obvious involve access to appropriate bathroom and change-room facilities.

Although Ontario was the first to change its human rights legislation to encompass explicit protections for gender identity and gender expression, it is anticipated that other provinces will follow with similar amendments to their human rights legislation. As a result, national employers should consider updating their policies nationwide by adding the protections with respect to gender identity and gender expression. **HR**

Hena Singh, founder of Toronto's Hena Singh Law, assists with workplace issues of all types—from the contemplation of the creation of an employment relationship, to assisting in its continuation, as well as termination. For more information, visit www.henasinghlaw.ca.

BY BRITTANY ROCKWELL

FOUR CRITICAL COMPONENTS FOR E-MENTORING PROGRAM SUCCESS

What happens when an organization wishes to shape its younger workforce, but those most qualified to train them are on the other side of the world? With new pressures to reduce costs in a global economy, organizations are being forced to develop increasingly innovative training and development practices. Moreover, organizations with a large demographic approaching retirement are looking frantically to find the *new* leaders of tomorrow.

These future visionaries and business leaders no longer fit one traditional mould: they are both men and women of all backgrounds, cultures and ethnic groups. Although this young and talented workforce is culturally rich and diverse, their training and integration is imperative to organizational success. In the past, mentoring has managed to fare reasonably well in promoting individuals to leadership roles, but its practice has acquired a significant set of limitations in recent years. With an increase in globalization and the advancement of technology, the traditional mentoring framework has changed considerably to incorporate various electronic communication channels.

Organizations have been looking to implement e-mentoring in order to break down geographic barriers, remove gender or cultural discrimination and reduce training and development costs. In e-mentoring, mentees could be simultaneously paired with multiple mentors from across the world, thus increasing their acquisition of knowledge and broadening their professional networks. However, like many recent technologies, there are serious implications to e-mentoring that are often overlooked by organizations. E-mentoring can be an extremely useful tool in promoting individuals to leadership roles; however, if not implemented properly, it can have a contradictory effect.

In partnership with the Canadian Alliance of Technology (CATA), researchers at the Telfer School of Management at the University of Ottawa

followed an executive-level e-mentoring program over the course of one year. The mentor group was comprised entirely of male and female chief information officers (CIOs); the mentees were a group of young women looking to advance into leadership roles within the high-tech industry. Researchers extensively interviewed the program participants at year-end in order to gather information pertaining to the strengths and weaknesses of the program and attempted to uncover any potential avenues of improvement that would be critical to the success of a similar program.

Although the participants came from various demographics and fields, the group generally stressed four key success factors in e-mentorship:

1. Guided Introductory Conversations: Participants who had had a positive experience often claimed that it had been due to the fact that both the mentee and the mentor had voiced their expectations of the program and of the other participant. Participants who had not had a positive experience often remarked that initial expectations and objectives had not be laid out, which frequently led to a lack of commitment and trust on behalf of the participants involved.

2. Continuous Evaluation and Feedback: Participants stressed the need to be given opportunities for feedback to both the mentor/mentee and the program coordinators. If a poor match had taken place, it was imperative for the coordinators to rectify the situation in the preliminary phase of the program, as opposed to near the end when the relationship had already dissipated.

3. E-Community: During the program, participants had often expressed a desire of community, where both mentees and mentors could have access to an interactive e-platform. By creating an e-community for the participants, both mentees and mentors could have access to reading material, surveys or coordinator contact information. Having access to resources and having a sense of belonging were imperative to long-term commitment from both participants.

4. E-Conferencing: Participants often commented on the utility of guided group discussion amongst all the program participants. This allowed for a viable avenue to promote knowledge-sharing and to broaden professional networks. By having a theme, the group addressed a common challenge that young professionals were often faced with, and were subsequently given various strategies by discussion leaders and mentors in order to learn how to overcome these particular obstacles.

For the young and talented professional, e-mentoring has managed to transcend numerous geographical boundaries and has granted these individuals simultaneous access to high-profile mentoring bodies. However, these communication channels can often hinder professional development and organizational success if not adopted adequately. Due to the use of e-channels and a lack of face-to-face interaction, e-mentoring schemes are difficult to structure and maintain. For this reason, commitment levels are often lower due to poor adoption strategies and a lack of resources offered to program participants.

Although its implementation is rigorous, the potential return on e-mentorship is significant. By referring to previous research on e-mentoring program development and by incorporating the four critical components of success discussed above, organizations will manage to reap the traditional benefits of mentoring, while improving leadership development, reducing costs, and most importantly, allowing for smoother integration. **HR**

BY MARY JANE LOUSTEL

DIVERSITY OF THOUGHT FUELS INNOVATION

Diversity in the workplace has never been more important. In today's global economy, more people are collaborating on teams that represent a wide variety of nationalities, ages, geographies and points of view.

As the composition of the workforce changes—boosted by an infusion of Gen Yers—so has the definition of diversity. While the traditional concept of diversity—race, colour, gender, religion, sexual orientation and disability—remains a cornerstone of any organization, we are now in the next phase of this important dimension of the workforce.

To remain competitive, companies today need to unite different cultures, languages, geographic origins and professions into an integrated whole while helping people appreciate individual differences. At IBM, we call it "diversity of thought."

Diversity of thought emphasizes awareness of, and respect for, personal differences—in attitudes, beliefs, experiences, traditions and approaches to problem-solving.

There is no doubt that diversity in all its dimensions produces societal benefits. But it is important to remember that diversity is also good for business. Diversity of thought yields tremendous innovation. By welcoming people with different backgrounds and points of view, a diverse workforce can better mirror and understand the markets it serves.

An organization's diversity becomes its competitive advantage. Since more customers, suppliers, influencers and strategic partners are global and multicultural, companies can position themselves to communicate with, and market to, a diverse range of organizations. Consciously building diverse teams helps drive the best results for clients, partners and society at large.

Diversity also creates a more effective workforce and positively impacts the race to attract and retain top talent. By encouraging a variety of viewpoints, people learn to work across differences, from working parents to recent graduates to professionals with experience in specialized industries, such as healthcare or banking. Employees even learn to find the ways their colleagues prefer to communicate, whether it is through email, phone calls or social media.

Organizations can create an inspiring and inclusive environment where people can fully express their views and solve even the most vexing problems, from product development to sales and marketing. Leaders also benefit from diverse perspectives since they can escape the "echo chamber" of agreement and fuel true innovation.

IBM's "diversity house" is founded on three pillars: equal opportunity; affirmative action to eliminate disadvantage and level the playing field for all employees; and, lastly, work/life balancing programs. Based on our collective experiences, here are some ways that organizations can foster a richly diverse workforce:

- Encourage employees to create informal communities around areas of interest, from professional specialties like project management, to recreational favourites like football. This enables people to share ideas and build skills in an open and inclusive forum.
- Formalized diversity networking groups also bring employees together and help create positive climates for building a mindset of inclusiveness outside company walls. We have nine diversity networking groups in Canada. The collaboration can be used as a catalyst for community involvement, like the Teaching Respect program initiated by our LGBT group. This program offers skilled professional volunteers—who all have experience in running diversity efforts within the company—a variety of lesson plans they can select to promote "no name calling" or "teaching respect" to students on a day of choice during the school year.
- Begin an ongoing conversation with employees about how they can balance responsibilities at work and home, and how technology can help them make the most of our "always on," 24/7 environment. For example, in 2010, we introduced web conferencing via the cloud and this model managed 85% of all our web conferencing needs that year, helping reduce travel requirements and making it easier for employees to collaborate.
- Provide guidelines for employees on how to use social media and collaborative technologies. This helps them feel comfortable being themselves while fully achieving their career potential.

Embracing diversity of people, cultures, thoughts and ideas are essential to innovation and marketplace success. Diversity also enables companies like IBM to attract and develop the globally aware leaders of tomorrow.

These leaders will require the ability to connect with diverse groups and inspire a new generation, to interact and manage in an entirely new way. Today leadership is about inclusion—connecting and linking, exerting influence and building interconnected systems. It is about re-architecting management systems so that they are based on collaboration and transparency. Success is dependent on fostering an unprecedented level of collaboration between differing stakeholders who historically have never co-operated—much less worked with one another.

This ability to influence change and interconnect with others in a meaningful way to collaborate and fuel new leadership agendas will foster greater competitiveness for visionary companies. There's never been a better time to make diversity of thought pervasive across your organization. In doing so, you will help our 21st century leaders accomplish their goals and fuel greater innovation in the process. HR

Mary Jane Loustel, leads the IBM Canada National Aboriginal Strategy, designed to advance Aboriginal inclusion in the technology sector.

