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Work-life balance is a tricky skill to master, and HR professionals are especially poised to help employees work toward the right formula. For employees who feel they have too much on the go, HR can step in to redirect them to a more sustainable path. Read the cover feature to learn more about how to recognize employees on the verge of burnout and how to keep them from going over the edge, starting on page 16.

contributors



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Balancing Act

As part of a growing organization, I often find myself with fluctuating workloads and striking a maintainable balance is a work in progress. I'm sure that we all, at one time or another, have felt so busy that work becomes overwhelming and stress levels rise. For a workplace, helping your employees achieve their ideal situation can be difficult, especially when workload tolerance levels are different for everyone and there is no magic formula.

Work-life balance is a popular topic, and for good reason. The Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) says that the majority of us feel we have too much going on in our lives. While HR professionals may not be able to give the perfect balancing equation to everyone in their workplace, they are in an optimal position to identify employees who may be on the brink of burnout, and offer solutions and guidelines to keep employees from suffering the consequences of being overloaded for too long. Read writer Melissa Campeau's article about how to set work-life boundaries and what signs to look for to know when a fellow employee is fizzling out, starting on page 16.

As summer comes, I hope all of our readers are able to take some time to themselves to decompress and recharge. While you're at the lake or relaxing at home, access the digital edition of *HR Professional* on your tablet by visiting hrpatoday.ca. I'm looking forward to your thoughts.

Happy reading,



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Workplace Mental Health: HR's Role

By Brenda Clark, CHRE

Over the past couple of years, there has been a long overdue spotlight shone on the issue of workplace mental health.

Led by organizations like Bell Canada and its "Let's Talk" campaign and the Great West Life Centre for Mental Health in the Workplace, the push has helped educate employers about an issue that costs Canadian businesses \$20 billion a year in workplace losses for things like absenteeism, presenteeism and LTD costs.

So as more organizations understand the issue and their obligations to provide and maintain a mentally healthy workplace, what is HR's role?

COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

I don't think HR should necessarily be taking the lead on workplace mental health. Rather, it should be a collective leadership responsibility to ensure there is a sound culture in the organization that supports a healthy workplace at all levels: physical, mental and spiritual.

Ultimate responsibility for workplace mental health must come from the top leadership. Leaders need to model respectful behaviours and show that the organization will not tolerate things like bullying, gossip or harassment.

In a mentally healthy workplace, there is no such thing as yelling or screaming. Colleagues have constructive

conversations that never get personal. When there are questions, individuals ask for clarity.

If someone is struggling because they're not well, a healthy workplace culture is one where an individual feels comfortable reaching out to their manager or OHS or HR manager to discuss the issue and request assistance to rebalance and get well.

Another part of a healthy culture is ensuring you're not setting your people up for failure. Things like asking them to do excessive overtime or work through their shifts without breaks or promoting them to a manager role without the training to do it effectively can all lead to stress and anxiety for the employee.



AT ITS MOST BASIC, A POSITIVE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE IS ONE THAT VALUES AND PROMOTES TRUST, HONESTY AND FAIRNESS FOR ALL WORK INTERACTIONS.

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TIPS FROM DISPUTE RESOLUTION EXPERTS



HOW DO YOU NEGOTIATE WITH SOMEONE WHO HAS ALL THE POWER?

You may have to negotiate with your boss for example, who has all the power. That doesn't mean there's nothing you can do. We all have the power to be more effective negotiators and use techniques that will persuade others to do things that we want them to do. For example, when you're negotiating with your boss, you can refer to objective criteria or standards of fairness as a way to persuade. Everyone likes to think that they're being fair and if your boss sees that he or she is not being fair, they may change their approach.

HOW CAN YOU BE ASSERTIVE WITHOUT DAMAGING RELATIONSHIPS?

The trick is to be soft on the people, hard on the problem. It doesn't have to be "me against you"; it can be us against a problem and we can be rigorous in trying to solve the problem. Just because we disagree, it doesn't mean we have to be disagreeable with each other.

