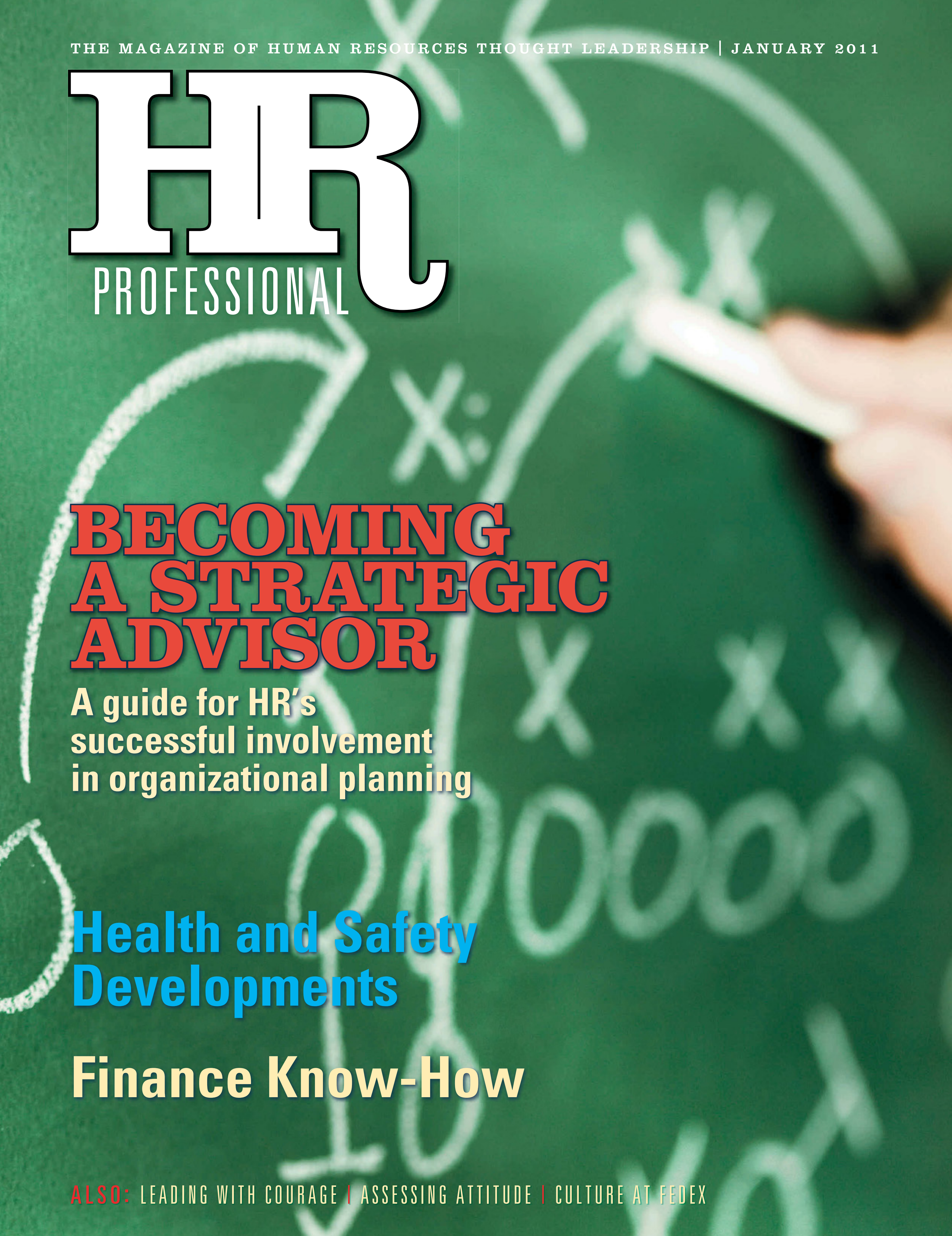
THE MAGAZINE OF HUMAN RESOURCES THOUGHT LEADERSHIP | JANUARY 2011

HR PROFESSIONAL



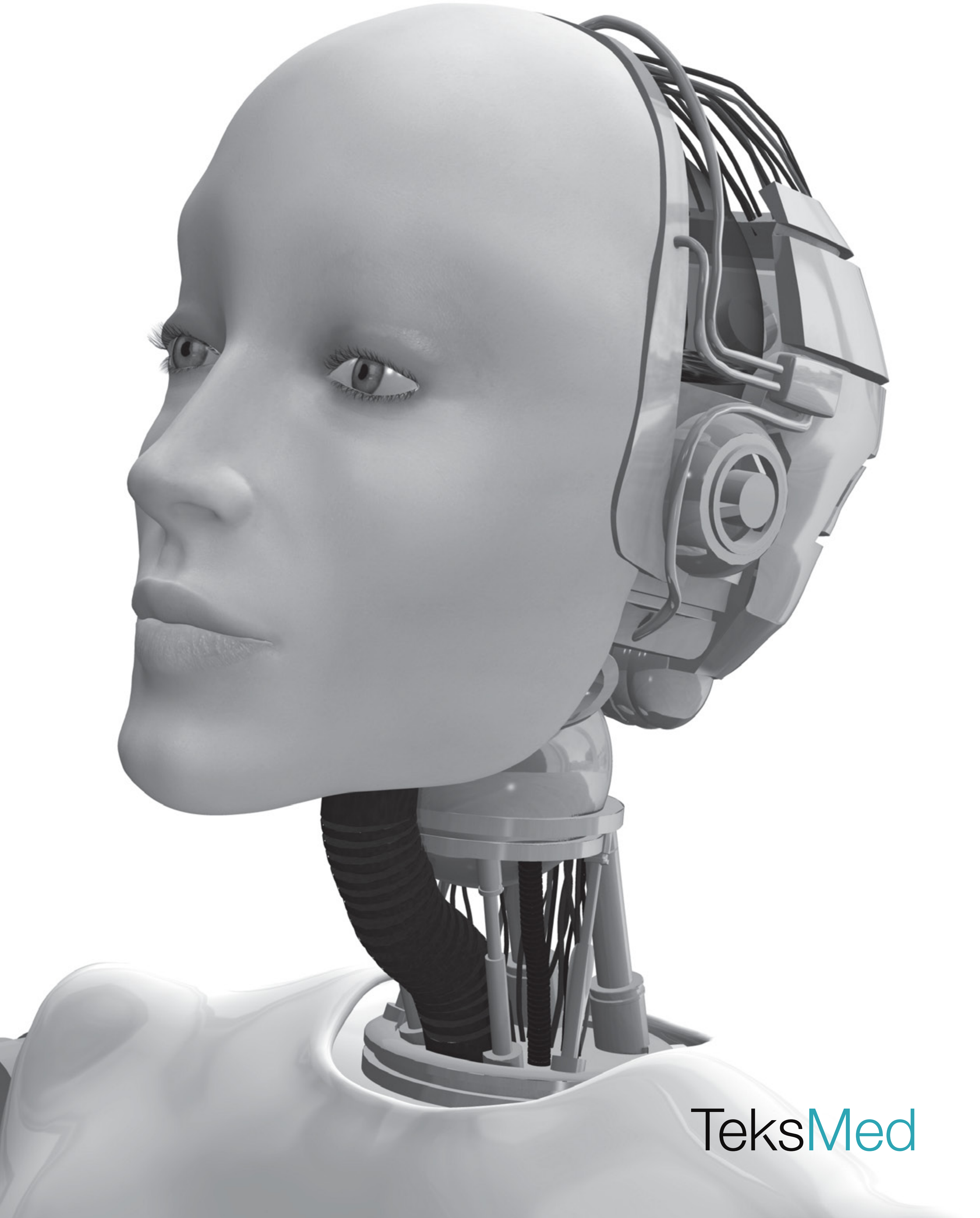
BECOMING A STRATEGIC ADVISOR

A guide for HR's successful involvement in organizational planning

Health and Safety Developments

Finance Know-How

ALSO: LEADING WITH COURAGE | ASSESSING ATTITUDE | CULTURE AT FEDEX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EDITOR'S LETTER

ADDING VALUE

Everyone in human resources has heard about the need to be "strategic." This is not isolated to HR. Many professions are undergoing this push to show value, including communications and marketing. But getting to the heart of what "strategic" means is essential, particularly for entry-level and up-and-comers. Waiting for them to "get it" is not timely or productive, for anyone. To facilitate, we've enlisted Greg Anderson, a senior consultant and former VP of a large global organization, to explain how to be involved and effective in your organization's strategic planning process, on page 22.

We've also asked Certified General Accountant Bernie Keim, to outline some financial terminology that every HR professional should know, because understanding the financial operations of an organization is critical to speaking intelligently and offering insight about the business strategy. This finance column, on page 34, is the first in a series of articles to boost your financial acumen and will appear in future issues of *HR Professional* and on HRPROMAG.com.

Health and safety

While being involved in business planning is critical, HR still needs to hire talent, train them, pay them and make sure they are safe and productive. To that end, *HR Professional* also addresses new developments in the health and safety arena, including the latest news on the regulatory front, on page 13; and the impact of Bill 168 to employee safety, on page 39.

Enjoy the issue.

Meredith Birchall-Spencer

Meredith

HR PROFESSIONAL

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JANUARY 2011

ALISON ADAM

Alison Adam is an associate with Shields, O'Donnell, MacKillop LLP. Along with co-author Meighan Ferris-Miles, she discusses the proliferation of overtime class actions lawsuits and how to avoid them, on page 19.

CAROL QUINN

Speaker, author and talent consultant, Carol Quinn has more than 25 years of hiring experience. She explains how to accurately gauge attitude in interviews (part 1 of her two-part series), on page 37.

GREG ANDERSON

Greg Anderson, a consultant and former VP of HR of a large international organization, provides a nuts-and-bolts approach to becoming involved and effective in the strategic business planning sessions of your organization, on page 22.

BERNIE KEIM

Bernie Keim is vice-president, member services and regulatory affairs at CGA Ontario. He penned "Grasping Financial Terminology," the new finance column, on page 34. This is the first in a series of finance articles to appear in *HR Professional* and HRPROMAG.com.