THE ROLE OF HR IN INNOVATION: TIME FOR MORE STRUCTURE?

Believing innovations occur by simply relaxing a company's formal system of rules, policies and procedures or bureaucracy is a mistake

BY CHRIS BART

Innovation is a really hot topic these days, and rightfully so. Without it, it's hard to imagine how companies with mature, or maturing, products and services can generate and sustain long-term growth. When it comes to finding new ways to harness drive and commitment to innovation, much attention has recently been given to what is known as the three D's: de-bureaucratize, de-layer and de-centralize. In essence, what this entails is a sort of administrative "loosening up" or "letting go" in the workplace.

The theory is based on the notion that by creating a more informal workplace, one with fewer rules, procedures and policies, workers will become more creative and innovative. In recent times many large private and public organizations have jumped on this bandwagon and have undergone changes to their company's thinking and structure. On paper the theory looks great: "We'll just lighten up on the dress code, ad lib our meeting agendas and then boot that oppressive monster we call "bureaucracy" to the curb and in doing so become more creative." That's all we need! Right? Well….maybe not.

To think that innovations occur by simply relaxing the company's formal system of rules, policies and procedures—or bureaucracy—is a mistake. What needs to be kept in mind is that formal systems and procedures are the hallmarks to any large organization. So, rather than looking to completely demolish our existing organizational arrangements, perhaps it's time to re-evaluate the way we look at bureaucracy and ask ourselves how we can come up with formal structures, systems and procedures *that promote innovation*—ones that will actually direct and motivate workers to achieve their

Rather than looking to completely demolish our existing organizational arrangements, perhaps it's time to re-evaluate the way we look at bureaucracy and ask ourselves how we can come up with formal structures, systems and procedures that promote innovation.

firm's innovation goals. And its HR professionals who can—and should—play a critical role in making this happen.

They'll do this by diligently re-aligning existing recruitment, training, development, incentive and performance management systems with the organization's drive for innovation. And the litmus test is very straightforward. Each HR system, process and procedure needs to be evaluated through the question: Will this help to foster and encourage innovation? To the extent that any one HR component does not, innovation will be impeded.

NEW PRODUCT INNOVATION: THE 'DEVELOPMENT' PROBLEM

Virtually all discussions focusing on innovation will, at some point, include the topic of new product development. Yet, introducing new products is typically a costly investment. Even worse, approximately 30 to 40 per cent of all new products that come to market are eventually considered commercial failures. Accordingly, companies want to minimize the amount of time, money and energy they spend on products that are not going to be winners.

Recent research suggests, however, that the main reasons for a new product's failure are carelessness and a lack of rigour with which firms execute even the most fundamental new product activities, including market research, consumer needs assessment and business-competitive analysis. Faced with this reality, one has to wonder if the often touted wisdom of "loosening things up" and reducing so-called bureaucracy actually results in too much product flow and in having too many new product losers make it to market. Perhaps it's time to re-evaluate the notion that formal structures and tight administrative controls reduce the number of new products; perhaps it's time to focus on a more structured new-product development model that commands focus and attention to detail and only lets the winners out of the gate!

Let's face it, developing and launching new products is a very different activity—and requires different skills—than managing mature ones. Therefore, for innovation to take place, organizational members must be properly trained and motivated for this specific function to occur. This requires, as an essential first step, that firms take the time to clearly outline their new product expectations:

- Why are we doing this?
- What do we hope to accomplish?
- What business are we really in and how will the new product enhance this?
- Are there any restrictions on the type of new products to be developed or its features?

Doing so ensures that organizational members understand what and how the company wants things done, and why they should be done in a particular way.

This process, in turn, must be reinforced by an incentive system, which not only rewards innovative thinkers but also punishes members who fail to live up to the organization's innovative values. In this fashion, an organization is able to shape and influence both the attitudes and behaviours of its members toward innovation.

Clear expectations and proper training, accompanied by an aligned reward system are prime examples of how HR professionals can use and realign formal organizational arrangements to play a key role in promoting an innovative working environment. Moreover, these new product success "lessons" are actually "universal principles," which I have previously outlined in my 2011 business bestseller, *A Tale of Two Employees and The Person Who Wanted to Lead Them.*

The argument that innovation is spawned from a loosey-goosey work environment that rejects or minimizes the importance of formal structure and tight system controls is at best amusing. To think that innovation is always stifled as a result of any and all bureaucracy is misguided. What we need to understand is that failures in innovation occur not because bureaucracy is bad, per se; *failures happen because the wrong bureaucracy is in place.* And this is something that HR professionals can definitely fix.

Undoubtedly, there are some companies that will continue to subscribe to the notion that loosening things up in the workplace will produce higher levels of innovation. However, it would appear that the really smart companies are the ones whose HR professionals devote their attention to identifying and implementing those formally structured HR procedures, processes and systems that actually promote and reward innovative thinking. **HR**

Dr. Chris Bart, F.C.A., is the author of the mission implementation and leadership book, A Tale of Two Employees and the Person Who Wanted to Lead Them, *which has been one of the Top Ten Best Selling Business Book in Canada for nine consecutive years. He can be reached at www.corporatemissionsinc.com.*

INNOVATION: GO AHEAD, UPSET THE APPLE CART

Attracting creative thinkers and risk takers involves creative thinking and a little bit of risk

BY MICHELLE MORRA-CARLISLE

Funny that for a word that denotes advancement, "innovation," is apparently staying put. More than a pesky buzzword that won't go away, the "I" word has become a prime directive for HR: We must innovatively staff our companies with innovative people who can do innovative things.

Innovative hiring can mean finding new ways to hire for the same old jobs. Sometimes, it means hiring people with new skills for those jobs and ideas for leaner, more efficient practices. And in some cases, it starts with creating new positions to give new life to an established company.

PepsiCo, the corporation behind 22 major brands including Pepsi, Lay's, Gatorade, Quaker and Doritos, recently announced in a press release that it is investing in giving its brands "a consistent, compelling voice around the world's media channels and consumer touch points." Part of this strategy is to create the new role of chief design officer, for which the company hired Mauro Porcini, formerly of 3M (and an ex-showbiz producer) in June. His task is to "infuse design thinking" into the organization and culture.

New positions reflect the need to not only compete in a tough economy, but also to comply with environmental standards and demonstrate a sensitivity to corporate social responsibility…hence the emergence of a whole new category—green jobs—over the past decade. Innovation created these positions.

KNOW WHAT INNOVATORS LOOK LIKE

A far cry from the "good worker" of your grandfather's day, who toiled for a salary and a gold watch, the "innovator" might be exactly the type that might have made your grandfather's boss leery. Could a risk-taker be trusted? Could a free-thinking radical be part of a team and fit into a company's vision?

Today's answers are yes and yes. As Steve Jobs said in an early Apple ad, "Here's to the crazy ones. The misfits. The rebels. The troublemakers. The round pegs in the square holes… They push the human race forward. And while some may see them as the crazy ones, we see genius."

But recruiting for innovative characteristics doesn't have to mean sacrificing other traditionally valued qualities, such as reliability and a general respect for one's company and co-workers. Raw talent comes into play, but not at the expense of

ARE YOU INNOVATIVE?

In an IBM study of HR leaders in 2011, HR leaders agreed that driving creativity and innovation is their No. 1 business challenge. Yet only 50% were doing anything about it.

SUGGESTIONS FOR INNOVATIVE HIRING

- Define innovation relative to the organization, department, team and position to be filled, and develop a hiring plan based on that definition;
- Make it a primary goal to hire innovators;
- Remove any barriers to filling innovative positions;
- Know and promote the elements of the organization that would attract innovators;
- Assess candidates for key innovative personality traits;
- Redefine how to identify and engage innovation in an interview; and
- Review how the organization defines position requirements, attracts candidates, conducts interviews and assesses capabilities, with the goal of hiring innovators.

Source: Career Advancement Employment Services (CAES) Inc.

experience. Rebels with a cause, today's innovative people have the whole package. Where are these people?

Caliper Canada helps companies hire the right person for the right job with the aid of psychometric assessments. For clients seeking innovative people, they assess for certain behavioural traits that are creative and thinking based. The candidate must demonstrate certain competencies: ability to recognize problems, issues and opportunities; tendency to evaluate and consider alternative options and solutions; and ability to analyze underlying issues and root causes. Caliper also looks for what it calls "dominant behavioural traits": idea-oriented, given to abstract reasoning, flexible, risk-taking; but also thorough, cautious and reliable.