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

"Each day was packed with information. The role playing method of instruction was much more effective than the normal lecture format of other seminars."

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



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HR'S ROLE

HR's role is to support that culture. At its most basic, a positive organizational culture is one that values and promotes trust, honesty and fairness for all work interactions – from conversations with colleagues, meetings, to performance reviews and disciplinary processes.

As a leader, an HR professional should be guiding a healthy workplace on a number of fronts: ensuring there are policies and procedures in place that support a culture of wellness, psychological and physical health and being there as a conduit for that information.

On a more practical and day-to-day level, HR can support the culture by ensuring the right benefits are in place, providing resources and supporting managers in how to promote a culture of safety and wellness, trust, respect and professionalism.

HR also acts as a kind of workplace barometer. People often come to HR because they feel more comfortable having a confidential conversation about a mental health struggle than they might with other senior leaders: "Here is the issue, how do I help manage through this?"

THE BUSINESS CASE FOR A MENTALLY HEALTHY WORKPLACE

With one-fifth of Canadian workers missing three or more workdays a year due to depression, stress, anxiety and other mental health-related disorders (according to a 2007 Ipsos Reid Poll), maintaining a mentally healthy workplace is not only the morally right thing to do, but a bottom-line necessity.

A mentally healthy workplace goes hand-in-hand with an efficient, productive – and happy – organization. ■

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

UPFRONT

LEADERSHIP DRIVES EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND CULTURE

Organizations are struggling to develop leaders in the modern, multigenerational workplace, according to the Canadian edition of Deloitte's Human Capital 2015 Trends report, *Canadian perspectives on the new world of work*. In a survey of Canadian business and HR leaders, leadership once again tops the list of concerns amongst 90 per cent of survey respondents followed by culture and engagement (86 per cent).

In a critical time of transition when workers are getting younger and older, as millennials step into the roles left by retired boomers, as new jobs are being created that did not exist five years ago and as senior leaders choose to remain in the workforce, only 58 per cent of respondents felt their organization provides adequate leadership programs for all levels.

"Leadership and culture work in tandem. The decisions, attitudes and behaviours of leaders shape an organization's culture," said Heather Stockton, partner and human capital leader at Deloitte. "When an organization's values and business goals are aligned, its culture tends to drive better employee engagement, customer experience and financial performance."

REDESIGNING WORK FOR THE ON-DEMAND WORKFORCE

Almost half of the survey respondents indicated plans to increase the use of contingent, outsourced, contract or part-time workers in the next three to five years. Tapping into the open talent economy provides firms with the ability to scale up or down as business needs fluctuate. Redesigning work so that tasks and deliverables can be provided by workers outside of a company maximizes an organization's ability to tap a vast array of talent as a competitive advantage.

**LEADERSHIP AND CULTURE WORK
IN TANDEM. THE DECISIONS,
ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS
OF LEADERS SHAPE AN
ORGANIZATION'S CULTURE.**

HR ORGS ARE UNPREPARED TO SUPPORT AGILITY AND OTHER ENTERPRISE GOALS

The newly released HR Key Issues research from The Hackett Group, Inc. found that HR organizations are largely unprepared to help improve enterprise agility and address issues most relevant to achieving business objectives, including workforce strategy, innovation and talent management in the context of changing business needs.

Companies are struggling to improve in several key HR strategy areas, and are focusing transformation efforts in the areas of talent, technology and analytics. These transformations are likely to take several years, so prioritization and prudent resource allocation is key. A clear dichotomy is also emerging in the area of digital transformation of the HR function, including adoption of cloud technology – with the best-prepared HR groups moving forward aggressively while typical organizations fall behind.