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BY ANTOINETTE BLUNT

EMPLOYEE BEHAVIOUR AFFECTS WORKPLACE SAFETY

Amendments to the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (Bill 168), which came into effect in June 2010, were designed to eliminate or minimize the risk of violence and harassment in the workplace. To ensure compliance, HR professionals must be vigilant in observing the behaviour of employees, understand what is appropriate and how to manage situations where inappropriate behaviour exists.

The expertise of HR professionals lies in the ability to distinguish between performance-related behaviour problems and other problems. If we can confirm through effective performance-management processes that the inappropriate behaviour is not related to performance, then underlying factors must be considered and dealt with.

HR professionals must also take into account the impact of the employee's behaviour on others. If it creates fear, concern or uncertainty among co-workers, HR has legal and ethical obligations to delve further immediately because employee safety is at risk. This was a lesson learned too late from the tragic case of the Windsor nurse who was murdered by a physician at her place of employment. Before her death, she had brought her concerns to hospital management and had applied for a restraining order against this physician, with whom she had a previous relationship.

Onus on management

The amendments to the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, which were created in response to similar cases, stipulate it is management's responsibility to identify hazards, ensure controls are in place, provide training to all employees exposed and remove any potential physical threats to employees.

Employers are now required by law to have a policy that will eliminate or minimize the risk of violence to employees. This also includes a requirement that if an employer becomes aware of domestic violence that would likely expose an employee(s) to a physical injury in the workplace, the employer must take every precaution reasonable to protect the employee. However, this does not mean that HR professionals are expected to be social workers or psychologists. After all, we are not qualified to diagnose mental-health problems. But our policy and risk-assessment plan must include ways to identify signs that an employee might be a victim of domestic abuse or that an employee might be an abuser, and techniques to manage potentially violent and actually violent situations.

Such expertise should now be considered part of the foundation of good human resources management and performance management, both of which we must execute while also ensuring employees know what appropriate conduct is. You need to know how to discern what the problem really is and when and how to react. We must also be aware that those skills are not instinctive and must be taught to many managers.

Building a trusting relationship with our employees is also essential, because if we do that, they are more apt to take guidance from us and approach us if they have a problem. HR professionals are busy people but we still have to be alert, vigilant and intuitive. Heightened awareness is crucial in today's workplace for the sake of all our employees.

Most important, we need to make sure employees understand and abide by policies that identify appropriate behaviour. HR

UPFRONT

HEALTH | SUSTAINABILITY | PRODUCTIVITY

COSTS OF OBESITY

MORE EVIDENCE FROM GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY THAT OBESITY IS NOT JUST HURTING THE HEALTH OF NORTH AMERICAN WORKERS BUT HAMPERING THEIR BANK BALANCES AS WELL. THE REPORT, RELEASED IN SEPTEMBER 2010, DETERMINED THAT WITH EMPLOYEE SICK DAYS, LOST PRODUCTIVITY AND THE NEED FOR EXTRA GASOLINE, OBESITY COSTS A WOMAN US$4,879 AND A MAN US$2,646 PER YEAR. WOMEN ARE MORE AFFECTED THAN MEN BECAUSE LARGER WOMEN EARN LESS THAN SKINNIER ONES; INTERESTINGLY, WAGES DON'T DIFFER FOR MEN WHO CARRY EXTRA WEIGHT. OBESITY COSTS ARE FAR GREATER THAN THE YEARLY COST OF JUST BEING OVERWEIGHT, WHICH IS US$524 FOR A WOMAN AND US$432 FOR A MAN.

Source: MetroNews.ca

GREEN ENGAGEMENT

The economic downturn of the last few years has not impacted generation Y's commitment to environmental responsibility, a study finds. The survey conducted by Leger Marketing on behalf of RSA Insurance, found that 77 per cent of gen Ys feel it's important for their company to be green with one-third reporting they would quit their job if they found their employer was acting environmentally irresponsible.

The survey highlights the growing attitude among young Canadians to expect their employers to be aware of their collective impact on the environment and demonstrate their commitment to resolving it. Further, 68 per cent of gen Ys reported that they would actively participate in helping their company meet their green standards by creating or joining a company-based green initiative.

Source: RSA Canada

High Performers

PURGE THE UNPRODUCTIVE

A new study by the Institute for Corporate Productivity (i4cp), "Time to Optimal Productivity," shows that more than half (55 per cent) of respondents from low-performing organizations report that employees remain in positions long after their productivity has begun to wane, which is true for only one-fifth of those from high-performing firms.

When participants were asked about the time to full productivity in their companies, 45 per cent of those from high-performing firms said this occurs in 12 months or less, compared with just 32 per cent of those from low-performing firms.

For more on this critical issue, see HRPROMAG.com "Time to Optimal Productivity."

Source: i4cp

LABOUR RELATIONS MANAGEMENT CENTRE OPENS

A group of Canada's most influential union leaders, employers, academics and government representatives, including former CAW chief Buzz Hargrove *(pictured right)* gathered mid-September for the grand opening of the Centre of Labour Management Relations (CLMR) at Ted Rogers School of Management at Ryerson University.

The school, the first of it's kind in Canada that is funded by both labour and management, offers a forum where leaders from labour, government, public and private sector organizations can jointly tackle issues, undertake research and network in a non-partisan environment. Ultimately, the intent of the centre is to better understand labour-management relations and reduce workplace conflict. Other areas of concentration for CLMR include alternate models for worker representation, pension sustainability, public sector labour relations and workplace mental health issues.

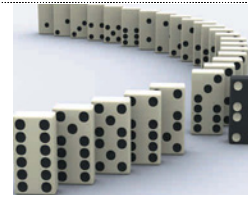
EMPLOYEE USE OF PRESCRIPTION NARCOTICS ON THE RISE

Sue Bates, an employee with Dura Automotive Systems in Michigan, lost her job of 22 years after testing positive for a legally prescribed drug—hydrocodone—which she was taking for back pain. The case brings to light challenges for employers concerning prescription drug use in the workplace. Under Dura's policy, a prescription drug is considered unsafe if its label includes a warning against driving or operating machinery even though doctors say many users function normally despite such warnings.

According to the Canadian Human Rights Commission, drug and alcohol testing is strictly not allowed for pre-employment, and only allowed in limited circumstances in safety-sensitive positions in Canada.

What this case brings to light is the increasing dependence of society on prescription narcotics and the affect these drugs have on the workplace. Quest Diagnostics, a provider of drug tests in the U.S., found employees' positive tests for opiates rose more than 40 per cent from 2005 to 2009.

Source: New York Times



SUCCESSION PLANNING'S SAD REALITY

NEARLY ONE-THIRD OF NORTH AMERICAN COMPANIES HAVE FAILED TO IDENTIFY FUTURE LEADERS WITHIN THEIR ORGANIZATION, ACCORDING TO A POLL BY RIGHT MANAGEMENT. FURTHER, ONLY 19 PER CENT INDICATE THAT THEY'VE IDENTIFIED TALENT WHO CAN LEAD THE ORGANIZATION IN THE FUTURE.

RIGHT MANAGEMENT POLLED NEARLY 200 SENIOR EXECUTIVES AND HUMAN RESOURCE PROFESSIONALS IN SEPTEMBER AND ASKED: **DO YOU HAVE FUTURE LEADERS IDENTIFIED FOR CRITICAL ROLES IN YOUR ORGANIZATION?**

19% YES, FOR ALL CRITICAL ROLES

21% YES, FOR MOST, BUT NOT ALL CRITICAL ROLES

29% YES, FOR SOME CRITICAL ROLES

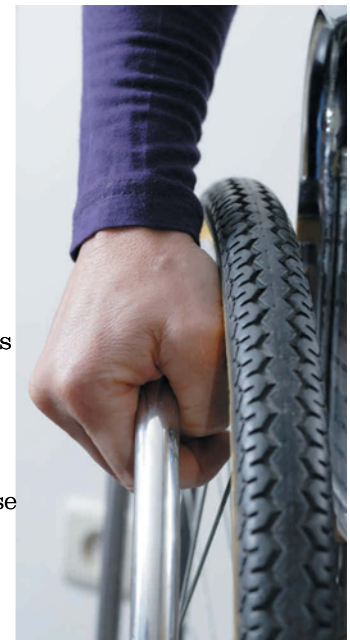
30% NO, NOT FOR ANY CRITICAL ROLES

"SO MANY ORGANIZATIONS, IT TURNS OUT, HAVE MADE PRACTICALLY NO PROVISION FOR FUTURE LEADERSHIP," SAID DEBORAH SCHROEDER-SAULNIER, RIGHT MANAGEMENT SENIOR VICE-PRESIDENT FOR GLOBAL SOLUTIONS.

Source: Right Management

March of Dimes

PARTNERSHIP CREATES A BRAIN TRUST FOR AODA COMPLIANCE



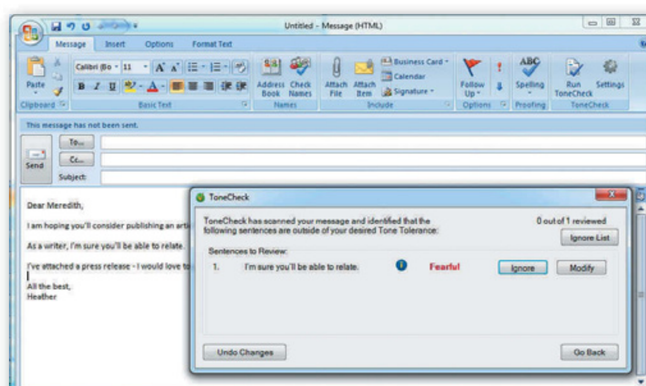
In Canada, the buying power of persons with disabilities is estimated to be $25 billion. In fact, more than 1.85 million people in Ontario (one in seven) have a disability and is expected to increase to one in five within 20 years. To help organizations serve this market, the Ontario March of Dimes and Quadrangle Architects have formed a new joint venture called AccessAbility Advantage.

