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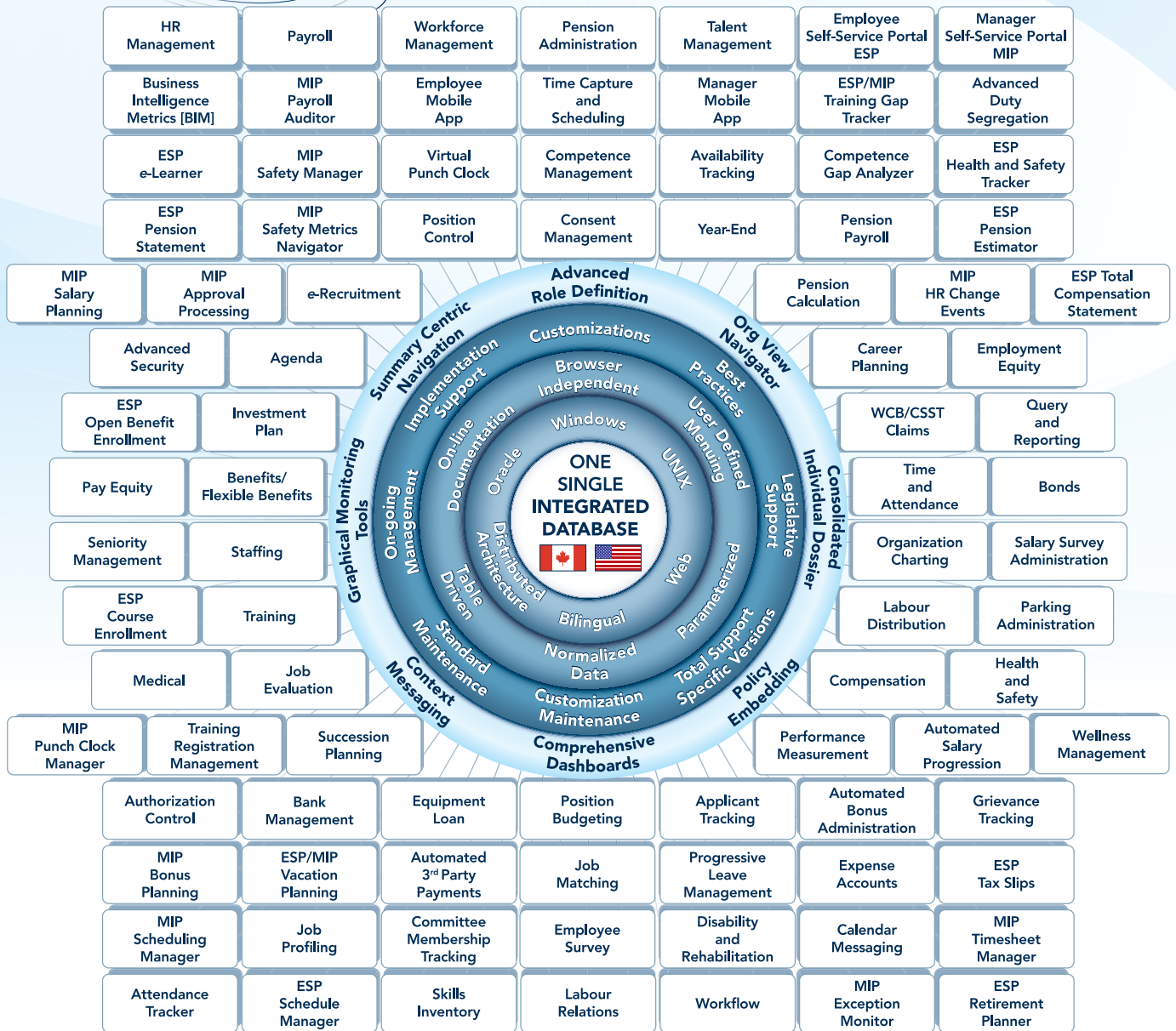
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ADDRESSING THE BLIND SPOTS
WE DON'T KNOW WE HAVE



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IN THIS ISSUE

Every person carries certain biases, but we don't always know exactly what our own biases are. These "blind spots" have critical consequences in an organization. This issue of HR Professional focuses on implicit, or hidden, biases, and how HR professionals can begin to realize and address the biases they may not even be aware they have. Read the cover story, starting on page 18.

contributors



JOEL SMITH

Joel Smith is a lawyer with Williams HR Law, where he practices management-side labour, employment and human rights law. He provides strategic advice and representation to employers on a broad range of issues, including employment contracts and policies, employment standards, wrongful dismissal litigation, human rights and accommodation, grievance arbitrations, labour board proceedings, privacy and workplace safety and insurance matters. Smith focuses on providing proactive assistance to employers with the ultimate objective of diffusing workplace issues before they escalate. Read his article that discusses the risks associated with alleging just cause for employee termination without a reasonable basis, starting on page 15.



CATHY GALLAGHER-LOUISY

A regular contributor to *HR Professional* magazine, Cathy Gallagher-Louisy is director of knowledge services at the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (CCDI). She is an experienced diversity and inclusion and corporate social responsibility professional with over 20 years' experience in change management, learning and development and HR roles within corporate, government and non-profit organizations. Gallagher-Louisy provides consulting and training services to CCDI partner organizations and clients. She is the author of CCDI's groundbreaking report, *What Gets Measured Gets Done: Measuring the Return on Investment of Diversity and Inclusion*, and the curator of CCDI's four toolkits for diversity professionals. Read the article she co-wrote with Wanda Santini about the professionalization of diversity and inclusion, starting on page 22.



SUZANNE L. COOK, PH.D.

Suzanne L. Cook, Ph.D. is a social gerontologist and adjunct professor in the Department of Sociology at York University. Her research project examines workers ages 50 and older who continue to work and are pursuing a new direction through second (or third) careers. She coined the term "redirection" to refer to this new stage of later life career. Read her article about how HR can assist older workers who are redefining or changing their career paths later in life, starting on page 31.



JO EISMONT

Jo Eismont is a social media and web editor for Insights Learning & Development with years of experience in the learning and development industry. She is very passionate about sharing the philosophy of "doing what you love and loving what you do." With two small children, a Twitter addiction and a love of blogging, Eismont strives to share the Insights' values so that her audience finds the right new position or way to love their job as much as she does. To read her article about why managers need to prioritize spending time with their employees, turn to page 48.



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WHAT'S HIDING?

I'll admit that up until a couple of years ago (when I first started working on *HR Professional* magazine), diversity and inclusion was not something I had ever given much thought. Like many Canadians, I assumed that since we live in such a diverse country, that our workplaces – and, more specifically, the leadership of our workplaces – must naturally reflect that diversity.

Of course, I now know that this is not necessarily the case in many Canadian organizations. We're coming around to the concept that diversity and inclusion is something that must be actively achieved – a point underscored by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's gender-equal cabinet.

Not only limited to gender, a diverse workforce has myriad benefits for organizations... so why are we taking so long to catch on? Part of the problem could be that in many cases, people are not aware of their own biases. As Melissa Campeau writes in her cover feature, it's difficult to address a blind spot if you don't know that it exists. In this issue of *HR Professional*, we explore hidden biases in our workplaces, how they affect us and how we can begin to mitigate them for the betterment of ourselves and our companies. Flip to the cover feature on page 18 to read about hidden biases from the HR perspective.

I encourage all of us to self-reflect and assess our own organizations for signs of hidden bias. I think that the working landscape in Canada is on the verge of significant change, and that in the coming years our leadership will be more reflective of our diverse population, an improvement that will benefit everyone.

Happy New Year and happy reading,



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A Different Take on HR Professionalism



By Brenda Clark, CHRE

Organizations today need to shift from short-term to long-term thinking, taking into account a much broader, multi-stakeholder view of the world in decision-making. Organizations must move from “accounting” to “accountability” – a new perspective that considers not just financial stakeholders, but customers, suppliers, the community, the environment and, first and foremost, our own employees.

That was a key message of Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) CEO Peter Cheese’s opening remarks at the 2015 CIPD annual conference I attended in November in Manchester, UK. These remarks underpin a new focus the UK HR body is exploring as it develops an updated direction for the HR profession and its members in that country.

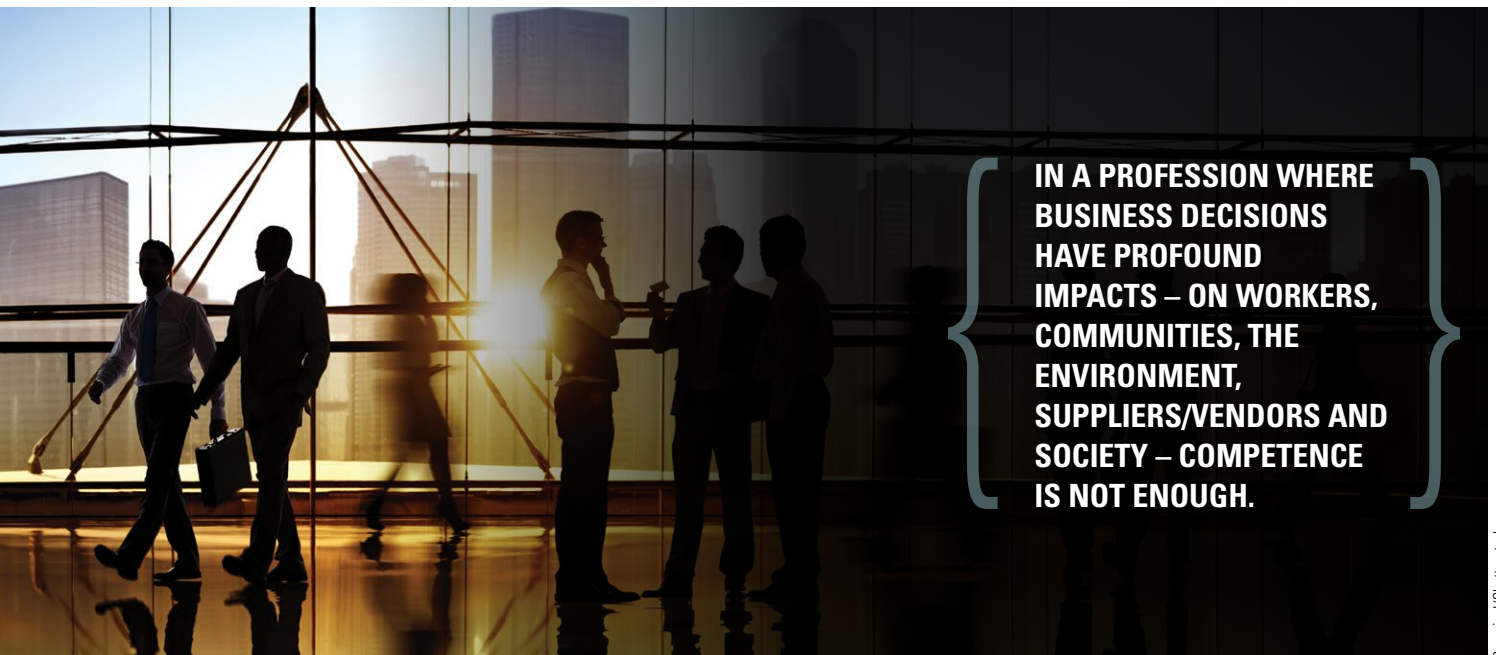
“We know there’s no one-size-fits-all model for great HR, and we need to adapt our HR practices to the context and needs of our workforces and organizations,” Cheese told delegates. “But our actions and decisions must be guided and framed through principles and values that drive good, ethical and sustainable business. These principles should provide the framework for HR to support the judgments and compromises organizations must make.

“Ultimately, we need a new definition of what it means to be an HR professional, with a greater focus on clarity of professional capability and purpose, and a strengthened ability to provide trusted and credible advice to businesses, whatever the circumstances,” he said.

CIPD is exploring this new thrust around “principle-based HR” as part of its broader Profession of the Future strategy – work and research that will help define how the HR profession can champion better work and working lives for all stakeholders. After an extensive research project (*From best to good practice HR: developing principles for the profession* – <http://bitly.com/1Xoq2aY>) that examined the changing nature of HR and how potential guiding principles would be developed, its next steps include defining the principles and then equipping HR professionals with the knowledge, skills and expertise to apply those principles in practice.