"The bottom line is that many HR organizations are simply falling short when it comes to building the capabilities required to respond swiftly to changes in business demands and truly contribute to greater enterprise agility, providing strategic guidance as business objectives shift," said The Hackett Group's principal and global HR practice leader, Harry Osle. "Many of these deficiencies are in two key areas – talent and technology. This is a tremendous hurdle that many HR organizations know they need to overcome. But it will take time and courage. The top HR organizations are spending their time and efforts on talent and analytics."

HR organizations should focus on operational excellence, freeing up resources that can be dedicated to strategic activities such as talent management and analytics. As HR develops a core

Continued on page 11



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competency around talent and analytics, it provides the business with better insights into skills gaps, critical jobs and employee performance, so that adjustments can be made as necessary. A focus on talent management is also required, to enable the enterprise to attract, develop and retain critical staff.

EMPLOYEE BENEFIT PLANS NOT REFLECTING CANADA'S HEALTH CHALLENGES

A yearlong study of health benefits usage by Green Shield Canada has revealed some startling facts for both health benefits providers and employers. For the first time in the health benefits industry, data from the comprehensive study includes prescription drugs, eyewear and paramedical services, and it shows how benefits programs are being used and that the dollars spent do not align with the predominant health challenges facing Canadians.

For example, the study showed that Green Shield Canada's clients spent approximately \$144 million on glasses, orthotic shoes and chiropractic and massage services last year. Yet, less than one per cent of that amount was spent on dietitians and nutritionists. This is despite studies showing Type 2 diabetes has doubled in Canada since the year 2000 and eating habits are a significant contributor to the disease.

"The plans and the spending habits of Canadian employees and their families are growing apart from the largest health challenges that face them. What employees and their dependents like and want versus what they may need must be balanced better for the future," said David Willows, vice president, Strategic Market Solutions at Green Shield Canada.

Escalating drug costs are also a major concern for the future. During the study period, the predominant debate was about the ability of Canadian employers to afford escalating benefits costs to cover expensive drugs for conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis and hepatitis C.

"Yes, these drugs cost a lot, and, while our industry is united in the belief that Canadian employers and individual consumers pay unnecessarily high prices, what cannot be denied is the positive impact they can have on employees," said Willows. "A drug that can cure hepatitis C or move someone with rheumatoid arthritis from a bed back to work is a sound investment for an employer."

MORE THAN HALF OF EMPLOYEES SAY ILLNESS WAS NOT THE REASON FOR THEIR MOST RECENT ABSENCE FROM WORK

Fifty-two per cent of employees responding to a Morneau Shepell survey said the main reason for the last time they missed work was not because of illness. At the same time, 33 per cent of employers responding did not list illness as one of the top three reasons why their employees are absent.


"EMPLOYEE RESPONSES MAY GIVE SOME INDICATION OF THE NEED TO TAKE A MORE SOLUTION-FOCUSED APPROACH AND ADDRESS THE ROOT CAUSE OF ABSENCE INSTEAD OF ONLY POLICING IT,"

PAULA ALLEN, VICE PRESIDENT, RESEARCH AND INTEGRATIVE SOLUTIONS, MORNEAU SHEPELL

The findings were part of a recent survey of employees, employers and physicians across Canada. The survey also indicated that 81 per cent of employers address the issue of absenteeism with performance management (e.g., issuing warning letters, etc.), and the majority indicated that unscheduled time off is a serious or extremely serious issue for their organization.

"Employee responses may give some indication of the need to take a more solution-focused approach and address the root cause of absence instead of only policing it," said Paula Allen, vice president of research and integrative solutions at Morneau Shepell.

Employees in the survey who reported time off work due to non-medical reasons were more likely to report higher work-related stress.



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"It is evidence that work absence is a work issue. Yet a very common practice in organizations is to require a medical note to validate absence, with little if any other intervention," said Allen. "This really does not solve the problem, and may actually create different problems."

The physician respondents to the survey indicated there's limited value in providing medical notes. Only five per cent said that medical notes reduce unnecessary absenteeism.

"Truancy management is not a medical service," said one physician.