AccessAbility's mandate is to deliver a one-stop shop to help make Ontario businesses more accessible for people with disabilities and facilitate compliance with *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, which dictates all Ontario business that provide goods or services to the public will be barrier-free for both customers and employees by Jan. 1, 2012.

"Of the 360,000 businesses in Ontario, some are making progress implementing changes, but many don't even know where to begin and are struggling to understand the complexities of these new regulations," said Frances Jewett, AccessAbility Advantage's business development manager. "That's why we are here to help."

For more info, visit accessabilityadvantage.ca.

WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?



We've all received at least one blatantly rude email from a co-worker having a really stressful day but what are far more damaging are those snarky or abrupt emails you find in your inbox everyday. In fact, studies show email messages are interpreted incorrectly 50 per cent of the time according to *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. These emails cause a host of problems including offending co-workers and customers, damaging the reputation of the company, as well as the sender, and eroding the workplace culture.

To the rescue is Lymbix—from Moncton, N.B.—and its ToneCheck software for Microsoft Outlook. Similar to spell check, the software identifies and flags emotionally charged sentences in emails. Other features allow you to preview the emotion in your message prior to sending, choose your acceptable tone tolerance level, and notify you if your message falls outside of your acceptable level when you hit send.

For more info and to download the free software, visit tonecheck.com.

ADVANCING WOMEN IN BUSINESS HONOUREES

THREE CANADIANS ARE THE INAUGURAL RECIPIENTS OF THE CATALYST CANADA HONOURS, WHICH RECOGNIZE CANADIAN CORPORATE LEADERS' COMMITMENT TO THE PROMOTION OF WOMEN IN BUSINESS.

ED CLARK, PRESIDENT AND CEO OF TD BANK FINANCIAL GROUP; COLLEEN SIDFORD, VP AND TREASURER OF ONTARIO POWER GENERATION INC.; AND SYLVIA CHROMINSKA, HEAD OF GLOBAL HUMAN RESOURCES AND COMMUNICATIONS AT SCOTIA BANK ALL WON FOR THEIR DEMONSTRATED COMMITMENT TO ADVANCING TALENTED WOMEN INTO LEADERSHIP ROLES.

CATALYST CANADA, A NON-PROFIT DEDICATED TO EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN IN BUSINESS AND BUILDING INCLUSIVE WORKPLACES, HOSTED THE CATALYST CANADA HONOURS, WHICH TOOK PLACE IN OCTOBER 2010 IN TORONTO.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT CATALYST.ORG.

BY MEIGHAN FERRIS-MILES AND ALISON ADAM

PREVENTING OVERTIME CLASS ACTIONS

Class actions for unpaid overtime have exploded in recent years. There are currently three such class actions moving through our legal system, and the stakes in each are high. CIBC employees are claiming $500 million in damages, Bank of Nova Scotia employees are claiming $300 million in damages and CN employees are claiming $250 million in damages. Each of these cases are in the early stages of litigation and, as these cases gain momentum, they will provide valuable lessons for employers in regard to managing overtime of employees and preventing future claims for unpaid overtime.

Employees with claims for unpaid overtime have several options available for pursuing such claims. One option is that a group of employees may elect to be certified as a class. To be successful at this step, the class of employees must establish certain requirements including that the claims of class members raise common issues, that a class proceeding would be the preferable procedure for resolution of those common issues, and that there is an appropriate representative plantiff who would fairly and adequately represent the interests of the class. To date, the Ontario court had reached different conclusions in regard to certifying certain overtime class actions. Early cases suggest the court was reluctant to certify overtime class actions. However, in some recent cases, including Bank of Nova Scotia and CN, the court has granted motions for certification. These decisions are undergoing a relentless series of appeals, and the issue of certifying overtime class actions will likely proceed to the Supreme Court of Canada in order to settle the matter. In the interim, employers should consider the following:

> "As these cases gain momentum, they will provide valuable lessons for employers."

1. Overtime policies should state that employees are not permitted to work overtime unless it is pre-authorized. There should, however, also be a mechanism for employees to have overtime approved after the fact. Sometimes issues arise that need to be dealt with promptly and it is not practical to have overtime pre-authorized in such circumstances.

2. Ensure that overtime policies permit for individual application and assessment. This reduces the likelihood that there will be common issues between all employees and thus minimizes the risk of certification of the class.

3. Ensure overtime policies are being consistently followed. Employers will be in a stronger position to argue that there is no common issue if it can be established that overtime policies are always followed.

4. Conduct an analysis of the eligibility requirements in your overtime policies. Generally speaking, salaried employees are entitled to overtime pay, but certain categories of employees (e.g., managers, IT, engineers, etc.) are exempt from overtime pay.

5. Maintain accurate time sheets for all employees. Wherever possible, have each employee sign off on the weekly schedule, acknowledging that it is an accurate reflection of the hours worked. Such records will be critical in defending any claims.

6. Have a system for monitoring and authorizing employees' hours of work. Employees should also be informed that working unauthorized overtime could result in discipline.

It is important to remember that simply having a policy that requires pre-approval of overtime may not be sufficient. An employer is obligated to ensure that overtime is not worked or, if it is worked, the employee will be paid accordingly. While these measures may seem onerous, overtime claims may prove to be costly, particularly if such claims are certified as class proceedings. HR

Meighan Ferris-Miles and Alison Adam are associates with employment law firm Shields, O'Donnell, MacKillop LLP in Toronto.

BY YAFA SAKKEJHA

TREND ALERT: NON-PROFIT EMPLOYEE BENEFIT CO-OPS

Amidst public uproar about the American health bill in 2009, U.S. President Barack Obama encouraged the Senate to develop a proposal for a non-profit health co-operative. The co-op would help individuals and small businesses afford health insurance by forming one large buying group in order to obtain discounts and lower margins from health insurers. Policy holders would be owners, entitling them to any profits seen by the co-op.

Catherine Leviten-Reid, an assistant professor at the University of Saskatchewan's Centre for the Study of Co-operatives, says that only a few of these co-operatives currently exist in Canada. "There are many purchasing co-operatives in the U.S., organized by private companies, for the purpose of saving those companies money; for instance, to buy drugs in bulk. But co-op development in Canada, which has largely taken place in the last decade, has focused on providing direct health-care services to individuals—most of our current health co-operatives are funded by the government to help elderly or disabled citizens."

> "**Policy-holders** would be **owners**, entitling them to any **profits** seen by the co-op."

Entities such as Beneplan Inc., which has been running such a co-operative since 2001, reverted to the original concept of insurance, where insurance companies such as Manulife, Sun Life and Great-West Life were originally co-operatives and policy-holders were inherently shareholders and entitled to the profits. That would be similar to getting a cheque at the end of the year from your car insurer when they made a profit. This practice ended in 1985 when lawsuits for neglecting to pay out profits to policyholders rocked the industry and insurance companies were "de-mutualized."

Examples

Paystation, a Canadian monetary security firm, established in 1955, joined a non-profit health co-operative in 2004, and data from Beneplan shows that it has distributed a total of $10,800 from co-operative profits. In years when its 30 employees spent more in claims than they paid in premiums, Paystation was not liable for the deficit.

A Canadian manufacturer with more than 100 employees, Berry Plastics joined a health co-operative in 2001 and has since saved in excess of $500,000. Judy Blanchard, HR manager for Berry Plastics, says that "it works the same way as other benefit plans do: employees get a drug card, coverage is the same and so on. The only difference is that we're shareholders of the co-op, so any profit is paid back to us."

How it works

Co-operatives are registered as multi-employer trusts with Revenue Canada, to ensure appropriate taxation, and audits are performed annually and disclosed with member companies.

Every member company appoints a trustee who has a vote on the board. Trustees are usually the company's HR manager or controller. They control refunds, how much reserve to set aside and opportunities. For example, trustees have recently been analyzing whether the co-operative should purchase a pharmacy in order to further reduce costs. Trustees are also contemplating building wellness centres where their employees would enjoy unlimited paramedical services such as massage therapy.

Member companies are not liable for deficits if their employees claim more than what was paid in premiums—the co-operative's surplus takes care of shortfalls. Since 2001, Beneplan has refunded $3 million in profits back to members. HR

Yafa Sakkejha is a co-operative analyst at Beneplan Inc.

BECOMING A STRATEGIC ADVISOR

BY GREG ANDERSON

A guide for HR's successful involvement in organizational planning

For many organizations HR's presence in the strategic planning process is relatively new, and even seasoned HR executives struggle with how best to add value. *HR Professional* presents a tried-and-true practice tool to ensure successful involvement at the executive table.

While there are different approaches used to develop a strategic plan, it is fundamentally about winning in the marketplace.

PREPARATION

Strategic planning preparation is done well before any meeting is held. Once you are at the meeting, it is too late to ask for data on customers or your people. Some basics that HR needs to address in advance are:

- Know a lot about the products and services you sell, how you sell, how you differentiate, how difficult the competitors are, what they offer and what customers think about their product and service choices.
- Know about the costs of the business. Understand the costs that don't directly lead to customer value are bad costs—wasted spending—a source of a potential pricing problem or net income generating problem.
- Know about the risks in the business and how the environment can complicate risks.

Coming to a strategic planning meeting without useful information isn't productive. Useful data can positively affect creative strategic thinking during the planning session.

All this really has little to do with HR but you still need to, in part, contribute to these discussions. If you have invested time in learning about the business you can talk about how issues raised relate to the people side of the organization.

Pivotal questions to know the answers to, include: How important are your employees to your customers buying your products/services? Who actually touches your customers, and can they aid or frustrate the sale completion effort? How do your employees compare to the workforces of your competitors? Are you losing ground or gaining opportunities every time one of your employees interacts with a customer? What is the attitude of your employees toward your organization? Do you provide too much low-value people contact with customers? Do your competitors have a better cost profile because they use fewer people, but use them in a higher value way?

> "Find where and how the major business strategies can be directly enhanced or accelerated by the judicious application of HR strategies."