COMPETENCE AND ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITY

CIPD’s new direction is recognition that, in a profession where business decisions have profound impacts – on workers, communities, the environment, suppliers/vendors and society – competence is not



IN A PROFESSION WHERE
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IS NOT ENOUGH.

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TIPS FROM DISPUTE RESOLUTION EXPERTS



“WHY” IS THE MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION IN A NEGOTIATION

It gets us information about other peoples' interests, wants and needs. The more information we have, the more likely we'll be able to find a solution that works for us and for the other side. It's rare to ask enough questions; we often ask too few. We are sometimes so focused on getting our point across that we don't take the time to learn the information that we need to know in order to reach an agreement. We make wrong assumptions and get bogged down in time-wasting and unnecessary debates. Remember that we have two ears and one mouth and should use them in proportion!

THE WORD 'BUT' IS THE GREAT ERASER IN A NEGOTIATION

It erases everything positive that you said before the 'but'. If I say to you, 'that is an interesting idea in theory, but it will never work on the ground', you're more likely to focus on the second part of what I said (the 'it will never work' part), and miss the fact that I said you have a good idea. When we use the word 'but' in the middle of a sentence, we can lose the good things we've said before the 'but'. If you can restructure your sentence and use the word 'and' instead of 'but', it can often help. For example, if I had said, 'you have a good idea and we also have to look at some of the difficulties we'll encounter if we go down that path', that would have been a lot easier to hear.

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"I liked the wealth of knowledge and confidence of all of the instructors and coaches. It's great to have all the resources available to you at all times throughout the training."

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enough. CIPD understands professionalism as something that goes beyond just professional competency. What makes a profession is the combination of competence and ethics for the good of society. A key CIPD concept is situational judgment, where competence and principles combine for ethical decision-making in a given circumstance. Principles are the how ethical responsibility works – and that, in essence, is where it all comes together.

CIPD is still developing its principles, but from its work to date, it is clear they will consider ideas such as HR serving society as a whole; not treating people as a means to an end; striving for fairness in considering the interests of all stakeholders; considering both short- and long-term perspectives; and not compromising principles.

HRPA AND ETHICS

The Human Resources Professionals Association (HRPA) is also taking steps towards enhancing the professionalism of the HR profession, including an updated HR competency framework that tests an updated body of knowledge, and the ability to apply that knowledge, at escalating levels of HR practice; as well as a government-sanctioned regulatory framework that grants HRPA powers to regulate its members in the public interest. Public interest – mandating that members abide by a Code of Ethics and Rules of Professional Conduct that ensures respect for human rights, equity, dignity and respect in the workplace – is essentially the same as the CIPD's new direction around HR and ethics.

The good news is that the professionalization of HR continues on both sides of the Atlantic, with mutual understanding that professionalism must be anchored by both professional knowledge and ethics. ■

Brenda Clark, CHRE is chair of the Human Resources Professionals Association (HRPA).

Editor's note: For an in-depth look at HRPA's work in professionalizing the HR profession, read the cover feature in the upcoming February 2016 issue of HR Professional, first available at the 2016 HRPA Conference & Trade Show.

UPFRONT

NEW HRPA HUMAN RESOURCES AWARDS CELEBRATE ACHIEVEMENTS OF DESIGNATED HR PROFESSIONALS

The Human Resources Professionals Association (HRPA) and Great Place to Work are pleased to announce the 2016 HRP Designation Excellence Awards — a new awards program that celebrates HRP-designated HR professionals (CHRP, CHRL and CHREs) who have architected people-driven business strategies that add quantifiable value to their organizations.

The HRP Designation Excellence Awards recognize individual HR excellence at three HRP designation levels:

- Certified Human Resources Professional (CHRP) of the Year recognizes outstanding work at the foundational level, including adding value to meet organizational priorities; business knowledge and partnering; and innovative thinking.
- Certified Human Resources Leader (CHRL) of the Year recognizes an individual who has excelled within the HR function and across the organization by partnering with other business functions to achieve bottom-line performance.
- Certified Human Resources Executive (CHRE) of the Year recognizes an HR executive who has demonstrated outstanding leadership, including creating and implementing a people-driven strategy that quantifiably contributes to the achievement of the organization's objectives.

"In today's organizations,

people are the primary source of sustainable competitive advantage and HR professionals design and execute people-driven strategies that help create organizational success," said HRP CEO, Bill Greenhalgh. "The HRP Designation Excellence Awards will highlight real examples of how HR professionals can develop and execute the innovative and effective strategies that add huge measurable value to organizations."

Nominations for the 2016 HRP Designation Excellence Awards close on conclusion of the 2016 HRP Annual Conference, January 22, 2016 and HRP members will choose winners by voting for their choice of the CHRP, CHRL or CHRE professional of the year.

The winners will be announced at the Great Place to Work's Best Workplaces in Canada Awards Gala in Toronto on Thursday, April 21, 2016.

For full details on the 2016 HRP Designation Excellence Awards, including award criteria and nomination information, please visit hrpaawards.ca.

DEMENTIA FRIENDS HELPS WORKERS CARING FOR SICK LOVED ONES

With 747,000 Canadians living with dementia (a number that's growing every year due to an aging population), many Canadian workers are balancing work with providing care and bearing the financial stress of looking after a loved one. In 2011 alone, family caregivers spent 444 million unpaid hours looking after someone with dementia. This figure represents \$11 billion in lost income and 227,760 full-time equivalent employees in the workforce.

To help ease the stress of these worker/caregivers, the Alzheimer Society and the Government of Canada launched Dementia Friends Canada – an initiative aimed at helping both individuals and employers learn what it means to live with dementia, and how to better support those affected within Canadian workplaces and communities.

"Workplaces of all kinds interact daily with customers and clients who may have dementia or be caregivers to individuals living with dementia. When employees and their managers understand a little more about dementia, it can make a big difference in reducing caregiver stress and transforming the lives and experiences of people living with this disease," said Mimi Lowi-Young, CEO at the Alzheimer Society of Canada.

"Building awareness about how to help and support those living with dementia, and their caregivers, is needed to ensure everyone continues to live meaningful and active lives. The Canadian Bankers Association is pleased to support the Dementia Friends campaign in our workplace and in our public education activities," said Terry Campbell, president of the Canadian Bankers Association.

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MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN YOUR WORKPLACE

To become a Dementia Friend, visit www.dementiafriends.ca. Watch a short video on what it's like to have dementia, register and then commit to a simple action. Email info@dementiafriends.ca to get your workplace promotional toolkit.

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For full details on the 2016 HRPAs Designation Excellence Awards, including award criteria and nomination information, please visit HRPAwards.ca.

Submit your nominations today!
Nominations close Jan 22, 2016.

YOUR DREAM CANDIDATE MAY BE THE TEMP RIGHT IN FRONT OF YOU

A “working interview” may be the key to your next successful hire. Two in five chief financial officers (CFOs) polled in a recent Accountemps survey said having a candidate work on a temporary basis initially provides the greatest insight into whether he or she will be a good fit with the company culture. CFOs also cited asking open-ended interview questions and checking references as effective ways to gauge someone’s potential fit with the work environment.

“How well a new employee will blend with a company’s existing culture is difficult to assess in an interview alone,” said Dianne Hunnam-Jones, Canadian president of Accountemps. “Allowing time to evaluate fit before hiring for a full-time position can prevent quick turnover and costly hiring mistakes down the line. Having applicants come in on a temporary basis allows organizations the opportunity to assess a potential employee’s collaborative work style and overall fit before making the decision to bring them on permanently.”

Accountemps offers five tips for companies that are considering testing out potential new hires through temporary work:

1. **Partner with a staffing firm.** Let your recruiter know immediately if an assignment has the potential to become a permanent position, and clearly outline the responsibilities of the job and key aspects of your workplace culture.
2. **Let them know what success looks like.** You can’t make a fair assessment of a temporary professional’s performance if he or she doesn’t understand what is expected. Give adequate direction, including project details and deadlines as well as company norms, like employee communication preferences.
3. **Give challenging assignments.** Provide interim employees with projects of varying degrees of difficulty. Pair them with key members of your team and seek staff feedback on how the temporary workers performed and collaborated with others.
4. **Bring them into the fold.** Invite temporary professionals to the same meetings, team lunches and events everyone else attends. Make sure they receive emails and other communication about company news.
5. **Keep in touch.** Regularly check in with temporary employees to answer questions, seek feedback and gauge how things are going with the assignment.

HOW COMMON IS WORKPLACE BULLYING?

Office bullying may be more common than many managers realize. According to recent research from staffing firm OfficeTeam, more than two in five workers surveyed admitted they’ve had an office bully, yet the majority (63 per cent) of HR managers interviewed said they think workplace bullying never happens at their company. Another quarter think it rarely occurs.

When employees were asked how they responded to a bully, 27 per cent stated they told their manager. Another 25 per cent confronted the bully and 18 per cent did nothing.

“Workplace bullying often flies under the radar because employees tolerate or fail to report it,” said Robert Hosking, executive director of OfficeTeam. “Managers and staff alike should be supported in addressing bullying issues. This includes not giving anyone a pass for negative behaviour, no matter how valued that person may be.”

OfficeTeam offers five tips to help employees who are victims of workplace bullying:

1. **Take a stand.** Avoid being an easy target. Bullies often back off if you show confidence and stick up for yourself.
2. **Talk it out.** Have a one-on-one discussion with the bully, providing examples of behaviours that made you feel uncomfortable. It’s possible the person is unaware of how his or her actions are negatively affecting others.
3. **Keep your cool.** As tempting as it is to go tit-for-tat, don’t stoop to the bully’s level. Stay calm and professional.
4. **Document poor conduct.** Maintain a record of instances of workplace bullying, detailing what was said or done by the individual.
5. **Seek support.** If the issue is serious or you aren’t able to resolve it on your own, alert your manager or HR department for assistance. ■



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TERMINATION

JUSTIFYING JUST CAUSE

HOW EMPLOYERS CAN MITIGATE THE RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH TERMINATIONS FOR CAUSE

By Joel Smith

A recent decision by the Ontario Superior Court of Justice (ONSC) serves to remind employers of the serious – and expensive – risks associated with alleging just cause for termination without a reasonable basis for doing so.

Employee misconduct must typically be egregious in order for it to constitute just cause for dismissal. It's therefore rare that just cause for termination will exist. However, in efforts to circumvent their reasonable notice obligations when dismissing employees, some employers will allege just cause when it is clear that just cause does not truly exist. This manner of attempting to reduce the (often high) financial cost of terminations has, however, been increasingly backfiring for those employers.

When an employer improperly alleges just cause for termination, the employee may commence wrongful dismissal litigation against the employer. In the event

that a court agrees that there was no just cause, the court will award damages, either for reasonable notice or pursuant to an enforceable termination clause in the employment contract. However, courts may also award additional damages – generally called extraordinary damages – in these cases if they find that the employer acted unfairly or dishonestly in alleging just cause when the employer knew or ought to have known that it did not exist.

The ONSC's September 2015 ruling in *Gordon v. Altus* ("Altus") is the latest in a series of decisions across Canada in which courts have awarded substantial extraordinary damages awards against employers that alleged just cause without justification.