"What we're measuring are people's natural tendencies and key motivations," says Michael Dunn, a client advisor with the company. "Then we take that information and look at the job. When we look for someone with a natural tendency to be innovative, it doesn't mean you wouldn't get an innovative idea out of a person with more routine-based traits, such as being accommodating. But the likelihood is increased in someone with those creative, thinking-based traits," he says. "It's just the way some people are hard-wired."

KEEP IT HUMAN

In this industry innovation isn't about machines. It's about people hiring people, a practice Jim Gilchrist says should be automated as little as possible. In the early 2000s, when online recruitment was becoming mainstream, it was considered valuable for the sheer numbers of applicants. But Gilchrist, who is president of Burlington, ON-based Career Advancement Employment Services (CAES) Inc., believes that was a situation of quantity, not of quality.

As he tells employers in his consulting practice, web postings, job fairs, newspaper ads or corporate website job postings do not necessarily attract talented people. In an article on his company website, he writes that innovative people, "…are in demand and they know it. If you want to compete for high-demand innovative people, you would be wise to proactively find them and recruit them rather than hope that they find you."

Discouraging shortcuts in hiring, he is a big fan of conversations—long ones—and appropriate assessment tools. "You have to invest the time to get to know the person," he tells *HR Professional*. "The longer you spend, the further you'll get to the truth. There is no quick fix."

Because employed people don't necessarily check the job ads, searching out the cream of the crop often requires approaching people who are already employed. This often starts with a phone call. Be professional, not sales-y, Gilchrist advises. Spend more time asking them what they want in their career, rather than overfocusing on the role of the company. And don't phone a person out of the blue and ask if he or she wants more money.

"For innovative people, money is not the prime motivator," Gilchrist says. "The remuneration package needs to be appropriate, but it's more about providing challenging work, personal growth, technical development, mobility opportunities and overall work/life balance."

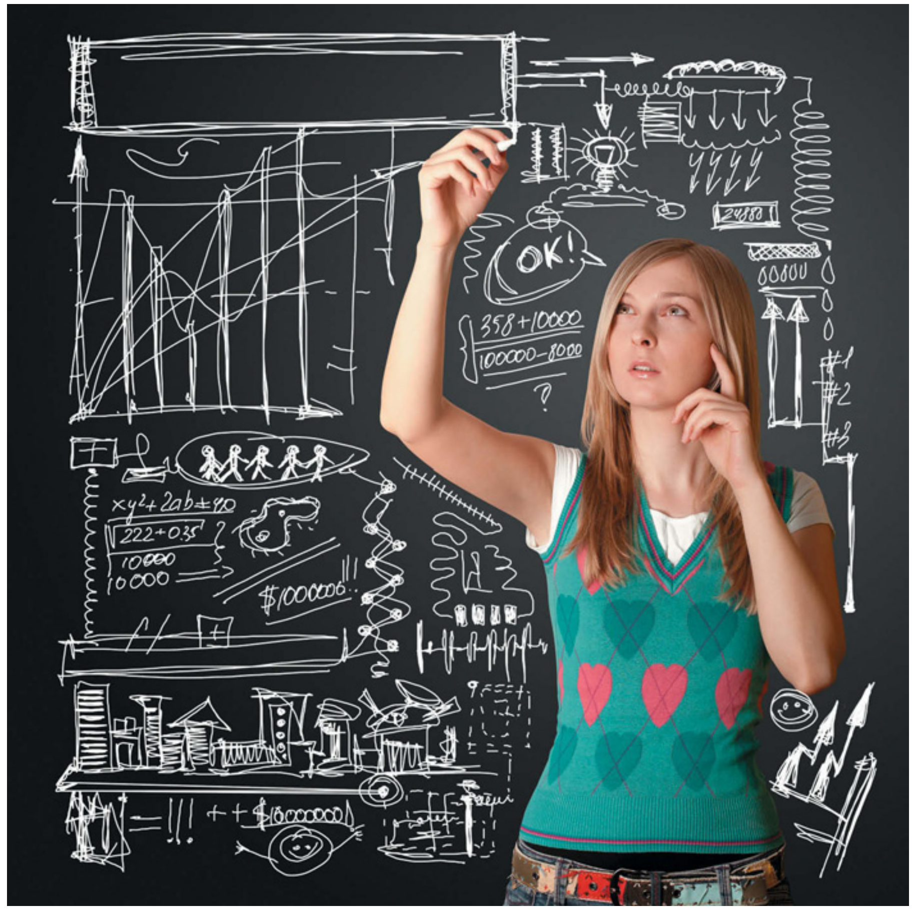
SET THEM FREE

When Andrea Lekushoff left her position as a senior public relations practitioner to freelance, she started noticing a steady stream of other senior people in her field doing exactly the same thing. This "mass exodus," as she describes it, was due to jobs that didn't meet the personal demands of these professionals, many of whom were women who needed time to care for their children or their own aging parents.

Noticing this trend inspired Lekushoff to found Broad Reach Communications, a virtual PR firm comprised of a network of senior freelancers across the country, in 2004. Many of the 20 associates with whom she now works have held very senior positions in large, established, traditional agencies.

"Our virtual workplace sort of redefines work as something you do, not where you go," Lekushoff says. Her approach attracts talented workers, and Broad Reach in turn attracts clients—including Deloitte, Cadbury, Independent Distillers, Nelson Mandela Children's Fund and many more.

Lekushoff would like to see employers shift their thinking away from requiring long hours and face time from their employees. She has seen some PR agencies attempt to be flexible by packing five days of work into a four-day week. "They're watching their talent walk out the door," she says.



Meanwhile, as freelancers, the PR professionals on the Broad Reach team get to choose their hours and set their own rates. Some work 10 hours a week, others three or six. "In our model, as long as they get their work done that's okay with us," Lekushoff says.

A willingness to accommodate employees' needs for work-life balance benefits everyone. What's innovative about Lekushoff's approach, she says, is the calibre of employees she has on a given project—senior PR people who are not only experienced but very grateful for the flexibility. Thus motivated, they do stellar work, so business thrives and clients are happy.

Lekushoff considers having a virtual workplace a definite competitive advantage. "Of course we want to make a profit," she says, "but one of our first questions is, 'What is your lifestyle and how can we fit into that?' Not the other way around." For this business, recruitment expenses are virtually nil. Talented associates are happy to tell Lekushoff about others in their field, or to tell them about her business.

Hiring can be a cinch when you set your people free. Apple is known for hiring, rewarding and recognizing employees who share a desire, energy and enthusiasm toward a common goal. Even after substantial change and growth the company has retained a casual working environment that seems to promote great performance and innovation.

Innovators are risk-takers, so it stands to reason that companies wanting to hire innovators must go out on a limb and offer the kind of work environment today's talented people demand. HR

VERIFYING FOREIGN CREDENTIALS: IT'S A SMALL WORLD AFTER ALL

Resources and tips for ensuring a diverse workplace

BY J. LYNN FRASER

What's a scarce resource in Canada today? It's not clean water, lumber or minerals—it's skilled labour. Baby boomers are retiring and Canada's workforce is aging. Statistics Canada estimates that by the mid 2020s most of Canada's labour force growth will be sourced from immigration. Many Canadian employers recognize that overseas applicants can fill their need for skilled professionals and tradespeople as well as enhance their companies' ability to compete in the global marketplace.

The process of verifying the language skills, education and employment history of overseas applicants might seem daunting; however, there are government and non-profit agencies, private companies and university or college bridging programs that can simplify the process. Below are some of the standard steps your organization should take to ensure their internationally educated professional and skilled employees have taken on their journey to employment in Canada.

STEP 1: OBTAIN THE RIGHT DOCUMENTS

A key first step when considering an overseas candidate is to be aware of the documents needed. An online guide provided by the Canadian government's Foreign Credentials Referral Office (FCRO) for overseas applicants to Canada lists the documents newcomers to Canada need. This workbook is also helpful for employers as to the documents they should expect from overseas job applicants, such as translated (by approved translators) original or notarized copies of degrees, diplomas and certificates from the respective institutions. As well, education-related program descriptions and grade transcripts should also be made available to employers, as well as letters from professional or regulatory bodies and employers. Employers can request that these documents be sent directly to them from the institutions and companies involved.