These are the strategic issues that HR, sales, marketing, customer service and product creation should work on together.

MATRIX

At your right is a simple template you can draw up on a sheet of paper in preparation for each strategic planning session.

This five-box matrix touches on the key processes HR heavily influences; each could improve and support business strategy. These are the areas of contribution where HR expertise can make a bigger difference than other executives. While these processes seem identical to the day-to-day operational focus of the HR function, the use of this worksheet in strategic planning should be focused on a system-wide, customer, competitive and macro-business environment level. The trick is to be thinking about the business as a whole, listen to the discussions of the business and find where and how the major business strategies can be directly enhanced or accelerated by the judicious application of HR strategies.

STRATEGIC PLANNING MATRIX

Organizational Performance Management	Recruitment and Talent Management
Development and Professional Growth	Rewards, Recognition and Compensation
Underlying Company Culture	

EXAMPLES

Let's look at five examples of discussions and related questions that can lead to formulation of human resources strategies anchored in business strategy needs. The discussion will not allow you to fill out the boxes in order. You will jump from box to box based on where the discussion goes.

ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

During a "Where are we now?" review, a discussion of the sales and customer feedback data shows that sales growth is stagnating in most regions and is actually slipping in two regions. The discussion rules out certain potential factors, but it does get more serious when the sales and marketing leader talks about customer frustration with how long it takes for decisions to be made around client proposals. You (as the HR lead) ask about organizational structure and flow of information and where decisions are being made and using what overall guidelines. You ask about how performance targets around decisions are being set and monitored. It turns out that a new way of organizing may lead to faster decisions; and that new ways of setting performance management objectives can make what is expected of employees clearer. Its importance leads to a group decision that a monthly review of three key factors is better than the current quarterly review of 20 factors. A decision to set up a new organization and performance management system becomes a key tactic in the strategic plan to improve the business.

NOTE: It is the focus on the business and its success that led to this decision, not a focus on the HR discipline. It is your contribution as a business thinker, influenced by your HR expertise, that made this contribution meaningful for the business.

RECRUITMENT AND TALENT MANAGEMENT

A discussion focuses on how the company must compete in the new e-market. Currently, 20 per cent of industry sales are going through that channel and it is growing with many customer groups. The firm needs to not just be competitive but a leader in this area in the next five years. Unfortunately, your organization has virtually ignored this sector up to now. You ask about who in the firm knows this discipline? Are they capable of leading this initiative? Some critical questioning suggests that while very good, they are inexperienced in the business and have a lot to learn. You lead a discussion that concludes the company must hire an experienced leader to achieve this ambitious goal. This now becomes an HR-focused talent management tactic in the strategic plan.

NOTE: It is not a discussion of specific people that led to this contribution. Strategic planning has to address issues that affect the success of the business as a whole, which in turn dictates your contributions to strategic business planning.

DEVELOPMENT AND PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

The previously mentioned discussion of regional sales shortfalls also highlighted that the process of developing proposals with customers was problematic and head-office simply had little idea of how to evaluate these proposals. It comes out in discussion that it was assumed that all the sales representatives would just figure out how to get it done. You ask about the general assessment of whether your representatives can do this job. A back-and-forth discussion with examples has everyone realize that the sales reps are fundamentally capable but it will take too long for them to absorb all the new skills needed simply relying on trial and error. You suggest a new process combined with accelerated training. This suggestion is met with enthusiasm. You now have a new HR strategy focused on development and professional growth in the strategic plan.

NOTE: This did not come from HR wanting to do a new training initiative. It came from a discussion of what the business needed, and your HR skills helped achieve this business goal.

REWARDS, RECOGNITION AND COMPENSATION

A review of a new product launch planned for the following year shows that the product's customer base is quite different from the company's traditional customer, as are unit costs and gross margins. However, this product line promises long-term success. You ask which representatives will be selling the product. It turns out that they will all be selling this new product alongside the existing products. You ask about how representatives will be compensated, especially around bonuses. You learn that bonuses will have to be paid, but that it may be hard to do it on sales dollars, as the unit selling prices will be quite different for the current products. You ask how representative behaviour will need to change after the product launch. It quickly becomes clear that the existing bonus scheme will not be useful once the new product arrives. You now have an HR strategy that calls for a totally new bonus scheme to be developed prior to product launch that encourages the representative to behave in exactly the way the business strategy suggests is needed. This is a great opportunity for sales and HR to work together on a strategically important project.

NOTE: Your contributions are creating synergies at the most senior level of the organization. This will lead to a more integrated response to the direction of the business and help eliminate divisional silos.

UNDERLYING CULTURE

A discussion of impediments to success in the future draws out the general feeling that more interdepartmental co-operation is needed to launch new products and initiatives. The conclusion is made that each division only cares about its own objectives, which stops other departments from achieving their goals. You raise the question, "Do we all feel we are fully supportive of each others' goals?" This leads to a discussion that, as a group, we operate in silos. You ask if this attitude has actually become part of the company culture. There is general agreement about this. You develop an HR strategy to address cross-company teamwork and interdependence attitudes to allow the strategic plans to be properly implemented.

NOTE: It is your focus on the business that leads to this strategy. It does not become a proposed strategy for the business because you, as an HR professional, know about teams and you have a desire to work on better teamwork in the organization. Instead it is a strategy because it is clearly linked to how to win in the business environment where the company competes. Your recognition of this difference is crucial.

Getting invited to the strategic business planning sessions of your organization is not your end goal. You need to be effective once you are there and thereby create the reason that you should stay over the long term. This means you must move from simply directing the HR function, to directing the business while you run the HR function as well. **HR**

Greg Anderson is a former vice-president of human resources of a large international organization and is now an associate consultant with Western Management Consultants.

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FEDEX'S PURPLE PROMISE

Focusing on employees and culture feeds the bottom line

BY GARY BURKETT

In today's competitive marketplace, a company's culture is almost as important as the products or services it provides. Culture determines the experience that a customer will have, making it your most powerful competitive differentiator. Using Federal Express Canada Ltd. (FedEx) as an example, FedEx's Purple Promise is "to make every customer experience outstanding" and is a touchstone of FedEx culture, responsible for much of the company's success. The same can be said for many service-oriented companies that invest in their cultures to set themselves apart from others.

Corporate culture arises from the employees, the heart of the company. Employees will follow the tone set by their leadership, which means management has to make employee engagement a priority. A successful corporate culture can reinforce a company's brand, help recruit and retain talented people and open new opportunities for growth.

Strong corporate culture at FedEx Express Canada stems from the global founder and CEO Fred Smith's belief that engaged employees are directly related to enhanced profit. That belief is embodied in the FedEx corporate philosophy, People-Service-Profit (P-S-P), which forms the basis for all business decisions. All three must be balanced in order to maintain employee engagement, customer satisfaction and business growth.

Placing a priority on this full-circle design acknowledges the importance of treating people well so they are empowered to take risks and become innovative in pursuing quality, service and customer satisfaction. Exceptional customer service leads to increased profits, which are redirected back to people programs, thus completing the P-S-P continuum.

The success of P-S-P begins with engaged employees. FedEx develops programs, policies and procedures ensuring emphasis on the importance of five employee engagement drivers. They are:

1. A supportive work environment that empowers employees to use their skills and competencies. This in turn fosters a sense of pride and accomplishment, individually and collectively. Employee advisory boards made up of staff representatives ensures the voice of the employees is part of the decision-making process. Employee feedback is used to refine services, reduce workplace stress and evolve total rewards programs.

2. Creating learning and career opportunities for employees. Accomplished by creating and using the Drive Your Career program, which ensures the continued development of talent with support from staff. Constant practice of a promote-from-within philosophy is also followed.

3. Relationship with immediate manager. Driven by trust and two-way communication, managers are trained to focus on the individual by enhancing the immediate leader relationship with Talk-Listen-Act one-on-ones, workgroup meetings, coaching, mentoring and constant feedback.

4. Developing the trust of senior management and their management of the business through open, honest and direct communication to all employees. Twice a year, the executive team, regardless of business performance, economic conditions or the message being delivered meets with all 5,700-plus employees across the country to provide a business update in an open conversation format.

5. Competitive total rewards and meritocracy. An extensive employee recognition and reward program including variable pay plans for not only salaried employees (i.e. professionals and management), but also for hourly employees, which represent about 85 per cent of the employee population. The Courier of the Year program provides the opportunity for customers to nominate couriers for exceptional customer service, providing both internal and external recognition for those couriers who deliver the Purple Promise in an exceptional way.

To further increase and measure employee engagement, FedEx leverages a unique tool that not only measures engagement and performance of engagement drivers, but cultivates it: Survey Feedback Action. Every employee around the world completes an evaluation and following the anonymous survey each manager meets with their team to discuss the feedback and jointly develop an action plan for the following year.

The success of these programs at FedEx is evident by the fact that, since 2004, employee engagement in Canada has increased 7.9 per cent, with a 99 per cent employee participation rate. The company has also been recognized on 50 Best Employers in Canada six times in the last 10 years. Employee engagement is important for employees and for business. It lowers costs of recruiting and training, and engaged employees are often willing to make that extra effort.

In today's competitive market, customers are more mobile than ever. Creating consistent customer loyalty has tremendous benefits—FedEx analysis shows that a one per cent increase in customer loyalty is equivalent to $100 million in additional revenue. But you don't create customer loyalty with gimmicks or tricks. Your employees are on the front line dealing with your customers every day and if you haven't created a strong corporate culture that those employees embrace and promote, you'll miss out on one of your greatest business opportunities. **HR**

Gary Burkett is managing director, human resources at Federal Express Canada Ltd.