THE FACTS IN ALTUS

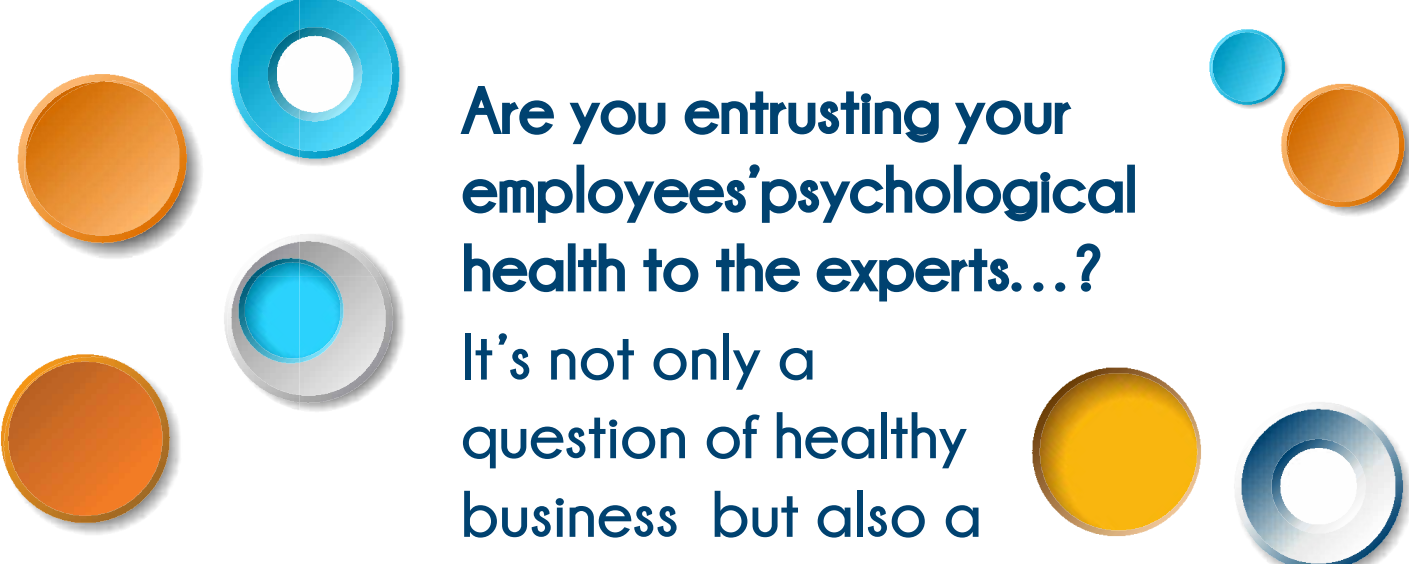
In *Altus*, the plaintiff, Alan Gordon, sold his business to the defendant, Altus Group Ltd. (the "Company"), for several million dollars in 2008. The purchase

price was subject to an adjustment in 2010 based on the Company's performance after the sale. Following the 2008 sale, Gordon was hired by the Company on a three-year, fixed-term employment contract.

In early 2010, the Company advised Gordon that the purchase price would be reduced based on its calculations of the Company's performance since it purchased Gordon's business. Gordon disagreed and advised the Company that he would trigger the arbitration clause in the purchase and sale agreement in order for an independent arbitrator to determine any adjustment to the price of Gordon's business.

The dispute over the purchase price of Gordon's business strained the parties' relationship. The Company suddenly began alleging that Gordon had committed various types of misconduct, then terminated Gordon's employment in March 2010, allegedly for cause and therefore without notice or further payment.

Continued on page 17



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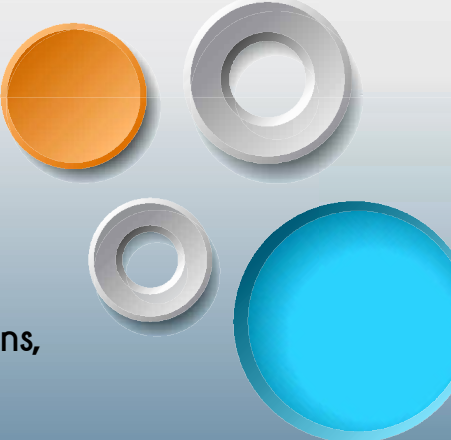
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THIS MANNER OF ATTEMPTING TO REDUCE THE (OFTEN HIGH) FINANCIAL COST OF TERMINATIONS HAS, HOWEVER, BEEN INCREASINGLY BACKFIRING FOR THOSE EMPLOYERS.

THE ONSC’S DECISION IN *ALTUS*

In the view of the ONSC, the Company decided to end the employment relationship because Gordon triggered the arbitration clause in the purchase and sale agreement, and therefore “conjured up” allegations of misconduct by Gordon to support an untenable position of just cause. The ONSC held that Gordon had in fact been dismissed without cause and was therefore entitled to a payment of slightly less than one year’s salary in accordance with the termination clause in the employment contract.

In addition to the contractual termination payment, the ONSC held that Gordon was entitled to extraordinary damages in the amount of \$100,000 to sanction the Company for its “terrible conduct.” The ONSC held that this was warranted because the Company got “mean and cheap” in coming up with an “unfounded allegation to fire” Gordon.

LESSONS FOR EMPLOYERS

The ONSC’s decision in *Altus* contains four key lessons for employers to follow in order to avoid similar extraordinary damages awards:

1. Implement a progressive discipline policy.
2. Apply the progressive discipline policy when it is warranted.
3. Do not allege just cause without a clear and viable basis for doing so.
4. Include enforceable termination clauses in employment contracts that reduce the financial obligations to employees upon termination without cause.

The Company in *Altus* would have benefitted from these lessons. The Company had an employee handbook that contained a progressive discipline policy. However, the Company did not use the policy in

Gordon’s case. As the ONSC suggested in its decision, if the Company had progressively disciplined Gordon, it may not have been liable for punitive damages.

Employers should always follow their progressive discipline policies and provide written warnings and any escalation of discipline along with instructions for improvement to employees who misbehave. Not only does this approach maximize the chances that the employee will improve, it also creates a written record of misconduct that the employer can rely on in the event that it later sees fit to terminate for just cause.

The threshold for just cause is very high in Canada. Employers should only terminate for just cause when a single instance of employee misconduct is sufficiently egregious or after progressive discipline for less severe but repeated misconduct. An employer does not, however, need to be certain

that it has just cause to avoid extraordinary damages awards; the employer must simply be able to reasonably justify a just cause position.

If an employer seeks to dismiss an employee whose contract includes a termination clause, the employer may terminate on a without cause basis and pay out only the contractual termination entitlement, which can be as low as the minimum standards legislated by the *Employment Standards Act, 2000*. When in doubt regarding whether just cause exists, payment of a contractual termination entitlement carries much less risk than termination for cause, as it greatly reduces the risk of costly litigation and a possible extraordinary damages award. ■

Joel Smith is a lawyer with Williams HR Law.

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FIXING OUR BLIND SPOTS

IMPROVING CULTURAL COMPETENCY CAN HELP ORGANIZATIONS
AND INDIVIDUALS TAKE IMPLICIT BIASES OUT OF THE
TALENT-MANAGEMENT EQUATION



By Melissa Campeau

Implicit bias is a bit like a driver's blind spot, with one important exception: you know that blind spot is there. To compensate for the spot your mirrors can't find, you get into the habit of doing shoulder checks for safety. You're conscious of your blind spot, so you make a point of addressing it. But imagine if you had another blind spot in the car – one you didn't even know existed. How does that change the likelihood of a safe trip from A to B?

In an organizational context, implicit biases – a preference for or belief about a particular group of people – are the blind spots you don't know you have. And when bias plays its silent hand in decision-making, it can have a profound impact on nearly every aspect of business.

IMPACTS

"What's intriguing about blind spots is how pervasive and automatic they are," said Norma Tombari, director of global diversity and inclusion for RBC in Toronto. "We're not even aware that they're there. Even the most open-minded liberal person, who thinks they don't have any biases, almost certainly does. It speaks to how our brains are hard-wired because of the various experiences we're all subjected to: where we live, where we work, the messages we've processed and internalized over a lifetime."

Those unconscious beliefs can shift the shape of organizations, from top to bottom. An unacknowledged but pervasive belief that men make better leaders, for example, can result in a largely male collection of senior executives. Or a belief that parents will be less committed to their work may mean all senior executives are single or have already-grown children. And negative stereotypes about people from particular backgrounds can mean an organization unwittingly misses out on recruiting, promoting or developing its most talented prospects.

"Over the years, we've seen implicit bias exhibited in every single facet of the employee lifecycle," said Jodi Zigelstein-Yip, director, HR Consulting Services for Williams HR Consulting in Markham, Ont. "There's no area, from attracting talent to retirement, that's not affected."

EXAMINING "GUT FEELINGS"

In some areas, though, the impact of bias is especially frequent, where tough-to-quantify feelings and impressions can sway decision makers.

“When I speak with leaders about the process they take to review resumes and to evaluate the candidates coming out of interviews, I often hear things like, ‘They’re just not a fit,’ or ‘I just have a gut feeling that this person won’t cut it here,’” said Zigelstein-Yip. “When we try to dig a little deeper, there are no reasonable hard facts to support why they don’t want to bring a certain individual on board or to recruit them onto a certain team.”

Removing that bias is a question of performance, ethics and the law.

“To choose the best possible talent for an organization and for a team, and to ensure compliance with the *Human Rights Code* and AODA, we have to be able to substantiate why we’re choosing certain candidates over others,” said Zigelstein-Yip.

THE PATH TO CULTURAL COMPETENCY

The term “cultural competency” has gained traction in recent years, and in many ways it’s the flipside or the antidote to hidden bias.

“Cultural competency means you have the foresight to be inclusive of everybody,” said Zigelstein-Yip. “It’s more than diversity and cultural sensitivity, although that’s part of the puzzle. There is no ridding individuals or teams of biases without some cultural sensitivity training.”

Cultural competency takes the foundation of diversity and cultural sensitivity, and builds upon it.

“It’s layering on how you acknowledge and validate who people are,” said Zigelstein-Yip.

“It’s about understanding cultural differences and seeing beyond them, so that we’re best able to leverage the capability of our talent and not just look at people through one lens – the North American lens,” said Tombari. “For example, different cultures may subscribe to different protocols. We may have individuals from teams who don’t submit ideas unless they’re asked to, or who are less prone to market themselves. If we know that, we can work to draw out the best in everyone.”

HR’s role in coaching cultural competency is key.

“If you have candidates on a short list, for example, an HR professional should help the hiring manager ensure the right decision is made by challenging the outcomes, providing constructive feedback and engaging people in a deeper dialogue to address any unconscious bias,” said Tombari.

OBJECTIVITY

One effective way to set biases aside when making decisions is to rely solely on objective information.

If, for example, senior executives are asked to select candidates for a high potential program, it shouldn’t be a simple matter of thinking about the team and jotting a few names down on paper.

“What we encourage clients to do, in this situation, is create an objective method for assessing their talent. We look at four key criteria for assessing potential so all candidates for the program are evaluated on a level playing field. The assessment asks a series of questions and everyone goes through the same rating process,” said Zigelstein-Yip. “We’ve seen significant change

in those identified for high potential development due to this objective method of assessing talent.”

In the case of restructuring or organizational transformation, Zigelstein-Yip has similar advice.

“Age bias may be a factor in situations where leaders are thinking that a particular employee or group of employees are closer to retirement than they are, so the leaders believe it makes more sense to let that person or those people go,” she said. But with the end of mandatory retirement, this argument is faulty, and it’s also a biased assumption that shouldn’t come into the equation.

“So what we recommend doing is looking at what you need in your future business before you look at your talent,” said Zigelstein-Yip. “Then, create an objective set of criteria to rate every single employee on your team based on the exact same criteria so you can make an informed decision as to the talent you’ve decided to restructure. You have to be able to substantiate why you chose particular people.”

It’s easy to imagine quantifying technical skills, but softer skills can be effectively measured, as well.

“We look at behavioural competencies and determine which ones are required for each role,” said Zigelstein-Yip. “Take teamwork, for example. There are ways to define effective teamwork. So we’ll design 10 or 11 questions about teamwork that will determine whether an employee respects others’ opinions, collaborates with others, shares their perspective and so on.”

COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

With a culturally competent workforce, an organization is in a position to take advantage of such things as diversity of thought and differing viewpoints, methods of solving problems and making decisions.

“It really allows the talents to be in the driver’s seat. When that happens, they’re free to bring their best selves to work every day and push the envelope,” said Zigelstein-Yip. “With really culturally competent workplaces, there’s an improved sense of engagement and empowerment. Even things like risk taking and innovation tend to come to the forefront compared to a less culturally competent workplace.”

Conversely, a lack of cultural competency has a negative impact on communication and how well people can genuinely connect.