STEP 2: VERIFY OR TEST LANGUAGE SKILLS

A second step for employers is to ensure that the candidate's English

and/or French language skills meet Canadian government standards. The best-known language assessment test worldwide is TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language). Universities, colleges, institutions and professional associations in 130 countries accept TOEFL language test scores in reading, listening to, writing and speaking English. Other tests of English language proficiency include: English as a Second Language (ESL); English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL); and the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). Organizations that can be contacted regarding language requirements and training include Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) Programs, offered by Service Canada, as well as the YMCA's Language Assessment and Referral Centres.

The FCRO advises that the level of French or English language ability that a profession requires may be different from that required to immigrate to Canada. Employers can contact the many provincial and government websites available to see what the language, skills and education requirements are for a regulated or unregulated profession. Regulatory bodies and apprenticeship authorities are also helpful. The Interprovincial Standards Red Seal Program sets a "standard of excellence" for individuals in the skilled trades. With the successful completion of the Red Seal's interprovincial exam, an individual obtains a provincial or territorial certificate of qualification and apprenticeship.

STEP 3: CREDENTIAL CHECKS

Dr. Phani Radhakrishnan, a senior lecturer in organizational behaviour and human resource management at the University of Toronto, observes that Canadian companies, "are wondering, but aren't researching their doubts. People have perceptions about certain countries and make huge assumptions about a country because *they* don't know the country."

She adds, "Recruiters should minimize their unfounded assumptions at every stage and should take the extra step to verify."

Organizations can research educational institutions through respected international rankings such as those from the Times Higher Education World University and the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU), for example. They also rate the particular strengths of universities. The website of Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials (CICIC.ca) lists Canadian agencies that assess credentials. Additionally, the International Qualifications Network, established by the FCRO, also offers information and services concerning credential checking.

Credential and background checking is also provided by companies, such as BackCheck and Garda Global. When choosing a company to do credential checks on potential overseas applicants, get references from the company's past clients.

"Look at the methodology of the company, its experience and familiarity with the state, province or country," suggests Dan Fallows, executive director at Garda Pre-Employment Screening Services. Companies, he warns, may check the equivalency of an overseas degree but may not "call to the registrar's office to see if the person actually has a degree from the institution."

Ensuring that credential-checking companies are thorough is important. Fallows cautions, "It is also important that the company understands the culture of the country where the checks are being performed."

Dave Dinesen, president and CEO of BackCheck, adds, "How long it takes to check education, employment and criminal record depends on the country as some countries do not centralize their criminal records." Dinesen believes that potential clients should look to the skills of a company's employees and the technology they use.

STEP 4: CHECK OUT BRIDGING PROGRAMS

A fourth step to consider for sourcing international candidates is Canadian university and college bridging programs, as these programs have already vetted the educational credentials and language abilities of their programs' students. Bridging programs smooth the transition of overseas candidates into Canadian culture and work environments.

"We orient immigrant professionals to the Ontario work culture and context," states Nora Priestly, project manager with York University's Bridging Program for Internationally Educated Professionals. The program works with professionals from over 40 countries.

"Many come to York on their own, usually after a 'cold search' for work," Priestly notes, because employers are not sure if their degrees are valid. She says that this can sometimes be code from an employer meaning "I'm not sure how you will fit in." The York University bridging program offers customized classes to fill in the gaps of language or training as well as providing Canadian work experience.

STEP 5: MAINTAIN OPENNESS

An important final step for employers to remember is openness. International employees can offer Canadian society and workplaces an abundance of social capital.

"Something that should be taken into account is that you have a different context that you have grown in. You have a mindset that is different [and] have been exposed to cultures and work where things can be done differently," observes Dr. Fernando Santiago-Rodriguez, senior program officer, Innovation for Inclusive Development with Canada's International Development Research Centre.

Santiago-Rodriguez comments that this different perspective and approach to problem solving applies to all categories of occupations. "Those working in an environment with no equipment, who are used to harsh conditions, have to find a solution using what they have on hand—they improvise," he says.

Radhakrishnan agrees that employees from different cultures bring different skills. Stating, "In South East Asian culture they have better teamwork skills. Perhaps they are not as assertive as leaders, but rather than change them, it is more beneficial to see how they perceive teams and to learn from them."

Russia-raised Andrey Bolgov is a graduate of York University's bridging program. The majority of his international marketing experience, both in work experience and in his MBA in international marketing, is German-based. Today he is a marketing communications specialist at Maplesoft Technologies in Waterloo, ON, with subsidiaries in France and Germany. Bolgov's understanding of the European approach to communications versus a Canadian approach—a difference of relationship building versus getting a message delivered in a straightforward manner—as well as his ability to speak five languages, has created what Bolgov calls "a good fit."

He notes, "I understand the German mentality and it's good for our European subsidiaries to have this type of support." Maplesoft's marketing communications are developed in Canada for the German market. "Maplesoft can go into the German market with certainty versus using what works in Canada. Newcomers with experience in a market narrows the time and money needed [by a company] to adjust their strategy."

"To be global you have to understand what is going on in the world. To design a product for Africa or Asia based on a Canadian perspective and needs won't work," states Dr. Hadi-Khan Mahabadi, a recent recipient of the Order of Canada. Mahabadi, born in India, is renowned for his innovations in polymer science and the promotion of science in Canada. For Mahabadi diversity includes gender,

age, background, ethnicity and life experience. His advice to Canadian companies is to create programs that help skilled immigrants grow within their companies; otherwise, they will lose their competitive advantage. “The world is getting smaller and a diverse workforce is an advantage. Diversity of thought and innovation in industry equals success.”

An internationally sourced workforce is key to the future success of Canadian companies. A company with a multicultural workforce has built-in intellectual and social capital; a wealth of diverse skills, creativity and experience, as well as an ability to draw on professional and social relationships and knowledge worldwide. To help build this capital for your company it’s important to find the right international candidates. By following a few basic steps employers can ensure their own and Canada’s economic success and global competitiveness. **HR**

RESOURCES

International Qualifications Network: http://tinyurl.com/cne6htc

Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials: www.cicic.ca/415/credentialassessment-services.canada

Alliance of Credential Services in Canada: www.canalliance.org/index.en.stm

Foreign Credential Referrals Office: www.credentials.gc.ca/employers/roadmap/section1-1.asp

Foreign Credentials Referrals Office: ‘Planning to Work in Canada? An Essential Workbook for Newcomers’: www.credentials.gc.ca/immigrants/workbook/index.asp

To check the qualifications for regulated and unregulated occupations see: **Occupation Facts:** www.credentials.gc.ca/immigrants/factsheets/index.asp;

Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials: Occupational profiles: http://tinyurl.com/ctpl4xm

To check international rankings of universities:

Times Higher Education World University Rankings: www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/world-university-rankings/2010-2011/top-200.html

Academic Ranking of World Universities: www.arwu.org/

Red Seal Standards: www.red-seal.ca

Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) Program: www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/goc/linc.shtml/

FCRO: www.credentials.gc.ca/employers/roadmap/section1-1.asp

TOEFL: www.ets.org/toefl

BY DEBORAH LEGROVE

SIX RETENTION STRATEGIES TO OVERTURN MANAGEMENT TURNOVER

The executive director looked at the letter of resignation in dismay. This was the third time in five years her nonprofit organization would have to find a new member of the management team. This would likely mean months of recruiting and orientation—an expensive and time-consuming process that would take a heavy toll on the agency's budget and time. Was there something more, she pondered, they should be doing to retain key people?

Management turnover can be an expensive issue for any organization. When it comes to small and midsize nonprofits with tight budgets and small teams, however, turnover can quickly become *too* expensive, hindering capacity and productivity.

Sadly, turnover in these organizations tends to be high—the "Opportunity Knocks 2010 Employee Retention and Vacancy Report" found the average rate among larger nonprofits is 16 per cent and nearly 25 per cent among smaller ones. For HR professionals who are staff members and volunteers for these organizations, promoting the following six strategies can help to overturn turnover and retain valued leaders.

1: Meet the needs of young leaders

Increasingly, today's managers are generation X and Y. Nonprofits must be prepared to meet their career needs, which are significantly different than those of baby boomers. Among the most important expectations of these employees are:

- less work/more life: they want to make a difference, but their personal lives are a priority, so they expect flexible hours and do not want to be on call 24/7;
- shared leadership with less hierarchy and more collaboration; and
- the latest technology, including smartphones, tablets, social media access, instant messaging.