WORKPLACE BULLYING

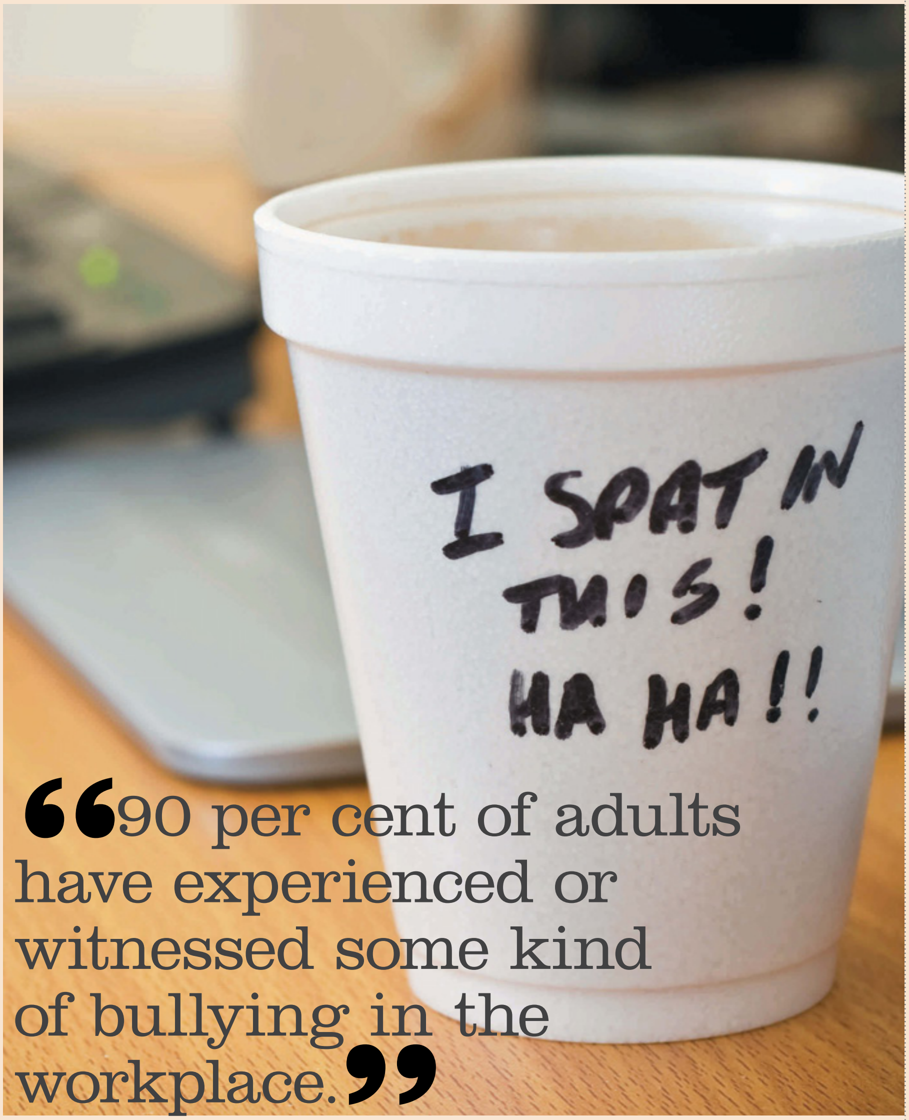
Consequences and remedies for employers

BY JACQUELINE POWER, RAYMOND LEE AND CÉLESTE BROTHERIDGE

In August 2006, a British employee who was bullied at work won the equivalent of $1.7 million in damages. The employee, Helen Green, worked at Deutsche Bank in London and experienced team bullying or "mobbing," which took the form of a persistent barrage of lewd and immature comments about her physical appearance that later degenerated into childish pranks such as hiding her mail.

In light of such cases, it is understandable why activists have rallied to make bullying a legal issue. It is estimated that 90 per cent of adults have experienced or witnessed some kind of bullying in the workplace. In a survey of 180 office and production workers in western Canada, we found approximately 40 per cent of respondents had been bullied at work in the past six months.

Bullying has detrimental effects on the victims. Workers exposed to bullying are more likely to suffer from heart attacks and high blood pressure and avoid their workplace by calling in sick. The Workplace Bullying Institute estimates that 33 per cent of adults exposed to workplace bullying chose to leave their places of employment. Moreover, family members of victims and witnesses of workplace



"90 per cent of adults have experienced or witnessed some kind of bullying in the workplace."

harassment face increased risks to their health as well.

LEGISLATIVE PROGRESS

Three Canadian provinces have laws to protect workers from acts of harassment and violence: Quebec (2004), Saskatchewan (2007) and Ontario (2010).

In Ontario, employers are now required to assess the risks of workplace harassment and violence, provide policies to deal with these risks, implement programs aimed at reducing such incidents, compel employers to report incidents of violence to the health and safety committee and take precautionary measures should harassment and violence appear likely to occur.

Since the legislation, Quebec has received more than 4,000 complaints, of which fewer than four per cent were considered to be unfounded.

Although these laws address workplace bullying after the fact, organizations should prevent these incidents before they even begin.

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

Undertake a bullying audit. Pinpoint the sources and causes of workplace harassment to formulate corrective actions.

Promote a healthy workplace. Maintain an environment where employees can communicate and share resources in a fair and respectful way. Managers can help to reduce stress at work by clearly defining and assigning responsibilities, and by reducing excessive workloads.

Hire the right people. Bullying can be caused by hiring self-interested manipulators who would rather engage in acts of incivility than work collaboratively.

Lead by example. If management engages in or condones acts of harassment, then a climate of incivility is likely to persist, regardless of the stopgap measures that are taken.

Implement proactive policies. Organizations should establish policies and practices that promote mutual respect and dignity in workplace relationships. For example, in 2004, the University of Manitoba implemented a policy for promoting a "Respectful Work and Learning Environment." The policy has clear procedures for handling complaints from individuals who are experiencing bullying.

These actions will reduce costly litigation, absenteeism and turnover, and prevent permanent damage to the well-being of employers and workers alike. HR

Jacqueline Power, University of Windsor, Raymond Lee, University of Manitoba and Céleste Brotheridge, University du Québec à Montréal worked together on this research.

BY ROBYN HALL

GRASSROOTS EMPLOYEE MOVEMENTS

When the sustainability co-ordinator at national retailer Mountain Equipment Co-op's (MEC) Calgary store suggested the idea of an employee "Green Team" to his store manager, it was the first step in creating a grassroots employee sustainability movement at all MEC stores across the country. The program has increased employee engagement and connection to both MEC and its longstanding environmental commitments.

"Staff is so passionate about these issues that the leap between management and employee ownership of operational sustainability is easy to make. The peer-to-peer influence leads to less top-down management. For example, when green team members want to make their store a one-use coffee cup free zone, other staff respect that," says Brad Clute, sustainability co-ordinator at MEC Calgary.

Green teams are just one example of an effective strategy for integrating sustainability into corporate culture. At a 2010 roundtable convened by Canadian Business for Social Responsibility (CBSR) and facilitated by the Network for Business Sustainability (NBS), leaders identified three secrets to creating a culture of sustainability. These findings were published in the report *Embedding Sustainability in Organizational Culture*.

Tap into grassroots employee energy

Environmental sustainability is a global issue close to the hearts of many employees. HR and sustainability practitioners can work to empower these passionate employees to be sustainability champions within their organizations.

MEC STAFF MEMBER

"A tangible way to embed sustainability in corporate culture is to have employees identify their own sustainability performance measures. In this way, employees feel that they are not just helping the organization make money but also helping make a better society—which is a great motivator," according to Tima Bansal, a professor of strategic management at the Richard Ivey School of Business and Executive Director of NBS.

Create a safe place for bold ideas

"We know that engaged employees want a dialogue with management and the opportunity to contribute creative ideas to the success of the organization. HR can, for example, help facilitate sustainability training with staff that encourages the sharing of ideas for reducing the organization's environmental footprint. HR can also support processes and rewards that allow employees to share their sustainability ideas, whether through anonymous surveys, online social tools or green teams," says Barb Steele, director of membership at CBSR.

One company, Cameco, for example, hosted an internal trade show during Environment Leadership Week featuring workshops on sustainability. The top three ideas from these workshops were chosen and honoured by the Environment Leadership Team.

Collaborate with other organizations

Unlike traditional business practice, sustainability is most effective when companies reach out to NGOs and other businesses with similar values and work with them to implement environmental and social programs. HR can encourage a culture that allows external collaboration on sustainability.

"The practices that support sustainability need to take two different approaches," says Stephanie Bertels, professor at Simon Fraser University: "First, targeting the 'taken for granted' ways of doing things in the organization; and second, translating desired behaviours into systems and procedures. In addition, efforts to embed sustainability need to target two important outcomes: fulfilling existing expectations along with making way for the innovations that will help the organization perform better in the long run."

To read *Embedding Sustainability in Organizational Culture*, visit cbsr.ca or nbs.net. **HR**

Robyn Hall is communications manager for Canadian Business for Social Responsibility.

 BY BERNIE KEIM

GRASPING FINANCIAL TERMINOLOGY

Having a solid grasp of finance terms and being able to use them appropriately is a surefire way of getting ahead in HR.

"So many people at the decision-making table are either from finance, or have a background in finance, that it becomes very easy for them to talk about numbers in a specialized way. When speaking to colleagues, they'll often use acronyms as shorthand," says Michelle Causton, a professor of accounting at Canadore College in North Bay, Ont.

"This can also be very exclusionary and leave somebody who should be in the conversation on the outside," she says.

Basic terms, such as **accounts receivable** (A/R), **accounts payable** (A/P) and **initial public offering** (IPO) are already familiar in the corporate world. But other commonly used acronyms by finance professionals have significant connotations as well.

> "The **ability** to speak a common language with financial **professionals** can help HR explain the **rationale** behind their **hiring** decisions."

For example, **generally accepted accounting principles** (GAAP) and **international financial reporting standards** (IFRS) are instrumental for understanding how financial statements, which are the benchmark of a company's financial health, are prepared.

"Very often HR is asked to provide information around **return on investment** (ROI) or **return on assets** (ROA) when they're making decisions," says Causton. "By developing the kind of mindset around the words that finance uses, you can say something like, 'Here's what this person is going to bring to the table. It's not just an expense that we're adding to the bottom line. This will translate to increased revenues or improved efficiencies,'" Causton says.