“Biases affect relationships, they affect communication. It’s tough to collaborate if you can’t communicate. And without collaboration, it’s difficult to foster innovation. Ultimately, that has a real impact on our competitiveness,” said Tombari. “We must work to create an inclusive environment where talent is able to contribute fully. It’s important to better serve our clients.”

NOT A QUICK FIX

Biases are developed over a lifetime, so working to identify and mitigate them isn’t a weekend project.

“This isn’t an area where you offer one course and then it’s all done. It’s really about embedding the approaches within the talent-management and decision-making process,” said Tombari.

Certain changes do signal progress, though.

“It’s great to be at the table when a decision is being made and someone asks, ‘Are we being biased? Do we have a blind spot?’”

said Tombari. “I remember one occasion where a team was put together for a project and someone looked around the table and said, ‘My goodness, we’re all the same age.’ They thought of gender, of cultural differences, but forgot about age. Being able to act on that is really powerful.”

The blind spot you know is much easier to manage than the one you don’t. If an employee is aware of biases, he can do something about them.

“We all have biases and prejudices, but when we come to work, we need to bracket our personal biases and put them aside, in order to stay focused on the task before us,” said Sally Ellis Fletcher, a former professor at the University of Rochester and the author of *Cultural Sensibility in Healthcare*.

What’s necessary, as well, is philosophical support.

“If there’s nothing in the organization’s mission and vision that talks about diversity and inclusivity, then it may not be high on the organization’s priorities,” said Ellis Fletcher. “When it comes to cultural diversity, inclusivity and equity, HR professionals have the unique position to pause and assess the organization’s pulse on this issue. Be that flashlight and do that organizational assessment.”

ASSESSING AND DEVELOPING

While cultural competency may seem a difficult thing to quantify, measurement is entirely possible. It’s necessary, too, to ensure you’re moving the needle. But simply assessing how diverse a workforce is will really only measure diversity. It’s important to delve a little deeper and get a read on employees’ attitudes and interactions.

“With our clients, I suggest assessing cultural competency whenever there’s an opportunity,” said Zigelstein-Yip. Targeted questions can be included in engagement surveys, self-assessments, exit interviews or even small focus groups. “Get your first benchmark, then resurvey and see if you’ve made an impact.”

At the heart of cultural competency challenges – and therefore the root of opportunity for improvement – are employee communications, miscommunications and conflict.

“Investigating this area can shed light on any attitudes or perceptions people may hold towards certain groups or individuals,” said Zigelstein-Yip. “Depending on how you end up coming out of your investigative process, you can determine where you need to go.” You may, for example, need to go back and do a little more cultural awareness and sensitivity training. “The good news is that some of those biases tend to lessen as you create awareness.”

That training, though, needs to be backed up by policies and practices that support cultural competency at every turn.

“You have to take a very holistic approach before you start doing any training,” said Zigelstein-Yip. For example, organizations in the IT sector would be hard-pressed to ask a manager of a predominantly male team to be more inclusive of female team members, if the organization has historically allowed gender bias to influence its hiring, promoting and training practices. “It’s easy to say, ‘Let’s do training,’ and there are many good programs out there, but it can become nothing more than a Band-Aid if an organization doesn’t have the infrastructure to support real cultural competency.”

SUCCESS FUELS MORE SUCCESS

With a thoughtful and long-term approach, cultural competency is likely to lead to a more diverse workforce.

“As you become more comfortable with these concepts and become more inclusive, you start to see more diversity in leadership ranks,” said Tombari. “You see stronger representation at the VP level and above.”

That becomes self-sustaining, as well. Research tells us that with increased exposure to an opposite association, our biases tend to recede. So a greater number of female senior executives and CEOs reduce the implicit bias that women are less effective leaders. More Gen Xers and Boomers working on code projects reduces the notion that anyone over 40 can’t excel in an IT role.

Another bit of good news? People are genuinely interested in this subject, and usually quite keen to learn.

“It’s about self betterment, both personally and professionally, and it speaks to everyone – it’s not a women’s issue or a race issue,” said Tombari. “When you open doors to this topic, the interest is incredible. People take ownership. They’re curious. It’s an area that requires time, but it’s absolutely worth the investment.” ■



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The Professionalization of Diversity and Inclusion

A NATIONAL STANDARD FOR A CRITICAL CANADIAN BUSINESS PRIORITY

By Wanda Santini and Cathy Gallagher-Louisy

As an HR professional, you know all too well the importance of professional designations. Chances are that you have one yourself. You are probably looking at the acronyms that people proudly place after their names every time you are recruiting candidates, or considering people for promotion. Likewise, in a very competitive job market, employees cannot ignore the edge provided by legitimate, well-established professional designations, and look at them as career accelerators.

Professional designations set clear and measurable standards of competence within a profession. A designation is good for employers and HR departments, who can easily hire the right people. It's good for job seekers, who can easily prove their skillset. It's good for any profession, as it helps to establish its legitimacy and credibility.

The Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (CCDI) is currently working on the development of a professional designation for diversity and inclusion (D&I)

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D&I IS A STRATEGIC ORGANIZATIONAL AND BUSINESS PRIORITY, AND A STRONG CONTRIBUTOR TO ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS.

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DESPITE THE EXPANSION OF D&I FUNCTIONS AND ROLES WITHIN CANADIAN ORGANIZATIONS, NO CANADIAN STANDARD EXISTS AROUND THE COMPETENCIES THAT D&I PROFESSIONALS MUST POSSESS.

professionals in Canada, an evolving field of competence within HR.

AN EVOLVING FIELD AND PROFESSIONALIZATION

Although many consider D&I to be a relatively new field, it has roots that go back many decades. Equity and human rights have always been part of the political and economic discourse in Canada. Their importance and impact on the workplace became more formalized after the release of the 1984 Abella Commission report, which led to the creation of the *Employment Equity Act* of 1986. Since that historical milestone, Canadian organizations have slowly but steadily progressed.

The new century has certainly seen an evolution in the field, as many organizations have started moving beyond mere *Employment Equity* compliance to a recognition that D&I is a strategic organizational and business priority, and a strong contributor to organizational effectiveness.

A Conference Board of Canada report on the D&I profession, released in 2008, says that the focus of D&I has progressed from valuing differences – achieved through awareness training and multicultural celebrations – to strategic global business growth. They emphasize that the 21st century D&I practitioner requires a challenging new set of competencies.

A 2014 report by Bersin-Deloitte confirms the increasingly strategic role of diversity practitioners. They write that Canadian corporations have a renewed interest in D&I practices due to changing demographics and a growing need to recruit and retain a highly skilled workforce.

Bersin-Deloitte also found that 44 per cent of Canadian organizations have a D&I function and employ a variety of resourcing strategies, ranging from informal, volunteer-based functions to dedicated staffing models. Interestingly enough, 60 per cent of the organizations with D&I functions have dedicated staff.

Despite the expansion of D&I functions and roles within Canadian organizations, no Canadian standard exists around the competencies that D&I professionals must possess. In 2014, CCDI conducted a benchmark study on D&I education in Canada. The study clearly showed that,

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although many colleges, university and private organizations provide training that is relevant to the work of current and future D&I professionals, there is no standardized curriculum.

HOW TO GIVE LEGITIMACY TO NEW ROLES

Dr. Mila Lazarova, associate professor, International Business and Canada research chair in global workforce management from the Beedie School of Business at Simon Fraser University, corroborates the need for a national standard.

“Creating a designation gives legitimacy to the job,” she said. “We cannot underestimate legitimacy. It provides a strong signal to the organizations hiring these people that they are qualified and passionate about this profession. Further, creating the designation is an important part of the process of institutionalizing diversity, and eventually making it more mainstream, more normal. This will help us eventually get to that point where everyone in the organization is a diversity champion.”

In collaboration with HR and D&I practitioners from different sectors across the country, CCDI is developing a designation for D&I professionals in Canada. Any D&I professional who successfully meets the requirements of the certification process will become a Canadian certified inclusion professional (CCIP).

CREATING A NEW CREDENTIAL

Creating a new credential is necessarily a complex endeavor. CCDI is following a collaborative consultation approach, modeled on well-established processes in the field of professional credentialing. To assist with the process and ensure it is relevant to practitioners in the field, CCDI has engaged with an advisory committee of experienced professionals in roles focused on diversity, inclusion, equity and human rights from multiple sectors and industries.

The advisory committee’s first task has been the creation of a competency framework for D&I practitioners. They listed and mapped all the competencies that D&I practitioners should possess to be able to perform effectively in their role.

Following best practices in the credentialing field, the competency framework

has then been validated by a large number of Canadian D&I professionals. A validation survey was sent to nearly 300 people who are in specific diversity, inclusion, equity and human rights roles as well as academics across the country, asking them to review and rank the competencies. Over 160 professionals and experts from across Canada provided their input. Subsequently, a list of knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) was developed for each competency, which was reviewed and revised by the committee.

“The process has been very rigorous and inclusive,” said Lazarova. “The sample of people who provided input to the competency assessment and validation were very diverse; they came from different industries, sectors and different personal diverse identity characteristics, but they were all knowledgeable about D&I.”

The next step in the process will be the creation of assessment tools and procedures that will be used to evaluate and measure candidates’ competencies and experience.

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“WE CANNOT UNDERESTIMATE LEGITIMACY. IT PROVIDES A STRONG SIGNAL TO THE ORGANIZATIONS HIRING THESE PEOPLE THAT THEY ARE QUALIFIED AND PASSIONATE ABOUT THIS PROFESSION.”

— DR. MILA LAZAROVA, BEEDIE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

D&I AND HR

In many organizations, D&I professionals are HR professionals who have been tasked with D&I responsibilities and agendas, and therefore have had to expand their knowledge and competencies. In fact, they might have had to acquire very specific expertise on topics such as equity legislation, cultural competence or workforce demographic analysis. A D&I certification would provide an avenue for that expertise to get formally acknowledged.

HR professionals know better than anyone else that their organizations are

becoming more diverse, and diversity management is a critical part of organizational effectiveness strategies. HR is extremely well positioned to take the lead on D&I and enact organizational change, and often does so even when there is not an official D&I role.

Finally, a professional D&I designation will help recruiters and people managers to find the best resources for D&I positions, as they will know exactly which kind of competencies and knowledge a certified D&I professional brings to the table. In a world where diversity of thought and culture is

sometimes painfully associated with harassment, discrimination, violence and destruction, having the right D&I people working to build inclusion in our organizations has never been more important. ■

Wanda Santini is the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (CCDI)'s manager of learning. Cathy Gallagher-Louisy is CCDI's director of knowledge services. CCDI has become the trusted advisor for all issues related to diversity, inclusion, equity and human rights management within Canada's workplaces.

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PSHSA sat down with the Greater Essex County District School Board to discuss what makes a good JHSC and successful Health & Safety training partnership:

Q: How long have you worked with the Public Services Health and Safety Association as your Health and Safety training partner?

A: The GECDSB has been working with the PSHSA since November 2000 to present. We are a site based board with approximately 85 Occupational Joint Health & Safety Committees (OJH&SCs).

Q: And what about PSHSA is a good fit for your organization?

A: They have a thorough understanding of Health & Safety Legislation specific to our industry. To date the PSHSA has certified over 500 of our Board’s staff.

Q: What is important to you about a good JHSC training program?

A: It has to cover not only the legislative requirements but be specific to our educational group with relatable examples.

Q: And how does PSHSA deliver on that?

A: Excellent delivery specific to our needs.

Q: What are some of the emerging health and safety issues you are seeing within your organization that the JHSC are faced with and how does PSHSA assist you to manage these issues?

A: We are transitioning into Job Specific Hazards and Prevention for all of our working groups. As we move forward we will be working with the PSHSA to incorporate this into the new part 2 training for our OJH&SCs.

Q: What in your opinion sets PSHSA apart from other training vendors?

A: Good customer service and willingness to customize training that meets our needs.

Q: And how can we help our clients do better?

A: By understanding each customers’ needs and how to provide cost effective solutions to meet those needs.