2: Promote "sponsoring"

Ambitious employees want support in developing their skills and careers. They want to be listened to, understood and coached. They also want to know how they are progressing and appreciate detailed feedback. Sponsoring top employees shows your team you want them to succeed. A sponsor is a senior individual who provides powerful backing that inspires, propels and protects an employee through management challenges. Sponsors can help to keep valued employees engaged by encouraging their growth in the organization: "here's where you want to go and here's how to get there—I'll help you navigate the way."

3: Help tomorrow's leaders build strong networks
Aspiring executives value guidance in developing their external networks. These connections offer benefits both to the individual (relationships, recognition, information sharing) as well as to their organizations (best practices, ideas, opportunities). Offer advice regarding associations, groups, conferences, etc., that can deliver these advantages.

4: Implement enterprise-wide succession planning
Succession planning should be more than a replacement strategy for retiring executives—it should show all staff a path to success in the organization. Involving everyone fosters employee development, retains knowledge capital for the long term, ensures leadership continuity for the organization and provides tomorrow's leaders with a picture of the future.

5: Lead by example
In order to demonstrate what's possible and to inspire staff to achieve it, senior leaders should personally show the way. Committing to a position for at least three to five years validates the importance of doing a job well, learning the relevant skills and responsibilities and experiencing the results of good decision making.

6: Adopt talent-management best practices
Employees want to know how they are contributing to the organization's goals. Provide them with a clear line of sight by cascading these goals down into measurable objectives for departments or teams and for each individual within them. Start with your strategic plan and determine the roles that need to be filled in order to achieve this plan. Then link your talent management practices (acquiring, placing, developing, managing and rewarding employees) to organizational goals so you have the right people in the right positions.

A compelling mission draws talented leaders to nonprofits; implementing these six retention strategies can keep them engaged in carrying out yours. HR

Deborah Legrove, CFRE, is president of crawfordconnect Inc. (www.crawfordconnect.com), an executive search firm that connects nonprofit organizations with executives, managers and fundraisers who drive success. Contact her at 416-977-2913 or Deborah@crawfordconnect.com.

 BY GREG HYMAN

BUILDING A CULTURE OF TRUST

The best interests of business and the economy at large are served when leaders encourage trust-building habits.

Illustration: Michael Eddenden

When Ralph Waldo Emerson said distrust is expensive, the revered essayist and father of American transcendentalism was not referring to financial loss. Yet, for today's business leaders, it's all too apparent that organizations suffer both culturally and fiscally if trust is not made a fundamental value in the workplace. We've learned this the hard way, as a look at the day's business news demonstrates.

In this climate of pervasive distrust, human resources executives across the globe now find themselves charged with leading a renewed drive for increased trust in the workplace. But before determining where to begin, one must first understand how we got here and which roads lead out.

Distrust in the Workplace Growing

Many of us have experienced the consequences of misplaced trust at one time or another in our personal lives, and thus have learned to dole out our trust with care. But what quantifiable effects does trust have in the public sphere? Take, for example, estimates made by bestselling author and trust expert Steven M. R. Covey, who has said that on the national scale, the cost of complying with rules and regulations put into place due to a lack of trust ranges in the billions of dollars. It follows, then, that the best interests of individual businesses and the economy at large are served when leaders encourage trust-building habits.

Unfortunately, distrust within the workplace is growing. Media reports of colossal malfeasance at the hands of high-profile business leaders has likely played a part in this trend, as have increased layoffs and cutting back during the recent global recession. Research cited by Covey indicates that only 49 per cent of employees trust senior management. Meanwhile, only 28 per cent of people believe CEOs are a credible source of information, whereas in 2011 nearly 50 per cent of the population trusted CEOs. These trends serve as an indication of the risks we face when trust in the workplace is not warranted or supported.

To mitigate these risks, leaders should focus on addressing the key factors that encourage employees to engage with their jobs, co-workers, supervisors and organizations. By employing best practices that target these drivers of engagement, human resources and management can support a trusting culture that attracts, engages and retains high-performing employees.

1. Communication

Clear, effective, transparent communication is paramount in a high-trust workplace. However, even the most well-intentioned communicators can be stymied by the complexities of conveying information in an organizational setting.

According to Kevin Sheridan, author of *The New York Times*' bestseller *Building a Magnetic Culture*, ineffective communication in the workplace is a sticking point for more organizations than many people realize. "Our research has shown that 75 per cent of employees do not receive most information concerning the workplace from their managers. That is significant. When employees aren't getting crucial information from their managers, they inevitably go to their peers, or the 'employee grapevine,' to get it. But the grapevine perpetuates the spread of misinformation, and can negatively impact trust," Sheridan notes.

To support the flow of accurate, transparent information, management should take responsibility for communicating news to their teams. One best practice is to call a group huddle with your team after company-wide meetings to make sure that your staff understands what they've heard and to address any questions they may have. For HR leaders, contributing to effective communication at the organization level also means recruiting highly skilled communicators for leadership roles.

2. Managers' Leadership Abilities

Trust is not only about truthfulness, but also about a person's reliability and tendency to follow through on expectations. When someone in a leadership position isn't appropriately equipped to successfully lead their team, reliability and follow-through necessarily suffer. As such, it is imperative that senior leadership and HR work together to develop a staffing model that not only gets the right individuals on the bus, but puts them in the right seats, as well.

When considering promotions, employees' technical, social and leadership skills should be assessed. Employees who lack strong social and leadership skills may not be ready to adopt managerial roles. Those employees who have aspirations to lead should be identified and paired with managers and mentors who can help them develop the skills they'll need to meet their goals. When managers are empowered with strong leadership abilities, trust will prevail within their work groups.

3. Relationships with Senior Leaders

Whereas most employees view their relationship with their direct supervisor in a fairly positive light, employees often feel somewhat ambivalent about senior leadership. These feelings are compounded when the structure of the organization is such that employees don't have an opportunity to interact regularly with senior leaders. This naturally leads to employee doubt concerning the company's vision, job stability and their perception that the contributions of all team members are equally valued. In short, employees' relationships with senior management have strong links with their feelings of trust toward their employer.

Carolyn Clark, senior vice-president of HR at Fairmont Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, has experienced this connection first-hand. Clark believes the most important role of leaders at Fairmont, an international hotel chain employing approximately 30,000 workers across the globe, is to build relationships with their colleagues and subordinates by creating trust. "We create trust by listening to our colleagues, setting expectations and following up, and holding one another accountable," says Clark.

The result for Fairmont has been a culture where employees view one another as family, and enjoy a strong sense of mutual trust. To achieve this high level of workplace trust, human resources leaders can also facilitate opportunities for senior leadership and line-level employees to engage in meaningful dialogue. This can mean hosting monthly town hall meetings, creating a blog platform on which senior leaders and employees alike can share news and help educate their peers, or developing a plan for leaders to "manage by walking around." This latter method has proven especially effective for supporting the perception among employees that senior leadership cares about them, a perception that could increase the tendency to trust.

Trust is Earned

Trust is not a value that can be taken for granted. Rather, it must be earned and constantly tended. As leaders tasked with driving business outcomes through strategic management of talent and workplace culture, human resources executives must ensure that employees' trust is earned at every level of the organization.

By addressing communication, supervisors' leadership abilities and employees' relationships with senior management, human resources leaders can create a strong culture of trust in the workplace. And when trust is the rule rather than the exception, positive business outcomes will follow. **HR**

Greg Hyman is associate marketing project manager at Avatar HR Solutions, a national leader in the quality improvement services industry. He can be reached at gregh@hrsolutionsinc.com. For further information, please visit www.avatarhrsolutions.com.

INTERVIEW WITH AN HR HERO

BY STEPHEN MURDOCH

MICHELE MIGUS: VERSATILITY AND BROAD EXPERIENCE KEY TO HR ROLE

HRP: How and when did you decide on a career in human resources?

MM: When I started my honours bachelor of commerce degree, I was intending on becoming an accountant. I was drawn into the human element of work by my experience as a summer student at General Motors of Canada. The theories outlined in my organizational behaviour course came to life, and I became intrigued by the human dynamic of work. I shifted the focus of my degree to personnel and industrial relations, following it with an MIR (masters in industrial relations).

HRP: What was your first HR-related position?