This is important to HR professionals who have a significant role to play in the financial well-being of their company—not only because the salaries of a firm's personnel generally constitute its largest expense item, but also because hiring the right individuals can add significant financial and other value.

Other acronyms also provide valuable insight into the myriad ways financial professionals analyze profitability. Terms such as **earnings before interest and taxes** (EBIT)—which describes operating income net of operating expenses, but before, as the name implies, taxes and interest; **net operating profit after tax** (NOPAT) and **economic value added** (EVA)—which takes into account profit less the cost of capital, describe different philosophies of looking at corporate profitability.

Terminology to describe profitability include: **accounting rate of return** (ARR)—an analytical tool that calculates the expected profit of a project divided by the average investment in that endeavour; **internal rate of return** (IRR)—another tool that takes into account the net present value of expected cash flows from a project; and **earnings before interest, depreciation and amortization** (EBIDA).

The ability to speak a common language with financial professionals can help HR explain the rationale behind their hiring decisions and the positive impact these decisions have on the financial bottom line at management meetings, as well as enhance their chances of getting support for their choices.

It is important that professionals not be shy when they don't understand financial terminology that's being used, says Causton. "Nobody is born knowing these terms." Speaking up brings everyone to a common place. Most people, when they're asked to explain, are happy to describe what they're talking about. That will also help bring you into those important discussions," she says. **HR**

Bernie Kein, CGA, is vice-president of member services and regulatory affairs at CGA Ontario.

 BY CAROL QUINN

ATTITUDE: A MISSING LINK IN THE HIRING STRATEGY PART 1

It goes without saying that we want to hire only highly motivated, accomplished people who find ways to achieve tough goals. All candidates would have you believe they fit this profile. Most resumés are structured to promote an applicant's skills, which interviewers tend to focus on while ignoring the rest of the picture. A candidate's detailed knowledge of their field, years of experience or extensive education are merely indicators of ability. Just because a person can do a job does not mean he or she will excel.

So what is the best indicator of a high performer? One of the missing links to predicting a candidate's future performance is attitude. Some people are quick to point out why a goal cannot be obtained, while others begin brainstorming on how to do it. This attitude is tied closely to motivation and job performance because it's what governs our actions. Typically, when the interviewer fails to comprehend the profound impact a person's attitude has on their job performance, they also fail to gather the information needed for assessing it.

> "Some **people** are quick to point out why a **goal** cannot be **obtained** while others begin **brainstorming** on how to do it."

Understanding attitude

Any person can have a good attitude when the going is easy. The undeniable test comes when the going gets tough. When a setback or a difficult hurdle blocks the path, it's normal not to know how to get around it, at least initially. Overcoming obstacles requires a lot of work to figure out. This problem-solving decorum is the part that is usually insufficient in the face of poor results. This is where you (the interviewer) can most easily distinguish between the two different ways of thinking. It is in the face of setbacks and defeat where people either give up and explain why it couldn't be done or kick into gear to come up with the creative solutions to achieve their goal.

Gathering attitude information

How do you check for an effective attitude during the interview process? Start with three-part behaviour-based skill assessment interview questions. Anyone can perform well when circumstances are obstacle-free and easy, so phrase each question to include a real-life challenge he or she might face at your organization. This is how you can expose and measure the candidate's effectiveness in the face of adversity.

Next, probe the actions the candidate took during the challenging situation, and finally, ask about the end results. This method of questioning is known as the O-SAE method and is part of motivation-based interviewing. O-S stands for "obstacle situation," A stands for "action taken" and E stands for "end results." Your questions will follow this format:

O-S: Tell me about a specific time when you had to reduce your recruiting budget and still meet your staffing goals; or you discovered a problem with a project you were working on.

A: What actions did you take?

E: What was the end result?

The obstacle or difficult challenge woven into each O-S example is subtle, yet highly effective. Employing this simple technique will power up your interview process and improve your hiring results.

Stay tuned for Part 2 in the February 2011 of *HR Professional*. HR

Carol Quinn is an author and president of consulting firm Hire Authority.

BY MELISSA CAMPEAU

UPDATES ON WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY REGULATIONS

First Aid and Regulation 1101—Keeping Employees Safe

ILLUSTRATION BY MICHAEL EDDENDEN

Even in the safest working environments, accidents will happen. A correctly stocked first aid kit or station, as well as staff members who are trained to administer that aid, can mean the difference between a well-handled minor injury and something more serious.

"In an office environment, where slips and falls are some of the most common injuries, first-aid treatment has been helpful in preventing infections when an employee suffers from cuts or scrapes," says Michelle Baker, CHRP. " Or the application of hot or cold packs can help to decrease pain and swelling when treating strains or sprains."

"Generally, HR should understand the company is obligated to provide adequate training, equipment and facilities to and for employees," says Michele Brubacher, HR manager at Silgan Plastics.

Ensuring compliance

Specifically, all employers who are subject to the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* must comply with Regulation 1101 under Section 3 of the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act*. Regulation 1101 (also known as the First Aid Regulation) is designed to help HR managers ensure proper first aid training in the workplace. "This regulation outlines all the requirements for first-aid training, the guideline for the content of the first aid boxes and facilities, and the description of posters, known as Form 82, entitled *In Case of Injury at Work*, which must be posted in the workplace," says Craig Fairclough, consultant with Workplace Safety & Prevention Services.

"Regulation 1101 is a very important and useful reference for HR professionals," says Baker. "The information provided on how to set up and stock a first aid room ensures an organization is prepared to respond to a first aid emergency." By adhering to this regulation, says Baker, a company demonstrates its commitment to the health and safety its employees.

To ensure compliance, says Fairclough, HR should obtain a copy of the legislation, which can be downloaded at no charge at e-laws.gov.on.ca or by contacting the WSIB. Fairclough also recommends doing a GAP analysis to determine if there are noncompliance issues, and then address any concerns with an action plan for correction.

PROTECTING WORKERS FROM HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

There is a new process in place for adopting revised and new Occupational Exposure Limits (OELs) in Regulation 833 under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*. This regulation—which helps to establish exposure limits to keep workers from experiencing adverse health effects—has been modified to be in line with the 2009 American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygiene exposure limits, explains Craig Fairclough, Consultant for Workplace Safety & Prevention Services. As a result, occupational exposure limits for 36 substances have been updated.

The government also consolidated the requirements of 11 designated substance regulations into one new regulation.

"These changes represent the Ministry of Labour's ongoing commitment to make workplaces healthier and safer," says Fairclough.

To ensure compliance with these changes, HR should first become familiar with the relevant legislation for their workplace. "Then they should do an analysis to determine if they are in or out of compliance, and where there are deficiencies identified, take corrective measures to fix them," says Fairclough.

This kind of analysis may be beyond an HR manager's expertise, says Fairclough. When this is the case, he suggests that the HR manager contact their Safe Workplace Association and request assistance from the appropriate occupational health and safety professional.

For full details of the regulatory changes, visit labour.gov.on.ca.

"Regular, monthly workplace inspections must include the first-aid boxes and the first-aid station," says Brubacher. "Workers need to be trained to current St. John Ambulance Standard, or its equivalent, with their names and locations posted together with copies of their certificates readily available."

Looking ahead, Brubacher predicts that first aid requirements may one day be extended. "Although not dealt with in Regulation 1101, there is the belief that Automated External Defibrillation (AED) use may be included in the near future." AED devices are becoming commonplace in public areas such as community centres, swimming pools, gymnasiums and arenas. Brubacher notes that the use of an AED, when combined with CPR training and practice, has been proven to greatly increase a person's chance of survival following a sudden cardiac arrest.

Fulfillment of Regulation 1101 requirements may not be top of mind for most HR professionals, but when even one occupational injury is treated immediately and successfully, it becomes clear why first aid and employee safety remain high priorities in the workplace.

Eyewash Stations and Emergency Showers—When Seconds Count

"In my personal opinion, eyewash stations in the workplace should be more readily available," says Michele Brubacher, HR manager at Silgan Plastics.

"This follows my own experience when working in a restaurant and witnessing a manager checking a unit that sprayed caustic cleaning solution into his eye. Had he not been quick thinking enough to use the deep kitchen sink to lean into and flush his eyes for approximately 20 minutes, he would have lost his sight," she says. "As it was, the manager took nearly six weeks to recover enough to stop wearing shaded eyewear indoors. Eventually his sight was fully restored but the lesson was not forgotten by anyone working that day."

A real eye opener

Of course, employers wouldn't intentionally put staff members at risk. But many may be unaware of the important role eyewash stations and emergency showers play in keeping workers safe and have therefore failed to include them—or include enough of them—in the workplace.

In fact, many businesses are legally required to provide eyewash stations and emergency showers for their workers. The applicable regulations under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* state: "Where a worker is exposed to a potential hazard of injury to the eye due to contact with a biological or chemical substance, an eyewash fountain shall be provided." And, "The OHS Regulation requires that the employer provide appropriate emergency washing facilities within a work area. This section applies to workplaces where there is a risk of exposure to harmful or corrosive materials or other materials that may burn or irritate."

While their presence may be mandated, says Brubacher, "there is no Canadian standard at this time for the design or placement of eyewash stations or emergency showers." Instead, says Craig Fairclough, Consultant with Workplace Safety & Prevention Services, "the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), Standard Z358.1-2009 Emergency Eyewash and Shower Equipment, is generally used as a guide."

Standard practice

"From a due diligence standpoint, the ANSI standard is a good standard to follow," says Fairclough. "Depending on the unit being considered there are specifications on flow rate, volume capacity and dimensions, etc."

The ANSI standard makes these key points in the event of a chemical splash in the face:

- The first line of defense should be appropriate eye protection enforced by the employer;
- Seconds count: the worker needs to reach the flush station within 10 seconds, as time is critical to minimizing permanent damage;
- Often both eyes will be affected when a chemical splash occurs;
- The normal reaction is to tightly close both eyes; therefore, workers must free their hands so they can hold both eyes open while flushing;
- The flushing should generally be continuous for 15 minutes: the amount of time is stipulated on the MSDS for each hazardous material.