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Career Development and Nonretirement

HR HAS A ROLE TO PLAY IN HELPING MATURE WORKERS WEIGH THEIR CAREER OPTIONS

By Suzanne L. Cook, Ph.D.

The workforce is aging. In addition, older workers are no longer accepting conventional retirement. Ignoring these trends can be detrimental for organizations, and HR has a key role to play in addressing these issues.

AN AGING WORKFORCE

According to Statistics Canada, the median age is now 40.5 years in Canada and those over age 65 now outnumber individuals younger than 15. Population aging and the shrinking of the workforce have been ongoing concerns, because the large number of baby boomers equates to a larger proportion of individuals in the second half of life. This means higher numbers of mature and older workers in the workplace.

REJECTION OF TRADITIONAL NOTIONS OF RETIREMENT

Increasingly, as older workers enter their 60s, they are not retiring; instead, they are weighing their options for later life work. Working past traditional retirement age is becoming increasingly common during later life, whether adults aged 50 and over remain in their current occupation or pursue second careers.

With the intersection of these two workplace trends, greater numbers of older adults are participating in today's workplaces than ever before. Furthermore, they are expected to remain in the workforce longer than in the past. As the trend toward later life work among the growing population of older adults builds, this shift is impacting

organizations in many ways. Naturally, HR must be at the forefront. There are five steps that can be taken to address this new workforce shift.

IDENTIFYING NEW CAREER PATHWAYS

In the workplace, traditional career paths have shifted and it is more difficult for individuals to build their pathway, connect into new opportunities and advance their careers. With the movement beyond traditional career trajectories into the new emerging reality with our aging workforce, HR plays a key role. In fact, identifying common career pathways and developing additional career trajectories will engage workers – both young and more mature.

IT IS CRITICAL FOR HR TO HAVE DEEPER CONVERSATIONS ABOUT LATER LIFE WORK RATHER THAN CONVENTIONAL DISCUSSIONS ABOUT PENSIONS AND BENEFITS AS INDIVIDUALS PREPARE FOR THIS STAGE OF LIFE.



talent management

ADJUSTING THE ORGANIZATION WITH HR STRATEGY

It is important to recognize the opportunity presented by having older workers in the organization. It is equally critical to be aware of how identifying and meeting the needs of these workers can advance organizational strategy. One way to realign the organization and adjust to the aging workforce is for HR to develop an understanding of older workers' issues and needs. This is a critical step towards building additional knowledge of this emerging later-life career stage.

HR needs information about how to direct older workers and their career development as they explore and consider new opportunities. In addition to identifying pathways, HR can also build unique opportunities that meet specific organizational needs, such as mentoring programs and special projects. These types of programs in the organization can stimulate knowledge transfer and tie into succession planning strategy. This builds a strong intergenerational workplace. Therefore, these types of programs should be workplace priorities for every high-achieving organization.

REDIRECTION RESET BUTTON

In some cases, those aged 50 and older might want to press the reset button; they might be ready to pursue a new occupation or career. Sometimes this can be achieved

through a lateral move or the challenge of an attractive new project that benefits the organization while appealing to the individual. At other times, a second or third career is a better match and becomes the best choice for a "new direction." Either way, HR can act as a guide and provide information that can help this decision-making process.

CAREER OPTIONS OFFER A NEW CHALLENGE

A new opportunity has great appeal. HR can take steps to understand what individuals aged 50 and over want as their next work challenge. Do they want to redirect into a different occupation or career? Is there a project that they would welcome, something that will make use of their unique contributions and enhance their career development while benefiting the organization?

NEW STAGE OF CAREER

Older workers have a contribution to make to organizations. There is a push to move beyond traditional notions of retirement. The old images of a relaxing retirement do not mesh with current realities. More individuals expect to work into their 60s and even longer.

Career development and career decisions will continue to be important to older adults and HR can act as a guide and instruct them. In fact, it is critical for HR to have deeper conversations about later life

work rather than conventional discussions about pensions and benefits as individuals prepare for this stage of life. This is the new reality where career development extends into the second half of life.

NEW STUDY ABOUT WORK

Older adults entering into this new stage of later life career, choosing the "reset button" and shifting gears is the focus of the new research project funded by the Canadian Education and Research Institute for Counselling (CERIC). This study will examine this new stage of career through diverse examples of occupation. It is hoped that many adults aged 50 and over will participate and share their experiences of later life work.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

In Canada, there are more adults aged 50 and older in society and they are remaining in the workforce longer than ever before. Going forward, HR has several questions to ask: in the workplace, what proportion of workers are 50 and over? In what ways are career development needs being considered for these workers? How does this tie into the overall organizational and HR strategy?

There is an aging workforce and a rejection of conventional notions of retirement in our country. The current generation of older workers is healthy and interested in lifelong learning. Life expectancy has lengthened and individuals can be productive longer if they choose to remain in the workforce. Older workers can continue to make a contribution in the sphere of work. New career pathways, alignment with organizational strategy, "redirection" options and special programs can be identified and developed for workers aged 50 and over. In addition, different conversations with older workers are required now that working lives have extended. All of this will help make this new stage of career an organizational asset. By implementing these steps, HR can be forward-thinking and ahead of the curve with the career needs of an aging workforce. ■

Suzanne L. Cook, Ph.D. is a social gerontologist and adjunct professor in the Department of Sociology at York University. Her research project examines workers aged 50 and older who continue to work and are pursuing a new direction through second (or third) careers.



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From Cubicle to Tablet?

HR AND THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

By Sarah B. Hood

Don't look now, but the days of the nine-to-five office workplace may already be over. A succession of technological innovations – email, social networking, cloud storage, smartphone innovations, e-readers – has brought about drastic changes in the ways traditional offices work. The recent *Digital Workplace Global Study* by Avanade finds that 72 per cent of people in Canadian workplaces believe the traditional office will be obsolete within four years. In its place, workers will inhabit a digital workplace made up of a network of devices and platforms, with personal mobile devices taking on an increasingly important share of the communications burden.

“Simply put,” the study said, “[the digital workplace means] employees can access the information and resources they need anytime and from wherever they are, in order to do their jobs more

effectively...The key question that remains is: Are organizations ready? Based on research findings, the short answer is no.”

A digital workplace is more than just a traditional workplace with a website that can be accessed via smartphone. It comprises a broad and sweeping re-examination of the way work is done, beginning with process and policies, then moving into the hardware and software (devices such as phones, e-readers and laptops, the phone and data systems that support them and the security systems that keep them safe).

Forward-looking companies are giving employees virtual access to all their work tools and designing proprietary communications portals to make the connections seamless, and the payoff can be significant. The Deloitte report, titled *The Digital Workplace: Think, share, do*, says that employers stand to benefit greatly by



**“THERE’S RISK,
BUT THERE’S ALSO
A TREMENDOUS
AMOUNT OF
OPPORTUNITY.”**

— KAYTEK PRZYBYLSKI, AVANADE CANADA INC.



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embracing this change, through gains in attracting talent and improvements in employee productivity, satisfaction, retention and satisfaction in communications tools.

Most Canadian companies are only beginning to move into the digital workplace; the AvanaDe study says “employees at only one in four companies can access software and applications seamlessly outside of a physical office location today.”

And there are challenges, like maintaining privacy for the employee and security for the corporation. This risk can largely be addressed through existing tools, like good password habits; a more complicated matter, and one that has particular relevance for HR professionals, concerns the new definition of the working day.

REDEFINING THE WORKDAY

While the ability to work from remote locations at any hour of the day provides enormous scope for accommodation of staff with caregiving responsibilities, for example, it also opens up a host of questions regarding how to account for hours worked outside the normal schedule, and whether or to what extent staff will be held responsible to be “on call” during what was once considered purely personal time.

These considerations have a very different feel at different levels of an organization. A senior legal counsel may find it normal and reasonable to respond to urgent queries at odd times of the day, but is the same true of a casual labourer earning minimum wage? Who pays for the phone, or maintains the data plan? Are smartphone ownership or skills part of the job description, like car ownership and a driver’s license?

“There’s a lot of discussion and debate on this topic; there’s risk, but there’s also a tremendous amount of opportunity,” said Kaytek Przybylski, AvanaDe Canada Inc.’s vice president, Canada Service Lines.

For companies looking to take the first step into the digital workplace, he says, there is no single tool or function that wins

out over all the others in every case. There will be shopping decisions to be made (like whether to adopt a Microsoft or Apple suite), but each innovation and every purchase should flow out of a thoughtful analysis of corporate processes and policies.

“If I were an organization wanting a better digital workplace environment, that’s the first step I’d take,” said Przybylski. “It starts with having a clear idea of what you want to achieve and why.”

HR professionals will most likely play a key role in the discussions around digital workplace innovation. On the one hand, it can be a major driver of employee satisfaction, since workers tend to respond with enthusiasm to systems that streamline their workplace communications. It also makes HR’s job easier, since the smartphone or tablet can become a primary way to connect people to company policies, payroll records and safety information, among many other items, and it opens up far-reaching new possibilities for accommodating employees with caregiving responsibilities. But these tools also pose challenges relating to privacy and data security, and may end up redefining the shape of the work week for some types of workers.

“HR plays a critical role,” said Przybylski. “Let’s say you want to digitize the workplace of a courier company or law office; the HR team needs to help make sure that the people who are ultimately the stakeholders in the systems are well represented in the process of designing and implementing these systems.”

Many companies will turn to consultants to implement the new systems.

“[But] HR needs to wave the flag to say, ‘Hey, let’s not forget about the couriers.’ And ‘Let’s also consider the policy implications of what we want to do,’” said Przybylski. “It’s an exciting time, and a lot of change is happening. The expectations of customers and employees are changing. We all need to figure out what that means and help organizations respond.” ■

The Hiring Challenge

FIT OR DIVERSITY?

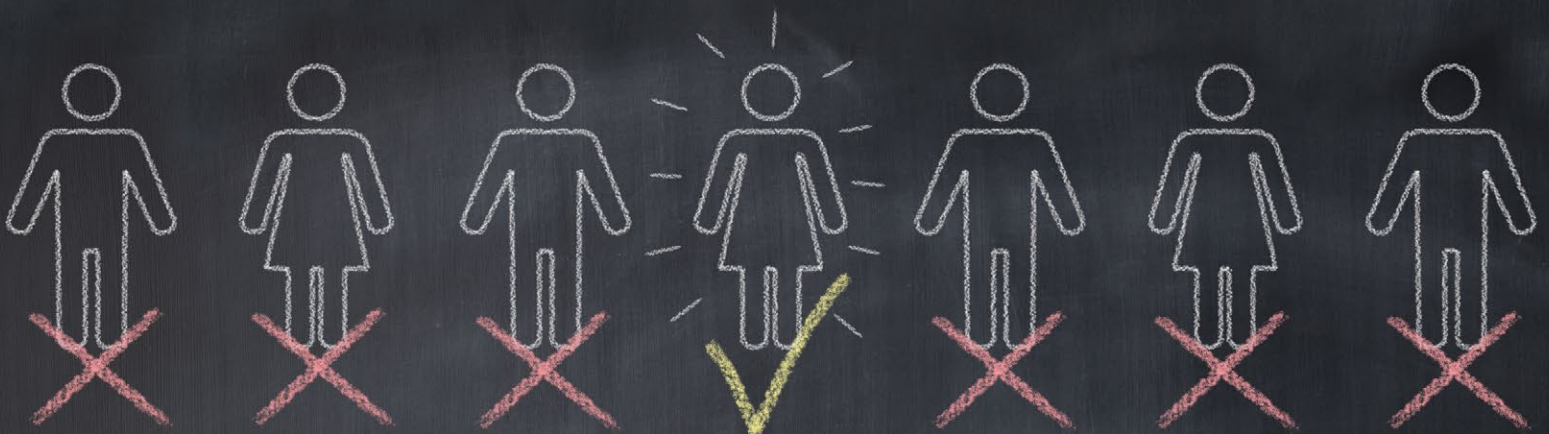
By Evert Akkerman

Can organizations hire for “fit” without sacrificing diversity? Many organizations tout diversity and inclusivity all over their websites yet many shy away from bringing in people with a fresh perspective. If we emphasize cultural fit, we end up selecting people “like us,” with diversity and inclusivity as collateral damage. Values are at the core of diversity; it’s about *who* the candidate is, not whether the candidate is like us.