MM: I was fortunate enough to have a summer placement in Stelco as part of the Student Training in the Industrial Relations Program run by the Ministry of Labour. My first real human resources-related position was as a labour relations officer with the community services department at Metropolitan Toronto. It was a wonderful opportunity to build experience as well as to learn about the challenges of providing diverse services such as housing and homes for the aged to the public.

HRP: What is your current role?

MM: I am currently the director of human resources with Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences. The organization recently moved health, safety and wellness under the human resources umbrella, rounding out my team providing all HR services, except payroll. I have a lead role in furthering the organization's objective of building a great work/life experience for the hospital staff, who are so important to the work we do with patients.

HRP: What do you love about your current job?

MM: I love what this organization is about. I have people who are very dear to me who have struggled with mental health issues. I

was talking to one of them about our positive approaches to supporting patients. They shared with me their treatment experiences over the years. The effect of their experience on me was profound, as prior to this, I had never previously thought about that aspect of how they coped with their illness. In terms of my direct role, I enjoy the breadth, the dynamic environment and working with a great team.

HRP: What are some of the challenges you face in your job?

MM: Being a 24/7 operation means issues can arise at any time that require immediate action. With rotating shift schedules and a small number of satellite locations, it is more challenging to communicate and provide HR services to our clients. We will be leveraging technology to put more services at their fingertips.

NUTSHELL QUESTIONS

First Job: My first job was picking peas and beans for a local farmer. It was hard, hot work, but rewarding, as there was a great effort-to-outcome linkage.

Best boss and why: My best boss was also my greatest mentor. She inspired the best in the people who worked for her. She was a great supporter of staff on a personal and professional level. She supported their development, providing great opportunities for growth and success. She was a true leader that inspired people to follow her, not because of her position or where she fit in the hierarchy, but because people trusted her.

Source of current inspiration/motivation: My current inspiration is the deputy CEO of Ontario Shores. He is passionate about the work we do. He gives so much of himself to the role and inspires others to do the same. I am also motivated by the organization itself. Helping our organization become the best it can be will be my focus into the future. I want to be there as we continue to look for advances in mental health treatment and reduction of the stigma associated with mental illness.

Ideal retirement: My ideal retirement is on a small hobby farm with lots of space around me, a couple of horses and access to miles of trails. I currently volunteer running a Pony Club Branch in Brooklin, ON. I see myself continuing to volunteer in that type of organization and others, such as building houses with Habitat for Humanity.

Favourite author or book and why: I recently picked up on a series of books written by Matthew Reilly. They are adventure novels, full of twists and turns and narrow escapes. They really trigger the imagination and fall into a world entirely different than that of human resources.

Best advice: It may sound cliché, but treat others as you would like to be treated yourself. It reminds me to be compassionate in my approach. It doesn't change the tough decisions that have to be made, but it can inform how we approach them.

I was also once approached for a completely different role within the organization I worked for. I declined, as I was very happy and comfortable in the role I was in. The individual said to me, "When I find I am extremely comfortable in a role, it is time for me to move on to new challenges." This has guided some of my decisions at different points in my career. I sometimes wonder what would have happened had I taken that opportunity, but I do believe things unfold as they do for a reason. The job and organization you choose must let you be true to yourself and your values and beliefs. Otherwise, you will spend much time trying to resolve the conflict internally, rather than being passionate about the work you do.

HRP: Do you have any tips for those want to advance their careers in human resources?

MM: Diversify your experience and engage in continuous learning. Look for what the organization needs done and help fill the gap. Establish yourself as a key strategic partner in your organization's long-term plans.

HRP: Where do you feel the field of HR is headed?

MM: Just like every other aspect of business, HR will be asked to do more with less. The traditional model of the human resources department handling all aspects of HR may be challenged where cost-effective options exist to secure services through other providers. There is still value in the traditional HR model, as the organization can reflect its culture in all aspects of their HR service.

Individuals in HR will be expected to bring broader skill sets and more business acumen to their role. At the same time, an aging population will create challenges for finding key talent, particularly in the public and broader public sector as compensation for those groups and operating budgets continue to be placed under pressure.

HRP: Where do you see yourself in the next five-to-10 years?

MM: I joined Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences as its director of HR in October of 2011. Ontario Shores had just unveiled a new five-year strategic plan, which includes shifting the organization towards becoming a research hub in the areas of geriatric and adolescent mental health, while continuing to look for ways to deliver services effectively to an expanding client base. With these opportunities and challenges ahead, I will be able to continue to grow in my current role.

HRP: Any advice for those just entering HR?

MM: My advice for those just entering HR is to gain as broad a range of experience as possible before you decide to specialize. Versatility will help you land a job and keep it. In addition to being very rewarding, volunteering in leadership and support roles within non-profit organizations is an extremely valuable way to gain experience. Learning the framework for project management is also extremely valuable, as HR is called upon more and more for that skill set. **HR**

BY ERIC BERGMAN

PRODUCTIVE PRESENTATIONS WITH POSITIVE OUTCOMES

According to recent estimates, between 30 and 40 million PowerPoint presentations are created each day. If each presentation averages 35 slides, simple math tells us that enough slides are produced each week to provide every man, woman and child on the planet with a new slide.

That's a tremendous number of human resources expended worldwide on a single activity. But is it effective?

"Today we use technology such as PowerPoint because we can, not because it results in improvements," says John Sweller, PhD., emeritus professor of education at the University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia. "I feel the evidence is overwhelming that the way in which we currently organize presentations is ineffective and inappropriate."

Sweller is one of the world's leading experts in cognitive science—how the human mind processes information to learn and understand. His research has been cited more than 6,000 times and he has graduated more than 40 doctoral students.

In this, his research is absolutely clear. When we try to read and listen at the same time, we actually understand and retain less than if we do either one separately. Working memory becomes overloaded. We can't keep up, so we give up.

Unfortunately, reading and listening at the same time virtually describes the modern presentation. And that's what "Death by PowerPoint" is all about.

Improving Productivity

As a human resources professional, if you notice that there's a direct relationship between the PowerPoint being shown in internal presentations and the number of people checking e-mail, how can you influence others so that your organization evolves to productive exchanges that make the best possible use of everyone's time?

It's simple really. All it takes is five steps and two changes in behaviour—one change on the part of audiences, the other on the part of presenters. The five steps are the easy part:

1. Put the audience first
2. Structure the conversation
3. Minimize visual aids
4. Convey your message & personality
5. Answer questions throughout

Changing Audience Behaviour

For audiences, the logic is of these five steps is virtually irrefutable.

What audience wouldn't want its needs to be put first? If you asked a hundred audiences to state their preference, how many would choose a presentation over a structured conversation? One conjures memories of bullet points and boredom; the other evokes images of a back-and-forth exchange.

What audience wouldn't want presenters to minimize visual aids? When has someone ever walked out of a presentation and said: "Gee, I don't think 35 slides were nearly enough?"

What audience wouldn't prefer being conversed with, instead of being presented to? And in a world moving toward two-way exchanges, we would never start a text conversation by typing: "I'm going to send you 10 screens of information. When I'm done, you can text back your questions."

If this wouldn't be acceptable in a text conversation, why is it now acceptable when people are in the same room together, regardless of whether the projector is on? Audiences need to start asking for a higher standard that makes productive use of the group's time.

Changing Presenter Behaviour

In theory, since the five steps are logical, they should be easy to implement. But they're not, especially if presenters use PowerPoint (or Keynote or Prezi or any other slideware program) to develop the content for their presentations. Until that behaviour changes, presentations will never improve.

When PowerPoint is used to develop content, more time is spent fiddling with slides than thinking about audience needs. When slides are developed first (instead of last), presenters can't be conversational because everyone (including them) is distracted by what's on the screen or what's in the deck.

Presentations consist of too many slides with too much on each slide. And the presenter won't want questions during the presentation because the carefully conceived sequence will get off track, even though the audience quit listening.

The next time you're at a presentation, look around. If people are checking their e-mail, they're sending a message: They'd like to salvage something from their time. It's a noble effort, but is it truly supporting the group's productivity? And, as a human resources professional, is there a way in which you can help set a higher standard?