When it comes to determining how many eyewash stations a workplace might require, says Fairclough, "ANSI recommends that the worker should get to the equipment in no more than 10 seconds. Considering the person's vision will be blurred, it is recommended that the distance should be around 50 to 100 feet. The CCOHS suggest that this 10-second rule could be modified depending on the chemical. Where a highly corrosive chemical is used the emergency eyewash or shower could be as close as 10 to 18 feet," he says.

"With the trend for more globally harmonized systems, it would seem logical that regulations may change for eyewash stations and emergency showers," says Brubacher. "Eyewash stations are more readily available with varieties that include portable 'pony' bottles; gravity-based flush models or faucet attachment varieties." But, she points out, "emergency showers, with their permanent plumbing and building code requirements, are more job-hazard based and less popular.

"Overall growing awareness and bottom-line avoidance of potential Ministry of Labour review or fines may change eyewash stations' and emergency showers' limited use in the future," says Brubacher.

For more information, contact the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety at **ccohs.ca** or the Safe Workplace Association at **healthandsafetyontario.ca.** HR

INTERVIEW WITH DAN ARIELY

BY MEREDITH BIRCHALL-SPENCER

DUKE UNIVERSITY BEHAVIOURAL ECONOMIST EXPLAINS THE RATIONALE BEHIND ACTING IRRATIONALLY

Surviving an explosion that leaves you with third-degree burns to 70 per cent of your body would be a life-changing experience for anyone. In Dan Ariely's case, reflecting on his reactions to the pain he experienced ultimately lead to a career as a professor of behavioural economics at Duke University and the author of two books, *Predictably Irrational* (2008) and *The Upside of Irrationality*.

Here, he explains how irrationality can and should be embraced as a positive force in the workplace.

HRP: Why do we assume that we think rationally when it comes to work?

DA: Our failure to understand our irrationality is in fact our biggest failure. We often don't see how irrational influences affect how we make decisions. Think of a journalist writing a story about somebody they have known for many years, or a banker who gets paid by selling mortgage-backed securities. In those cases the person can't see reality in an objective way. Sometimes we can see how those things affect others but not ourselves.

HRP: What, then, determines our decisions?

DA: So often people think we make decisions based on our preferences. We have internal ideas of what we do and don't do and think our decisions are driven by those. Research in social psychology and behavioural economics have shown over the years that decisions are driven less by our internal preferences and more by the environment in which we make decisions. For example, someone could be a kind, calm person. But they go to soccer game, and if the audience is wild and crazy, they may start acting differently. Further, if a person is presented with a situation or a question in a particular way, it can increase the likelihood of a certain outcome. The biggest lesson is that we think we are the drivers, we think we make decisions, but in reality our decisions are largely determined by external forces.

Consider also the force of emotions. You can decide to watch your weight and not to eat anything unhealthy. But then you go to a restaurant and the waiter offers you chocolate soufflé. At that moment your emotions are evoked and you start craving the soufflé and you have it even though you know it's not a good idea.

HRP: Are there any positive aspects of irrationality?

DA: Yes. One positive is adaptation. Adaptation is our ability to get used to stuff. When something starts very bad, we end up getting used to it. When something starts out very good, we also get used to it. On the negative side, we buy a car and think we will be happy with it for a long time but it turns out we are only happy for a short time. On the positive side, something terrible happens and we have a bad injury, like mine, for example, and we think our future is gone. But eventually we get used to it and life gets better.

HRP: Do you think irrationality has an especially bad reputation in the context of work?

DA: Yes. Many people use the word "irrational" in the same way as "stupid" or "incompetent"—as if rationality is the benchmark of all good decisions. But the reality is that entirely rational people can behave really badly in the workplace. They would

IN A NUTSHELL: **First job:** An underwater tour guide in the Red Sea. My first real job was a professor at MIT. **Childhood ambition:** To spend as little time as possible in school. **Best boss and why:** Blair Sheppard (dean at Fuqua School of Business) for telling me that he loves having me, but that he doesn't want two of me. **Mentor:** Professor Hanan Frenk at Tel Aviv University. **Next move:** Trying to figure it out right now. **Ideal vacation destination:** India. **Last iPod download:** NPR app for the iPad. **Favourite author or book and why:** Jerome K. Jerome, *Three Men in a Boat*, for his keen insight into human behaviour. **Source of current inspiration/motivation:** My own difficulties and the difficulties of the people around me. **The best piece of advice I ever got:** Doubt your intuitions.

be continually doing a cost-benefit analysis. You can think of this as someone who tries to do the least amount of work possible, but gets the most credit. This is someone whose objective function is to get the most money and work the least. This is someone who would cheat and lie to avoid being caught. The moment they check out of work, they stop thinking about it. They will only do something if it can translate into some benefit for them.

The fact is we want lots of irrational people in the workplace. We want people who are committed to their work, are dedicated, think about work even after they leave, people who really care about it.

If you find a wallet on the street and no one is there to see you, the rational approach is to take the money. It's the irrational person who cares about the person who lost the wallet and might be more inclined to return the wallet. So you can see why we want lots of irrational people, because it's wonderful to live in a society where people care about each other.

I also give an example in *The Upside of Irrationality*, of the "not invented here" principle. This is the idea that people fall in love with their own ideas and because of that are willing to invest more in them. This is an irrational tendency and it's both good and bad. It's good because it gets us to be committed, work hard and care about something. But it's also bad because sometimes other people have better ideas than we do and we ignore them.

HRP: What would be different at companies if managers were more aware of irrationality?

DA: Recently, I went to a big software company in Seattle. I met a group of 80 people who worked on designing a new product. They'd worked on this project for two years and thought it would be a great product for the company. A week before I came, the CEO cancelled the project. So I sat there in front of this deflated, unmotivated group. I asked them how many of them come late to work now? Almost the entire audience raised their hands. I asked if they left the office early. They all raised their hands. So then I asked, "How many exaggerate their expense reports?" No one raised their hands, but they all laughed a little bit.

And then I asked them what their boss could have done to make them less upset? They came up with lots of ways in which he could have cancelled the project without hurting their motivation: He could have written a few memos acknowledging the project team's work and circulated them throughout the company, or he could have asked a few members of the project team to address the whole company. The reality is that each one of those efforts would have taken some effort or cost from the boss. If he understood the value of motivation, he would have done it, but the fact is, he didn't.

HRP: Can you think of other situations where some people decide not to act rationally at work and benefit from it?

DA: The CEO of one company told me that a few years earlier, he created a specific target for each employee to achieve. Yearly bonuses were going to be based on meeting that number.

He said this was one of the worst decisions he ever made. Each person in the company only cared about their goal and focused on their bonus. If they could do something that would garner themselves another $3 but might hurt someone else, that was fine. It created lot of friction and performance deteriorated. The CEO said the problem is that it's very hard to figure out what you want employees to do. He thought he'd done the best job possible by telling them what the objective was, but he didn't want them to do it by neglecting everything else.

A more general way of thinking about this is the phrase, "you are what you measure." If you create a situation in which you measure a particular aspect of behaviour and you make it salient and apparent to people, there is a good chance that's what people will try to maximize. It could be salary, it could be reputation, it could be how many patents you produce. Whatever it is, the moment you start measuring something, that's what people will start to maximize.

HRP: Why do you feel the selection of job applicants is a flawed process?

DA: Job application is one of the worst procedures in business. Assessing talent is very hard to do and people have really bad intuition about it. People talk to someone for an hour and they have a feeling about whether someone will be good or bad. But it turns out it's just a subjective feeling. In reality, job interviews are not very helpful at all. **HR**

OFF THE SHELF

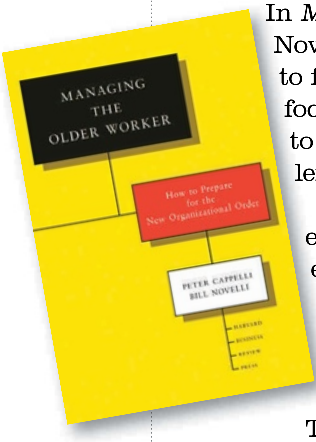
BY ALYSON NYIRI

WHAT'S WORTH READING

Managing the Older Worker: How to Prepare for the New Organizational Order

Harvard Business Press, 2010

By Peter Cappelli and Bill Novelli

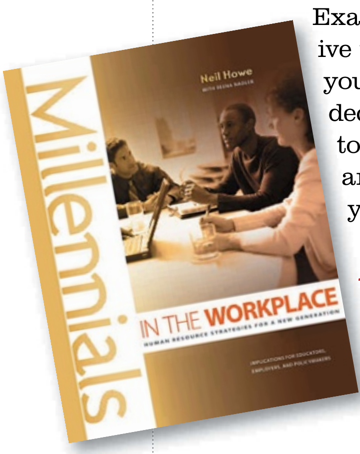


In *Managing the Older Worker*, Peter Cappelli and Bill Novelli present strategies for companies and managers to fully utilize and integrate older workers. The book's focus is to illustrate why it makes sense for employers to engage older workers and how to overcome the challenges that keep them from doing so.

Cappelli and Novelli build a definition of older workers carefully. While chronological age is a component, the authors propose that one becomes an "older worker" when they fall victim to age-related prejudice. Discrimination against older workers is widespread and the authors argue that it is greater than the bias confronting minorities and women.

The biggest obstacle for older workers getting access to jobs lies with younger managers. Many companies argue that the concern about hiring older workers is the fear of conflicts that would arise from being managed by younger managers. The authors' surveys revealed that 88 per cent of employer respondents worried about these conflicts, and nearly 60 per cent of HR managers at large companies say they've seen significant office conflicts that flow from age-related differences between workers. Their research suggests that both younger managers and their older subordinates distrust each other.