The phenomenon of “fit” usually has three components: job fit, team fit and organizational fit. Job fit is a matter of skills, abilities and experience, while team fit and organizational fit are based on working well with others and blending with the culture. What’s

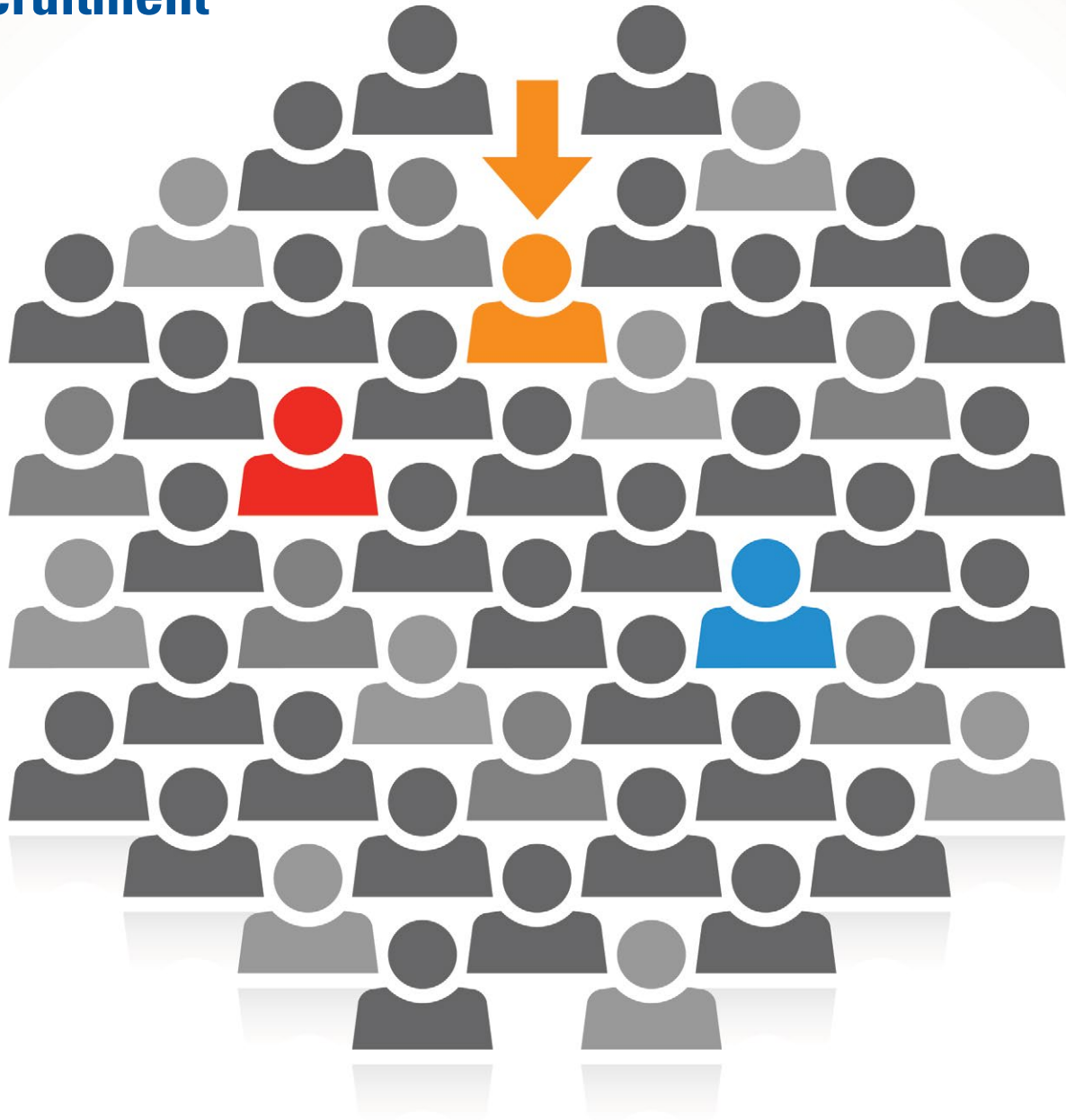
often missing from the equation is values – the core beliefs and goals that all members of an organization should share, regardless of background and what they look like. Great teams tend to consist of people with different talents but similar values, driven by the same goal or ideal.

Job fit is the easy part of recruiting. Team fit and organizational fit are harder to determine. What it often comes down to with team fit is: do the team members like you? Organizational fit is more of a broad stroke and tends to include unwritten rules and codes. This can be an obstacle to hiring great talent, as we’re stereotyping people for fit into an organization.



**JOB FIT IS THE EASY
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recruitment



Selecting for shared experiences and similar personalities may come at the expense of new skills, fresh ideas and future potential. If we want to take an organization from static and morose to energetic and efficient, we need to hire people that don't fit the current mold. As an example, a CEO had to choose between three corporate trainers that presented RFPs based on the company's five-year plan. One of the candidates mentioned that she was a fundraiser for a charity the CEO supported, and that was it. He decided – based on that commonality – that she would be a great fit. Come training time, she did not deliver and failed to connect with the audience.

How about the role of technology in the recruitment process – is it working for us or against us? Output can only be as good as input. If we feed terms like energy, passion and innovation into an Applicant Testing Service (ATS), we'll get resumes with those

words. When we present the hiring manager with six dynamic superheroes, chances are they won't be considered a fit. This is where an ATS stops being of any value at all, as these only look at resume fit.

Regardless of how much effort we make, no recruitment process will ever be fail-safe. You will only know whether you've made the right decision once a new hire is actually in the job, as this is the stage where skills, abilities and character match with the new environment and values are put to the test.

It is crucial to begin a recruitment process by defining the job we want to fill, the difference the position should make for the company and which experience, skills and abilities will help the company achieve its goals. ■

Evert Akkerman is an award-winning HR professional based out of Newmarket, Ont.

iPhone – Eye Strain

THE TIME WE SPEND ON SCREENS IS AFFECTING OUR HEALTH AND PRODUCTIVITY; WHAT CAN EMPLOYERS DO TO HELP?

By Joel Kranc

The late Steve Jobs, founder of Apple Inc. and visionary behind some of the modern workplace's most prolific devices and technological tools, told the *New York Times* in 2010 that he limits the amount of screen time his kids use at home. This is perhaps a shocking thought to many to think the children of the man behind Apple get limited time on their screens. As adults, however, we make those choices for ourselves – most of the time. At work, on the other hand, we are generally in a constant screen environment, either at our desks, in meetings or even on our breaks. The physical strain these digital devices are having on our eyesight and productivity is taking its toll on the modern workforce.

In fact, nine of out 10 employees say the quality of their work has been negatively impacted by problems with their vision, according to the *2015 Employee Perceptions of Vision Benefits Survey*, conducted by Transitions Optical. Unfortunately, while many of these problems affect most employees, the survey says, only 13 per cent of employees have addressed them with their employers.

WHAT IS DIGITAL EYESTRAIN?

The problem itself, according to The Vision Council (a Virginia-based organization representing manufacturers and suppliers in the optical industry), is “the physical discomfort felt after two hours or more in front of a digital screen and is associated with the close to mid-range distance of digital screens, including desktop and



laptop computers, tablets, e-readers and cell phones.” Workers are spending more and more time in front of screens, which is causing greater fatigue and dry, itchy or burning eyes, and this is affecting their work and productivity over time.

Jonathan Ormsby is a strategic account manager with Transitions Optical. He says extended use of the devices leads to many physical problems.

“Employees who can’t see well can’t work well,” he said. “Vision problems can really affect employees in many other ways depending on the type and severity of the problem. Vision problems resulting from eye disease may have little or no symptoms at first but can lead to gradual vision loss or complete blindness if you are not careful.”

THE EMPLOYER POINT OF VIEW

The effect of digital eyestrain is twofold. The first, and most obvious, problem is the physical issues that can arise from excessive use of digital devices. However, the second problem can be seen from the employer’s point of view. The more people experience these issues, the more it will negatively affect work. As a result, workplace productivity and medical claims become part of the bottom line for that company.

“The workplace has evolved tremendously,” said Yafa Sakkejha, general manager with The Beneplan Co-operative in Toronto. “When we used to price for vision benefits and someone would

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ask, ‘How much will it cost for me to add vision?’ we would assume that 60 per cent of the population are probably going to be wearing glasses; now, we assume 80 or 90 per cent of the population will be wearing glasses.”

Sakkejha says before employers spend money on changing their benefits plans or adding more vision care to them, it is important to look for root causes and make changes in the office culture, if possible.

“Adding vision benefits can be expensive and that’s why a lot of companies don’t have it, but I think the root cause is people staring at their screens,” she said, and that’s where changes need to take place.

Once the changes have been explored and the employer is still inclined to add benefits to their plans, Sakkejha says that rather than just coverage for glasses being added, eye exams should become part of the benefits package.

“Doctors will not only give you advice on how to ease the eyestrain in your life but they are able to detect diseases earlier because there is a lot the eye can tell you,” she said.

Ormsby agrees and says employers should offer a vision plan that provides comprehensive eye exams and high quality lens options. The next step, he explains, is for employers to educate their employees about proper eyewear options that can help alleviate strain and stress.

“The right options can help alleviate stress at home and at work, but many employees are not often aware of the options available to them through their vision plan at work,” he said. “It’s really important for employers to educate them about the lens options that are available, as well as some recommendations for the type of eyewear employees should be asking about.”

BACK TO BASICS

The traps of the modern workplace, including the digital tools we can’t seem to live without, are only increasing in usage and importance. As screen time grows, so does the potential for things like digital eyestrain, and ultimately employees with growing health issues. A change in culture and education can help ease some of the issues but there has to be buy-in at all levels to ensure this occurs and is maintained. It can certainly be part of a benefits package, but a back-to-basics communication approach with more face-to-face time will be the first step in fighting the effects of digital eyestrain. ■

Preventative measures for digital eyestrain

According to Yafa Sakkejha and Jonathan Ormsby, some of the best ways for companies and their employees to encourage a cultural shift when it comes to screen time include:

- Encouraging people to get up and walk around
- Talk to people instead of sending emails
- Try to accomplish tasks face-to-face during meetings rather than on a projector screen
- Encourage employees to work without their screens and use of the Internet
- Follow the 20/20/20 rule – after every 20 minutes, take a break for 20 seconds and look at objects that are 20 feet away



Crunching the Numbers

NEW CALCULATORS ESTIMATE DISABILITY COSTS FOR EMPLOYEES AND EMPLOYERS

By Jesse Martell

The National Institute of Disability Management and Research (NIDMAR) has developed calculators to measure the financial impact of Return to Work / Disability Management initiatives. These calculators allow individuals, employers and social security agencies to estimate the short and long-term costs following the onset of a disabling condition with the goal of improving return to work outcomes. In other words, an employer can use hard data to see the current picture but can also use the calculator to determine the return on investment (ROI) for any number of scenarios.

The following scenarios detail how the calculators work:

EMPLOYEE CALCULATOR SCENARIO

In this disability-related employment loss scenario, the person had a loss of employment income at age 40, a current age of 43 and a retirement age of 65. An annual income used in this scenario was \$40,000 and, as a result of 25 years of lost income, the total annual income lost was \$1,000,000. The employment benefit (including social security, insurance, etc.) annual value over the same period was \$875,000. The total anticipated income loss for this individual was \$1,875,000.

The total anticipated pension income to be received by this individual is \$190,478. Thus, their total expected loss of income is \$1,684,522.

EMPLOYER PROGRAM IMPACT CALCULATOR SCENARIO

The employer in this scenario had an average yearly WCB expense over the last three years of \$34,167; the average days lost due to disability were 5.67. The total



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return to work program cost was \$5,000. After the implementation of the program, the yearly expenses are \$28,000, the ratio (program impact/total program costs) is 0.23 and the change in days lost due to disability is 1.67. The impact of implementing the program is \$1,167.