Eric Bergman, BPA, ABC, APR, MC, has been a professional communicator for more than 30 years. His latest book, Five Steps to Conquer 'Death by PowerPoint', *is available from Amazon. Contact Eric at ericj@fivestepstoconquer.com.*

BY ANTON DIMNIK

FIRST DO THE MATH, THEN INNOVATE

Understanding four fundamental financial concepts allows HR to be a trusted business partner

Research shows there is a positive relationship between financial discipline and innovation. Innovative organizations are more likely to have formal investment processes, post investment reviews, comprehensive budgets, financial performance targets and financially literate employees. This surprises many people who expect a negative relationship between finance and innovation: dour accountants saying no to every new idea. But if you think about it, a good financial system demands focus and coordination. It offers an opportunity for questioning and learning and ensures that sufficient cash from successful innovations is available for future innovations.

The Finance You Need to Know

In addition to traditional HR responsibilities, HR leaders must be involved in the early stages of any major decision. HR professionals must be a member of the senior management team to bring an HR perspective to discussions of big innovations and to anticipate and resolve HR issues before they become problems.

Every functional leader aspires to sit at the executive table and be a trusted business partner. The price of admission is a deep understanding of the business and a comprehension of the language, concepts and tools of finance. So what finance does an HR leader need to know? Here's a list of four fundamental tools and concepts.

1. Discounted Cash Flow (DCF): Many companies use ROI to assess short-term, operating-budget initiatives. But for strategic, long-term initiatives, most companies use DCF. The underlying concept of DCF is time-value of money: cash you receive in the future is worth less than cash that you have in your hand today because of risk (uncertainty of future cash flow), inflation (future cash has less purchasing power) and opportunity (cash today can be invested). When you invest in a major initiative, you typically spend today's dollars with the expectation of receiving dollars in the future. If an initiative is worth doing, discounted future cash inflows have to exceed cash outflows.

The mechanics of DCF are simple. More difficult is deciding on discount rates and estimating future cash flows. HR leaders can estimate personnel costs, a major component of future cash flows, but to fully participate in the DCF discussion, they must understand terms such as Net Present Value (NPV), Internal Rate of Return (IRR), Capital Cost Allowance (CCA), and Weighted Average Cost of Capital (WACC). DCF is the single most important decision tool in most organizations and is essential in preparing persuasive business cases, managing lifecycle costs, dealing with labour negotiations and estimating the costs of benefit and retirement obligations.

2. Budgeting: Budgets are used for communicating objectives, setting targets for performance evaluation, planning for resources, coordinating effort, etc. Budgets are the Swiss Army knives of management: they do lots of things but most of them not particularly well. Understanding the strengths and weaknesses of traditional budgeting can make you more adept at the process and more able to recommend improvements, especially those that relate to innovation.

3. Costing: A cost object is anything you want to know the cost of. So when someone asks "What is the cost of the HR department?", the HR department is the cost object. Direct costs are those that can be traced to a cost object. Indirect costs are those that belong to a cost object but aren't traced. Indirect costs are allocated to cost objects. For example, the salaries of HR staff are a direct cost of the HR department but occupancy costs of a building shared by several departments are typically allocated to the HR department on the basis of floor space or headcount. Depending on which costs are allocated and how they are allocated, you can get dramatically different answers to questions about costs. Allocated costs are especially problematic because they may be appropriate for one purpose (such as financial statements) and inappropriate for other purposes (such as making outsourcing decisions). HR leaders must not blindly accept costs that are generated by the costing system and must ask questions to determine the real costs of decisions, especially those related to HR.

4. GAAP and non-GAAP numbers: Most executive teams claim they make decisions based on value (as calculated by DCF). In reality, executive teams are also concerned about perceptions (as created by financial statements). External financial statements (for shareholders and banks) are prepared according to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). In the past, Canadian organizations used Canadian GAAP but accounting regulators recently adopted international GAAP (International Financial Reporting Standards or IFRS). Senior management performance targets are usually a mix of GAAP and non-GAAP numbers. To understand how executive teams think, HR leaders must be aware of how initiatives might impact financial statements and the numbers on which executives are evaluated.

Learning Finance

Although you can try to find some book or website to teach you the fundamentals, learning finance is like learning a new language: it's a lot easier to learn with other people. Here are three ways to kick start your financial education:

1. Ask your finance staff for help. Finance staff typically deal with complaints and unhappy people. Give them a break by asking them to teach you more about finance.

2. Start a study group. Check the internet for information about how to read annual reports. Share the information with two or three of your colleagues and use it as the basis for regular discussions of the annual reports of your company, major customers, competitors and suppliers. It's sort of like a book club with annual reports instead of novels.

3. Enroll in a course. Most college and university courses are designed for students who intend to pursue careers in accounting and finance. Open-enrollment executive programs are expensive and time consuming. HRPA has recognized these shortcomings and offers two customized certificate programs for HR professionals (www.hrpa.ca/ProfessionalDevelopment/Pages/CertificatePrograms.aspx).

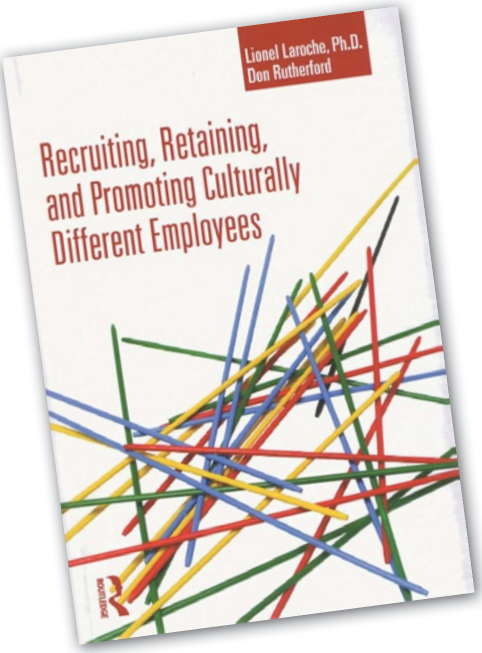
To achieve your full potential as an HR leader and a contributor to innovation, you must know the fundamentals of accounting and finance. If you have any concerns about learning finance, let me assure you that it will be easier for you to learn finance than it would be for your finance people to learn HR. **HR**

Anton (Tony) Dimnik, PhD, is the founder of the Queen's Finance for the Non-Financial Manager Program. In addition, he is president of Vednost Inc., a company that provides relevant and enjoyable financial education with the belief that people who are financially literate are more engaged and effective. Contact Dimnik at Tony@vednost.com.

OFF THE SHELF

BY ALYSON NYIRI, CHRP

WHAT'S WORTH READING



Recruiting, Retaining, and Promoting Culturally Different Employees

Elsevier, 2007

By Lionel Laroche, Ph.D., and Don Rutherford

After years of working in business organizations and corporations, both Lionel and Rutherford say they have observed the following: most professionals vastly underestimate the impact of cultural differences in their work, believing that technical skills are universally recognized; recent professional immigrants are often passed over at some point in the recruitment process, not because of a lack of technical skills but because of cultural disconnects or misunderstandings; by being coached on cultural differences, both the recruiting organizations and recent immigrant job seekers can make minor change to their approach, allowing them to connect successfully.

Their book provides a well-organized and practical guide to help individuals and organizations to modify their recruitment and selection process to avoid rejecting culturally diverse candidates for reasons unrelated to their ability to do the job. Chapter 2 looks at how to screen resumes from different cultures, Chapter 3 reviews the interviewing process, Chapter 4 addresses job searching, Chapter 5 provides guidance on how to help new hires adapt to the organization, Chapter 6 looks at cross-cultural communication, Chapters 7 and 8 handle retention while Chapter 9 reviews promotion strategies.

Where this book is especially useful is in the way the authors take a specific issue, performance management for example, and provide a comparison between hierarchical and egalitarian people. The authors then offer a solution on how to help a newcomer use your performance evaluation system. Each chapter contains many such examples making this book a must-read.

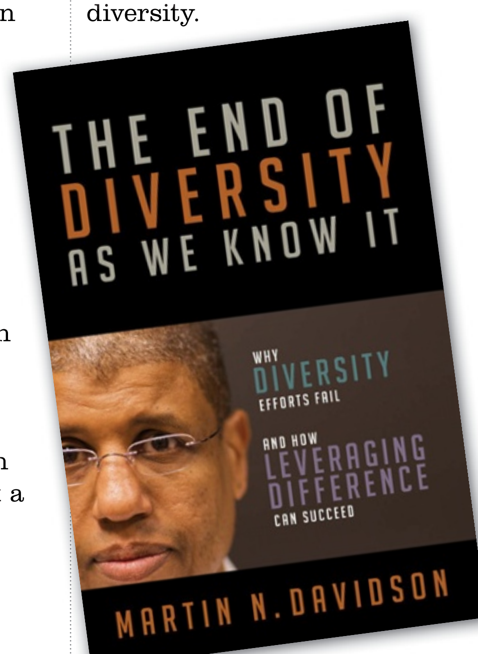
Lionel Laroche is the principle and founder of Multicultural Business Solutions Inc., in Toronto; Rutherford is the co-founder of Culture Connect in Calgary. Previously, as a chemical engineer, Laroche worked for Proctor & Gamble and Xerox, where he experienced first-hand the complexities of cross-cultural challenges. Rutherford worked for 10 years in the IT industry and has lived outside of North America in Latin America, Africa, Asia and Europe.