Managing the Older Worker offers important insights into the career development of older workers, including their motivations, attributes and contributions to employers. The authors make a business case for hiring and retaining older workers based on statistical evidence and research in management psychology. Examples include using older workers as a cost-effective way to handle short-term projects, encouraging younger supervisors to engage older workers in the decision-making process, using a sense of mission to help older workers connect with the company, and forging social connections between older and younger workers.



Millennials in the Workplace: Human Resource Strategies for a New Generation

Life Course Associates, 2010

By Neil Howe with Reena Nadler

This is the sixth book in Life Course Associate's series on this generation. As a group, according to the authors, millennials are unlike any young adults in living memory. They are "more numerous, more affluent, better educated and more ethnically diverse."

In Part I, "Meet the Millennials," the authors explain who the millennials are and why older generations often misunderstand them. The focus is on young people in the United States, but the authors do discuss youth trends of cultures from Europe to China. In Part II, "Millennials in the Workplace," a more detailed discussion of general workplace conflicts is organized around seven core traits of the millennial generation such as "special" and "achieving." Effective solutions and bet practices are offered for each trait and are presented to each of the book's three groups of intended readers: educators; employers and HR professionals; and public sector managers.

In the chapter on "special," for instance, when onboarding new hires, organizations need to understand that millennials want a closer, more personal relationship with their employer, looking for managers who act as trustworthy mentors with whom they can consult about personal challenges and career on life plans.

A well-researched and engaging book, *Millennials in the Workplace* challenges stereotypes and offers solid and tested strategies for HR professionals. **HR**

Alyson Nyiri, CHRP, is an HR consultant and freelance writer.

INDEX TO ADVERTISERS

BY BILL TREASURER

LEADING WITH COURAGE

Throughout history, people have searched for the precise alchemy of ingredients that constitute great leadership. In measured proportions, great leaders are said to demonstrate bold but reasoned judgment, spirited but calculated risk-taking and an assertive but reflective behavioural disposition. And while the list of characteristics that comprise great leadership is long and, often, contradictory, there is a clear starting point. One leadership characteristic or, more accurately, virtue, informs and strengthens all others: Courage.

Aristotle called courage the first virtue because it makes all the other virtues possible. In addition to being the most important *human* virtue, it is the most important *business* virtue as well. Leadership requires making bold and, often, unpopular decisions. Leadership takes courage. Innovation involves creating ground-breaking but tradition-defying ideas. Innovation takes courage. Sales requires being rejected over and over before closing a deal. Sales takes courage. Take away the courage, and sales, innovation and leadership lose their potency.

ILLUSTRATION BY C.JAFFE

CEO = Chief Encouragement Officer

Contrary to popular belief, courage is a skill—teachable and learnable—and most everyone has the capacity to be courageous. As a leader, your most important job is to put courage inside people—literally to encourage them.

Below are some ways you can promote workplace courage and become the chief encouragement officer.

Be a courage role model: Why on earth would your employees behave courageously if you don't? Take on a hairy project. Deliver a tough message to a customer. Propose a tradition-defying idea.

Give workers something to prove: Provide challenges that cause people to prove themselves *to* themselves. When the going gets rough, having something to prove, in the form of stretch goals, can be a source of motivation.

Emphasize the risks of not risking: The risk of inaction is usually more perilous than the risk of action. When assigning tough tasks, emphasize the dangers of *not* taking the risk, including a potential hit to employees' personal and career development or their job security.

Give people permission not to brown-nose: Make it explicitly clear that you don't want to be surrounded by yes-people. Let people know that part of their annual performance evaluation will assess whether they've appropriately pushed back on you. Make sure to give them guidance on how to disagree with you, without being disagreeable.

Keep in mind that courage is not always governable. While courageous workers will always outperform their cowardly counterparts, you, as a leader, won't be able to fully control or direct how peoples' courage will be demonstrated. You may think you want workers to speak up to you more, but when they actually do, you may be taken aback. It will be important for you to stay committed to the virtue of courage, despite the fact that sometimes peoples' courage will be directed at you. HR

Bill Treasurer is founder and chief encouragement officer at Giant Leap Consulting and author of Courage Goes to Work.

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- In a sudden cardiac arrest incident, the victim collapses and stops breathing. Death can occur unless CPR and defibrillation are performed within minutes to restore the heart's normal rhythm.
- Sudden cardiac arrest is caused by a sudden abnormal rhythm of the heart, usually ventricular fibrillation.
- After more than 12 minutes of ventricular fibrillation, the survival rate of adults is less than five percent.[1]

Why Do You Need an AED Program in the Workplace?

- Sudden cardiac arrest accounts for 13% of on-the-job fatalities.
- Lives can be saved if trained responders provide prompt CPR and defibrillation, such as with an automated external defibrillator (AED).

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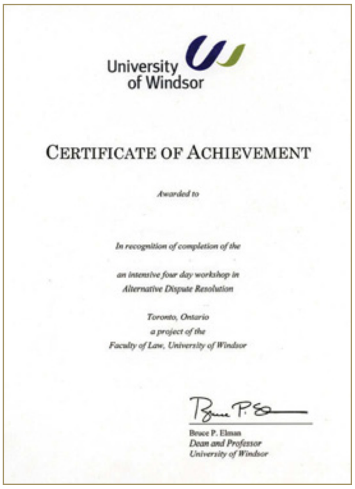
1: http://www.heartandstroke.com/site/c.ikIQLcMWJtE/b.3484053/k.C22A/Heart_disease__HSFC_Position_Statement_on_Public_Access_to_AEDs.htm. *For purchases made until March 31, 2010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"Each day was packed with information. The role playing method of instruction was much more effective than the normal lecture sessions of other training seminars."

- Gerry Walsh, HR AOC Resins and Coatings Company, Guelph

Tackling the HR Challenge

You work in a complex and constantly evolving environment. Everyone expects you to solve their problems. How do you deal with upset and stubborn people? Do you have the tools to resolve conflicts effectively? How well do you deal with employee disputes? Do you help employees negotiate when they have problems? Can you identify talents and personality types? Our training will provide you with the tools you need to excel at the tasks you face every day. We have taught over 26,000 people worldwide, many of them in the HR field. We have run programs for the HRPAO and understand the issues that you face.

It Will Work for You

Experience has taught us that the best way for people to develop conflict management, negotiation,and communication skills is through practice. Our workshops involve case studies, thought-provoking discussions, small group exercises, lectures, demonstrations and videos. Our training is focused, practical and immediately applicable.

Under the guidance of leading international negotiation, mediation, and conflict management trainers, you will hone your skills in an environment that offers the opportunity for intensive practice and self-analysis. Visit sfhgroup.com to see biographies of our trainers. We practise, lecture and research in the areas we teach. Therefore, you get the most up to date and advanced training.

Alternative Dispute Resolution

ADR, Advanced ADR, Applied ADR Workshops available

What is Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)?

ADR processes provide practical ways to resolve workplace disputes. Two of the processes we focus on are principled negotiation and interest-based mediation. Principled Negotiation, developed at Harvard, is an approach to negotiating that allows you to look behind the positions and focus on the underlying interests in order to find a solution that makes sense and maintains relationships. In an interest-based mediation, a mediator assists disputing parties to negotiate. Mediation can help re-establish trust and prevent damage to relationships. Mediation can save time and reduce financial and emotional costs.

ADR Workshop

You will learn how to mediate disputes while preserving relationships and how to negotiate your way through tough situations.

Day 1

- What causes conflict?
- What are your negotiation tendencies?
- How do you avoid negotiation pitfalls?
- Which style is better, a competitive or cooperative one?
- How can you avoid making dangerous assumptions?

Day 2

- 7 Elements of Principled Negotiation?
- How do you deal with difficult people?
- How can you be creative to get better results?
- What should you disclose in negotiation?
- When should you say yes and when should you walk away?

Day 3

- How do you prepare for a negotiation?
- How do you deal with strong emotions?
- How can you be more persuasive?
- How can you get people to listen to you?
- How do you handle a number of people at the table?

Day 4

- How do you find people's underlying interests?
- How do you mediate to resolve disputes?
- How can you resolve workplace conflict?
- How can you prevent mediations from getting out of control?

"The ADR Workshop was by far the best course I have attended in my 30+ year career in HR. A must attend for HR Professionals. I have used the tools on a regular basis."

- Dan Heard, HR Ministry of Community & Social Services Bleinheim

40 CHRP recertification points by HRPATM

Workshop includes 6 negotiation case studies, 3 mediation case studies, 1 video and a mediation demonstration.

Experienced coaches supervise mediation case studies.

Dealing with Difficult People

You will learn how to prepare for difficult conversations, deliver messages powerfully, confront someone calmly and respectfully, overcome the fears that lead you to avoid conversations, how to end a difficult conversation and spot personality differences. You will have the opportunity to complete the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator-Step II ® * and receive a customized report containing insights into your personality type and the personality types of others.

Day 1

- What makes a conversation difficult?
- How do you start a difficult conversation?
- How do you confront bad behaviour?
- How do you deal with difficult people?
- How do you identify personality types?
- How do different personality types contribute to problems in the workplace?

Day 2

- What triggers you and others?
- How do you avoid common mistakes?
- How do you manage emotions?
- How do you get to the root of a problem?
- How can you disagree without escalating the conflict?
- How do you prepare for a tough conversation?

Day 3

- How do you deal with difficult conversations in the workplace?
- How do you deal with difficult conversations at home?
- How might you manage your own responses better to make the conversation less difficult for you?
- How do you know when to end a difficult conversation?
- What is the best way to end a difficult conversation?
- How do you conquer fears around a difficult conversation?

"I learned some very solid techniques in this course that I will be able to use immediately."

- Miranda McCulloch HR, Mold-Masters Limited, Georgetown

"I would recommend this course to any HR Professional!"

- Susan Broniek, HR Toral Cast Precision Technologies Mississauga

30 CHRP recertification points by HRPATM

Workshop includes the MBTI exercise (all of day 1), 5 exercises, and 3 case studies.

On day 3 you will also practise a specific skill or conversation that you have identified. The facilitators will be available to answer any questions.