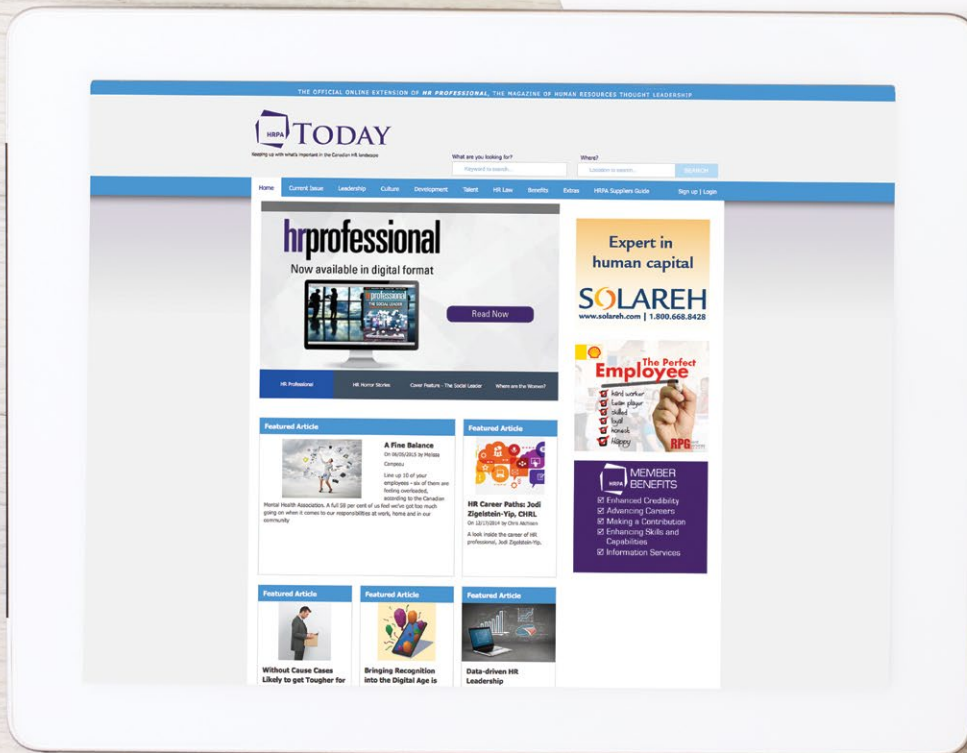
This initiative is designed to document and verify not only the financial impact of disability-related employment loss but also to define the potential benefits derived – for all parties – from effective interventions designed to maintain continuity of the employment relationship for affected workers.

This tool is beneficial for both employers and employees as the guidelines are applicable, regardless of whether the reason for the sick leave absence is occupational or non-occupational. What is consistent is where the continued, productive employment of workers is lost, regardless of the system or circumstances;

the financial, social and personal costs are significant – especially for the worker.

Depending on the jurisdiction, the costs can also be considerable for employers. This calculator allows employers to clearly measure the financial impact of their return to work/disability management initiatives in addition to providing a better understanding of their long-term disability frequencies. It therefore stands to reason that maintaining the continued employment relationship for a worker who has acquired a disabling impairment and is at risk of losing his/her employer attachment can yield substantial economic, social and societal benefits for workers, employers and society as a whole. ■

Jesse Martell is a professor of human resources at Durham College and director of professional development for the Durham Chapter of the Human Resources Professionals Association.



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HR CAREER PATHS: Catharine Sanko

BENEFITS AND PENSIONS

By Lisa Kopochinski

Catharine Sanko originally thought she would be a social worker or psychologist, but after getting her feet wet in her first payroll position, she knew she had found her niche.

As a highly organized and analytical person with an empathetic personality, this area of human resources fit her personality to a “T.”

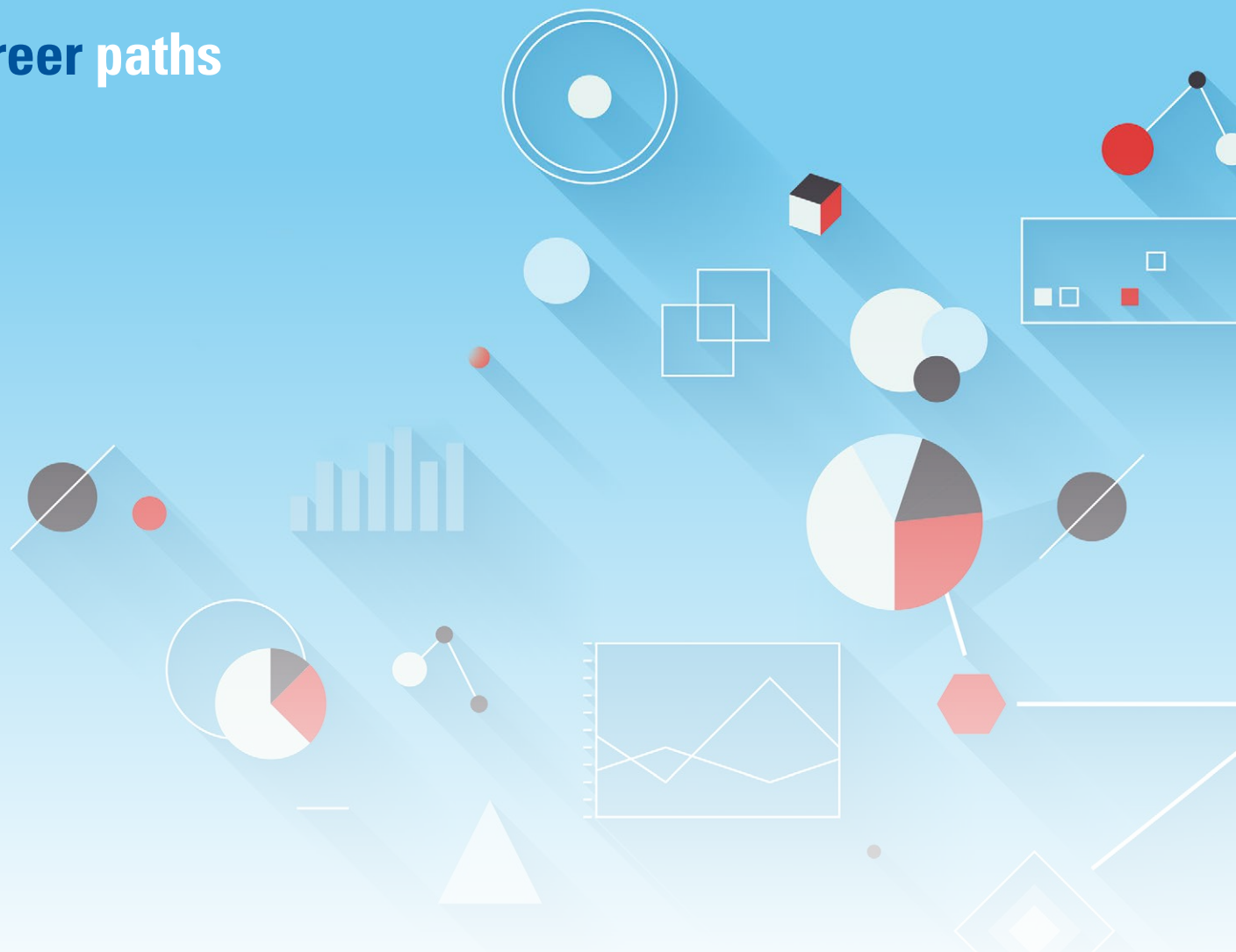
“I have always wanted to help people,” she said. “So in my HR career I can help others with matters that are very significant, yet very sensitive and personal to them – like their pay and benefits.”

Growing up around the Greater Toronto Area, she studied psychology and sociology after high school at the University of Waterloo, but it was while working in an accounting position that the opportunity arose for her to work in payroll.

“The company was not having success finding the right fit for the role at the time,” she said. “The hiring manager happened to be discussing the challenges with the



Illustration: Syda Productions/Shutterstock.com
Photo courtesy of Catharine Sanko



finance director in front of my desk. She was describing a need for the right mix of an analytical, detailed person, but with the right personality and fit. At one point she said, 'I need someone like Catharine!' I laughed with her and they moved on and I went about my day as usual."

However, the following day, the manager and director approached her and asked if she would be interested in the payroll position.

"I had no payroll experience at the time, but was very excited at the opportunity to learn something new, so I accepted," said Sanko. "That was my first payroll job and I embraced the opportunity, learning the day-to-day processes and registering for payroll courses. Within a year or so I started taking on some additional HR accountabilities and started getting some benefits exposure. The next role I accepted was a mix of payroll, benefits and pension accountabilities."

After working in payroll and benefits for a number of different companies and completing courses through the Canadian Payroll Association (CPA), she earned a Certified Payroll Manager (CPM) designation before achieving her Certified Human Resources Leader (CHRL) designation.

Sanko joined PepsiCo in August 2014 as HR operations associate manager. Her position expanded last February and she is now associate manager, Benefits and Pension Core Services. Working out of the company's Mississauga office, *HR Professional* recently caught up with this busy benefits and pension expert to find out what motivates her.


As associate manager, Benefits and Pension Core Services at PepsiCo, what are your main areas of responsibility?

Catharine Sanko: My main areas of responsibility include managing the operations of all existing benefits, retirement plans, disability pay, vendor interfaces and reporting for PepsiCo Canada. I'm also responsible for ensuring that any new programs are implemented successfully and to provide HR training and support on PepsiCo Canada Total Rewards policies and programs. I lead a team of five employees who keep all of these various day-to-day operations running smoothly.

How did you come to work in your current role?

CS: In my position before PepsiCo, I led three significant HR projects to successful completion. These projects encompassed a complete benefits redesign including rollout and a Total Rewards Roadshow to educate employees, an HRIS/payroll system conversion and an acquisition.

As I started to think about my future career development, I saw the job posting for PepsiCo Canada's HR operations associate manager. I had followed the organization for years hoping to see an opportunity that was right for me, so I applied and really connected with the hiring manager during my first interview. I believe my varied Total Rewards experience combined with the number of projects and system implementations I've led were instrumental in securing this role; I knew right away that it was the right opportunity and fit for me.



“IT IS OFTEN THE CHALLENGES OUTSIDE THE SCOPE OF A SPECIFIC POSITION THAT PROVIDE THE MOST CHANCE FOR LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT.”

– CATHARINE SANKO

What do you like most about your job?

CS: Every day there are new challenges in my job. I have so much to learn about the business still and there is a lot of variety in my responsibilities. I feel like there is unlimited opportunity for improvement or enhancements to the processes within the areas I lead. I love solving problems and helping my team troubleshoot through something challenging.

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

CS: On a typical day, I will attend several meetings. PepsiCo is a very collaborative business and they truly value their subject matter experts (SMEs). I provide support on a regular basis within the scope of my role to various teams including global payroll or HR operations.

What are some of the challenges you experience?

CS: Some of the regular challenges that I deal with include issues with one of our interfaces, receiving urgent requests with a short resolution turnaround time, or being asked to make a decision with limited information to move a project or change forward.

Another challenge is working within a “matrixed” organization. In this type of environment, a key focus is getting work done through others who are not my direct reports. This is different from my past experience and requires strong influencing and relationship building skills to be successful.

What skills do you possess that make you a great fit for your position as a benefits and pension expert?

CS: I am analytical, systematic, extremely organized, goal-oriented and decisive. I thrive on change as it usually provides a new opportunity for learning. I also work hard to provide the right support to my team and to become a better manager.

What are your ultimate career goals?

CS: I would like to continue to advance within the Total Rewards specialization in positions that would benefit from my unique skillset. I will also keep myself open to a project or development assignment that may be outside of the Total Rewards scope if it is a good challenge and would benefit my long-term goals.

What advice do you have for others interested in pursuing a career in benefits and pensions?

CS: Work hard and embrace change for the opportunity that it is. Don't ever think or say, “That's not my job.” It is often the challenges outside the scope of a specific position that provide the most chance for learning and development.