The End of Diversity as We Know It: Why Diversity Efforts Fail and How Leveraging Difference Can Succeed

Berrett-Koehler, 2011

By Martin N. Davidson

Davidson's provocative title belies the careful distinction he makes between managing diversity and leveraging diversity.



Managing diversity, he argues, was built for the short run; a form of triage work. It was also supposed to promote the successful integration of people who have been historically marginalized in most organizations. Traditional diversity work was typically an add-on activity to regular jobs and usually promoted various metrics and incentives designed to generate visible results.

Leveraging diversity, on the other hand, is mission critical and not a tangential activity handled by HR. The value of leveraging diversity comes when exploring difference becomes standard operating procedure. While attracting and engaging employees with varied identities and perspectives is a part of a significant diversity initiative, Davidson says this is not enough. To truly leverage difference, organizations must use what they learn and apply it to various domains, such as customer engagement and operational procedures.

Just how companies can achieve this is well outlined in succeeding chapters. Davidson shows how conceiving of leveraging difference as strategic for the entire organization can move diversity to centre stage and makes it the job of every manager and leader, not just an HR diversity specialist. Using survey and interview data from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds and in-depth case and action research with a broad spectrum of organizations, the book offers senior executives, middle management, chief learning officers, human resources professionals and corporate diversity specialists a range of tools for new strategies to develop their expertise and influence organizational stakeholders.

Martin Davidson is associate professor of leadership and organizational behaviour at the Darden School of Business, University of Virginia, and has served as associate dean and chief diversity officer. He has consulted with numerous Fortune 500 firms, government agencies, and non-profit organizations. HR

BY CAROLINE YANG

HIRING AND WORKING WITH SKILLED NEW CANADIANS

We hire for skills, but fire for behaviours. This is the opening statement of a workshop on recruitment and selection for managers at a multinational company. Most HR professionals will agree it represents the reality in many situations. Hiring and working with new Canadians is especially challenging because behaviours are culturally based. What is considered acceptable behaviour in one culture may be unacceptable in another.

For example, what does being on time mean? When we have a regular 10 a.m. department meeting, it usually starts around 10:05 a.m. in eastern Canada. In other words, we give each other five minutes social grace time. When does the meeting start in Germany? 10 a.m. sharp. What about Mexico? We often hear between 10:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. If a Mexican employee arrives at work 15-30 minutes late consistently, very likely it is unacceptable. However, as far as the employee is concerned, it is normal and he will likely have no problem attending a meeting at 5 p.m. on a Friday afternoon.

As a result, many new Canadians with solid technical skills may not demonstrate the "right kind" of behaviours during interviews. For example, they may stand too close or too far when they first meet the interviewer. Some may refuse to shake hands with the interviewer. Some East Asians may not make enough eye contact. Some Middle Eastern candidates may answer the question "tell me about yourself" by telling you their family history. Interviewers will likely conclude unconsciously that the candidate is not a good fit in the first few minutes of the interview.

When the candidate calls to follow up, the number-one reason for him/her not proceeding in the process is, "you lack Canadian experience." In other words, lacking Canadian experience is a sum of all the "wrong" or unfamiliar behaviours. However, on the receiving end, it is interpreted as not having worked in Canada. We all know that many organizations have hired new Canadians when it's the newcomer's first job. We also don't need to call someone in for an interview to know that they haven't worked in Canada before.

The second reason is, "you are overqualified." Many new Canadians have high education because of the immigration point system and higher degrees represent bigger achievements and better qualifications back home. For example, the job posting for an engineer in Canada typically requires a bachelor's degree. In China, the engineer job posting will prefer graduate degrees and pay more accordingly. Some newcomers will apply for support jobs such as technicians or administrative assistants hoping to gain Canadian experience.

Objectively Assess Behaviour

My suggestion is, give people the benefit of the doubt. First, focus on assessing their skills and qualification for the job. Ask people familiar with the cultures of the candidates why they speak or behave in a certain way to assess: whether it is a culturally driven behaviour and determine whether that behaviour will be an obstacle to perform the job or not.

Second, view the higher degree or higher previous position as a way to compensate for the adaptation they will need to make and communicate your expectation for the job.

Third, evaluate the candidate's adaptability by asking them of their previous experience when they have to manage a major change, e.g., relocating or changing industry. If the candidate is adaptable and driven, it is very likely that he/she will learn the Canadian workplace culture and his/her knowledge and experience will become a competitive advantage for your organization. HR

Caroline Yang, CHRP, CCP, partner and human resources consultant at MultiCultural Business Solutions, will be presenting at 2013 HRPA Annual Conference. She and her partner Lionel Laroche are working on a new book "Turning Cultural Diversity into Competitive Advantage".

INDEX TO ADVERTISERS

Please support the advertisers who helped make this publication possible.

BY JULIE SHIFMAN

ARE YOU A COMPLACENT FROG?

Do you remember the old story of how to cook a frog? If you put a live frog directly in a kettle of boiling water, the pain will cause the frog to jump out. But if you put the frog in a kettle when the water is tepid and slowly warm the water to boiling, the frog will relax and stay put, eventually getting cooked. The slow rise of the water temperature fools the frog into believing that everything is just good enough until it is too late. (I don't know if this is true by the way but it makes for a great visual).

Well we are just like that frog. If the water is boiling, meaning something is patently wrong or painful, we are forced into action, like the frog jumping from boing water. But, just like a frog in tepid water, when our lives are just good enough, which is usually the case, we also stay put. We get complacent, comfortable enough with the status quo.

My client Barb was a complacent frog. Here is what Barb wrote to me in advance of our first coaching session:

"I'm approaching my 30th high school reunion next year. If I fall into the mindset of comparing myself to other women I graduated from high school with, I in no way, shape or form 'measure up' to a majority of them. But I'm not really unhappy and I often think that I should wait to try anything else."

It is clear that even though Barb's self-esteem had plummeted, as witnessed by her comparison to her school friends, because she was not terribly unhappy, she felt no urgency to change. Her complacency allowed her for many years to avoid striving for more.

So the question then, is how best to counteract complacency when there is no crisis; no "boiling water." The answer is to manufacture your own crisis. You can do this by closing your eyes and picturing yourself at 90 years old and assume that in all the intervening years you have kept living your life just as you are now, doing the same kinds of things. Now imagine the 90-year-old you looking back at your life. Have all these intervening years been as fulfilling as you had hoped? Did you accomplish all you wanted to, or make the difference that you hoped and felt you could? If your answer is "no," think about how sad or even mad this makes you. Really feel these emotions. I even suggest capturing these feelings by writing down your thoughts. This is the motivation that you will need to counteract complacency.

Then the next time that you are confronted with the possibility of doing something new or something challenging where in the past you might have shied away, remember how sad or mad that 90-year-old you felt and push yourself a little harder. After doing this several times, complacency is gone forever.

And what about Barb, the complacent frog? I am happy to report that we did the exercise above and she was able to manufacture her own crisis. Now just two years later, she has sought out several situations that have forced her out of her comfort zone. HR

Julie Shifman is the author of Act Three: Create the Life You Want After Your First Career and Fulltime Motherhood. *More information on Julie and Act Three can be found at www.actthree.com.*

workperks®

Your employees and their families can access *perks* online, anytime, from anywhere.

WorkPerks® provides a growing list of discounts from over 900 brand name stores and local shops on everything from tickets and dining to shoes and travel.

Whether you have 10 or 100,000 employees, visit us online to learn why many of Canada's leading companies are using a fully-managed WorkPerks® program to cost-effectively enhance their overall benefits package and help employees save money — every day.

Now available for Android and iPhone.

ANDROID APP ON Google play

Available on the iPhone App Store

www.venngo.com/*perks*

venngo®