Be true to yourself and trust your instincts. If something doesn't feel right, it probably isn't. Just because someone says, “We've always done it this way,” doesn't mean you have to continue to do it the same. ■



MEET THE HR INFLUENCERS: **Denise Hayes**

**“ONE LEADERSHIP
STYLE DOES NOT
FIT ALL, SO BEING
NIMBLE AND
COMING UP WITH
CREATIVE SOLUTIONS
IS IMPORTANT.”**



PICKING UP THE PACE

By Lisa Gordon

Denise Hayes has never been one to back away from a challenge. It's a trait that serves her well in her current role as chief human resources officer at Moneris, Canada's largest point of sale payment processing firm. With offices across Canada and the U.S., Hayes is responsible for leading a 40-person team in delivering the human resources strategy for the company's 1,800 employees.

HR Professional caught up with Hayes to discuss some of the lessons learned during her 26-year career in HR.

When did you decide you wanted a career in human resources? Describe your first job in the field.

Denise Hayes: I was working in the travel industry, and I had worked for three different travel organizations. The different management styles, the leadership and the culture of those organizations and how they interacted with people intrigued me. It piqued my curiosity and I ended up going back to school to study human resources. Ironically, my first HR job was back in the travel industry. It was a generalist role, but it had a high focus on employee relations and also analytics.

Describe your current job. What are your main areas of responsibility?

DH: Moneris is a financial technology company. We are the number one debit and credit card payment processor in Canada, and among the top 10 in North America. I have HR responsibility for North America, and this means having an HR strategy with a high focus on talent management, which is both attracting and retaining key talent for the future evolution of the organization. I also work very closely with our CEO and my peers to ensure our work is aligned with the business strategy. It's a broad mandate, with a broad scope of responsibility.

What do you love about your job?

DH: I really like that it's challenging because of the scope and complexity, and I love having a North American view. It's a rare opportunity for a Canadian organization to be the head office, growing a business in the U.S. That creates a whole different set of opportunities and learning. It's very rewarding from that perspective. I personally need complexity and interesting work to keep me motivated, and I certainly haven't been disappointed.

What are the challenges you experience in your job?

DH: The challenge is really driven by the industry – the payments industry is changing very rapidly. We've gone from cash to debit and credit, and now paying with our phones and mobile wallets. We need to keep ahead of that trend and how the world is evolving around the payments industry, and have a lens on the future in terms of HR impacts and skill sets, and how to change within the organization to support our merchants. What kind of talent do we need to recruit, and how do we develop them? The world is moving faster and so we need to move faster, too.

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

DH: I think focus is very critical and so is staying calm. When an organization is going through a difficult time, they often look to HR to set the example. HR is in the role of helping people through the challenge. For HR to remain focused and empathetic, and also realistic about the situation, is really critical to success.

What skills are important for success in HR?

DH: Demonstrating broad business acumen is important. I often read about HR having to struggle to get a seat at the table, but to me that is a given. Building credibility by knowing the

business, while also building relationships at the same time, is very important.

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

DH: Knowing the industry that you are working in and being up on other issues besides HR is important. The one thing that has worked for me over the years is asking, “What business problem are we trying to solve?” You really have to focus on the business issue and then back away to determine what is possible and what is not, from an HR perspective.

What’s the future of HR?

DH: I think HR needs to be more fast-paced to keep up with business. We’re hitting a lot of change in workforce demographics and employees with different expectations. One leadership style does not fit all, so being nimble and coming up with creative solutions is important. HR has come a long way in leveraging technology, but we have to go even further. Our workforce today is comfortable in a mobile, social space so our way of interacting with our employees and our workforces needs to evolve along those lines. It won’t be the only way we interact with our employees, but it will definitely be one way. We have to be looking ahead, not in the rear-view mirror. ■



First job: Serving burgers at McDonald’s in Fort McMurray, Alta. I was born in Belfast, Ireland, but spent part of my teenage years in Fort McMurray when we came to Canada.

Childhood ambition: I wanted to be an ice skater, which is so ironic because we didn’t have any ice rinks in Ireland back then.

Best boss and why: My current boss, the CEO here at Moneris, Angela Brown. She’s an incredible leader; she brings a very down-to-earth approach to her leadership style; she’s driving a very ambitious strategy in a very pragmatic way. She genuinely appreciates the contributions of every employee in the organization.

Current source of inspiration: Right now it’s my team here at Moneris. We developed a new HR strategy when I joined last year, and they’ve been so motivated at driving it. It’s really great to be able to watch it happen.

Best piece of advice you ever got: To view all forms of feedback, especially constructive feedback, as a gift.

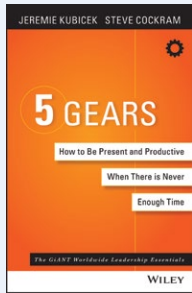
Favourite music: I like a wide range, from Katy Perry to Bon Jovi to Neil Diamond. I listen to pretty much everything.

Last book you read: I read a lot of business books and articles, so in my free time I like to chill out. The last book I read was *Six Years* by Harlan Coben. It’s a suspense novel.

How you spend your time away from work: I’m mostly with family and friends, which usually involves eating out or entertaining at my home with small dinner parties. I always seem to have some sort of home improvement project on the go; it seems to be a never-ending cycle. I also go to the gym and try to stay healthy.

OFF THE SHELF

By Alyson Nyiri, CHRL



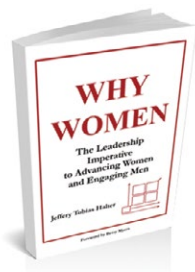
5 GEARS: HOW TO BE PRESENT AND PRODUCTIVE WHEN THERE IS NEVER ENOUGH TIME

Jeremie Kubicek and Steve Cockram
Wiley, 2015

Coined by Valerie Gauthier in 1994, relational intelligence is the foundation for leadership development in *5 Gears*. Defined as the capacity for developing social skills in the services of fostering relationships, relationship intelligence is the future competitive advantage for leaders. The five gears correlate to corresponding behaviour that people shift into at certain times and with certain people. Mastering the behaviour in each gear allows leaders to maintain relationships critical for purpose, direction and leadership.

Talking point

Knowing which gear is our default and when we need to switch gears makes us more productive at work and more present at home.



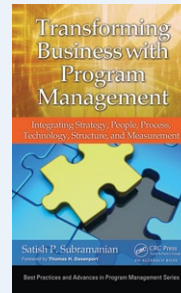
WHY WOMEN: THE LEADERSHIP IMPERATIVE TO ADVANCING WOMEN AND ADVANCING MEN

Jeffery Tobias Halter
Fushian LLC, 2015

Halter is upfront about the purpose of his book: for leaders to embrace an integrated organizational approach to women in their organizations. Doing so is a business imperative for those who want to grow revenue, improve operating profits and enhance their company's reputation. Most organizations have failed to think strategically about women as a business opportunity and the potential solution to their biggest business problems.

Talking point

Supporting the increased role of women in organizations is a strategic priority for both HR and senior management. HR can help thread an urgent sense of accountability among leaders to advance women within their organizations.



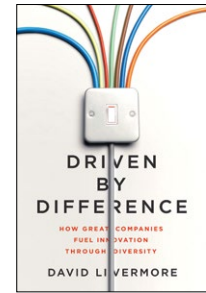
TRANSFORMING BUSINESS WITH PROGRAM MANAGEMENT: INTEGRATING STRATEGY, PEOPLE, PROCESS, TECHNOLOGY, STRUCTURE, AND MEASUREMENT

Satish Subramanian
CRC Press, 2015

Mounting transformational change programs requires enormous planning and vigilant monitoring, so launching more than one or two programs is a significant drain on human resources. Subramanian offers a complex and robust schema for organizations looking to successfully transform their business. By tightly integrating business strategy, execution, business transformation, program management and organizational change management, business performance can be critically improved.

Talking point

Significant risk accompanies disruptive change. Program managers manage the process from end to end, beginning with describing the problem accurately.



DRIVEN BY DIFFERENCE: HOW GREAT COMPANIES FUEL INNOVATION THROUGH DIVERSITY

David Livermore
Amacom, 2016

Canada is the only Western country in the list of top 20 most culturally diverse countries, with Toronto being in the top 10 most culturally diverse cities in the world. Few would dispute that cultural diversity yields greater opportunities for global innovation. But, as Livermore points out, it's a correlation, not causation. Organizations that learn to leverage the varied perspectives from multicultural teams have a significant opportunity to find better solutions. *Driven* shows the managerial steps necessary for translating diversity into innovation. Diversity combined with high cultural intelligence (CQ) is essential for managing diverse teams.

Talking point

Speaking up is necessary for innovation. Drawing on various studies, Livermore shows high CQ predicts the degree to which individuals will speak up in culturally diverse situations. ■

WANT A MORE IN-DEPTH LOOK? READ EXTENDED BOOK REVIEWS ON WWW.HRPATODAY.CA.

What's Your Leadership Legacy?

By Jo Eismont

The world is constantly speeding up. We spend our working days jumping from conference calls to annual reviews, to checking our ever-buzzing cell phones, to syncing our work calendar with our home calendar and it's time that we stop and ask: what is left of us, as leaders, to give by the end of the day?

What great leaders must give – regardless of what else is on your to-do list – is time to your team.

TIME WITH YOUR TEAM

According to a survey by research firm Leadership IQ, the optimal time for a manager to spend with those she leads is six hours per week. Employees who enjoy six hours of their manager's time are 29 per cent more inspired, 30 per cent more engaged and 16 per cent more innovative than those who only spend one hour with their manager in a working week.

Now, you can choose to see that one of two ways. You could feel under immense pressure to offer six hours of your time to each of your team members, and crumble under the weight of the extra responsibility. Or you can choose to see it as a massive (and welcome) opportunity to become the kind of manager who leaves a meaningful, lasting legacy.

WHAT IS A LEADERSHIP LEGACY?

Effective leaders leave a subtle legacy every time they walk out of a room. Every time you exit your office or a meeting room, you leave behind an imprint, and whether that is positive or negative is wholly up to you. Only you can choose exactly what that legacy looks like; maybe you'd like to build an atmosphere of positivity, a culture of innovation, a high performing team of subject matter experts or a climate of ambition and growth?

BEING MINDFUL

Being aware of your leadership legacy is a question of mindfulness. First, you need to recognize that your legacy is not some abstract notion, far off in the future and somewhat out of your control. Instead you should accept that you have direct control of your legacy on a daily basis; by understanding this acutely, you'll have no option but to move relationship building with your team to the top of your list of priorities.

If you put that six hours in with your team, if you get to truly know them, their ambitions, their fears, what puts them under pressure and what motivates them, then you're building a lasting legacy, person by person, in increments and on a rock-solid foundation. And in doing that, you'll go from good leader to great. ■

Jo Eismont is social media and web editor with Insights Learning and Development.

WHAT GREAT LEADERS MUST GIVE – REGARDLESS OF WHAT ELSE IS ON YOUR TO-DO LIST – IS TIME TO YOUR TEAM.



Introducing—The Williamson Group's HEALTH CONNECTED

Helping Employers Take a Strategic Approach to Wellness

We help organizations take a strategic and 'connected' approach to wellness. Our targeted solution promotes the understanding of daily health habits and enables employees to act on this understanding and better manage their health goals. This employee wellness program goes beyond traditional approaches by leveraging the latest in digital and mobile health technologies. Powered by MediResource, The Williamson Group's Health Connected program is designed to promote the daily engagement and behavioural changes necessary for measuring meaningful impact on employee well-being and organizational health over time.

Make Wellness Count

- ✓ Validated personal health risk assessments.
- ✓ 24/7 access to digital health and wellness coaching to address risks, lifestyle behaviours & chronic disease.
 - Stress
 - Fitness
 - Sleep
 - Diabetes
 - Nutrition
 - Mood
- ✓ On-demand, 'quantified self' health tracking platform, connects with popular wearable devices and health apps.
- ✓ Managed and ready to launch quarterly health challenges that motivate with fun themes, camaraderie and goal setting.

Want to Learn More?
Contact The Williamson Group

Phone: 1-800-265-9975 | Email: info@williamsongroup.com | Website: williamsongroup.com

Or, visit us in the Exhibition Centre at the 2016 HRP A Annual Conference & Tradeshow



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