"This points quite clearly to a need for specialized expertise in workplace accommodations for employee health issues," said Allen. "Overall, the survey provides a clear message for employers that they would do well to rethink previously accepted practices in absence and disability management, and to leverage more workplace problem-solving and accommodation planning resources than relying so heavily on the family doctor."

BEYOND SALARY, WHAT DO EMPLOYEES WANT IN 2015?

As the focus on employee recruitment and retention sharpens, many executives may be undervaluing a perk their workforce wants most, suggests new research from Accountemps.

When asked which workplace perk they think their employees are most interested in receiving this year, 41 per cent of chief financial officers (CFOs) interviewed said better benefits, 26 per cent said a more flexible schedule and 17 per cent said more vacation days. In a separate survey of workers, however, more vacation days topped the list (35 per cent) as most desired in 2015, a more flexible schedule was next (17 per cent) and better benefits came in third (16 per cent).

The surveys were developed by Accountemps, a specialized staffing service for temporary accounting, finance and bookkeeping professionals and conducted by an independent research firm. The surveys include responses from more than 270 CFOs from a stratified random sample of companies across Canada and more than 425 employees 18 years of age and older who work in an office environment.

"Offering workplace perks can be a great tool to motivate and retain workers," said Dianne Hunnam-Jones, Canadian district president of Accountemps. "Regular feedback from your team will provide insight on which incentives are the most meaningful and can help confirm you are focusing your efforts in the right area. Providing a variety of workplace perks and allowing your employees to choose the mix of incentives best suited to their individual circumstances can set you apart from the competition and improve your employees' job satisfaction."

There is a silver lining to the survey results.

"Re-evaluating the vacation policy and the feasibility of offering flexible working opportunities can be a quick win," said Hunnam-Jones. "In comparison, changing a company's benefits package can be a lengthy, challenging and expensive process.

Supporting your employees to achieve greater work-life balance through additional vacation time and flexible work options shows you appreciate their efforts."

ADVICE FOR THE ASPIRING CHRO

Want to work your way up to chief human resources officer? Bill Conaty, former SVP HR at General Electric (GE), has some advice for you: become a problem solver and not a problem identifier.

"I'll always remember something a GE executive once told me: 'Whenever I have a meeting with HR, I have my list, she has her list, and by the end I have both lists,'" he told a capacity crowd in May at HRPAs first HR Executive Authors Series event at Toronto's Hazelton Hotel.

The lesson? If you want to be a welcome sight in the CEO's office, don't add to the pile of issues they need to sort out. Instead, give them a heads up on the issue – as well as a description of how you're dealing with it and assurances that it's being resolved.

That's what Conaty did during a long career working under GE's Jack Welch. And it was this experience heading up HR at GE, as well as his new book *The Talent Masters*, that he discussed at the event.

In Conaty's estimation, CHROs are in high demand in North American corporations, but they also have the shortest shelf life among C-suite executives (only 20 per cent last seven years in the role before they're replaced – usually by an external hire).

But if you do get the job and you want to succeed, you need to convince the CEO that you're up to the task. "HR is only as impactful as the CEO wants us to be," said Conaty.

During his time at GE, Conaty turned Welch's thinking about HR 180 degrees – from the opinion that anyone can do HR to understanding that human resources is the most important part of the organization, with a mandate of anticipating business needs, attracting and developing the best talent to fulfill those needs and building a leadership pipeline that ensures organizational success over the long term.

And besides knowing your business and industry inside out, some other bits of advice Conaty had for aspiring CHROs included:

- Find a critical fit between the CEO and CFO. "You have to work well with both functions. The CFO bring the numbers and the CHRO balances that out with the people side and employee advocacy."
- Have the courage and confidence to push back when you see things being done that run counter to the organizations' – and your own – values.
- Develop the trust of the entire senior management team – not just the CEO.
- And never forget the "human" in human resources: "The best leaders balance a passion for the business with a compassion for people," he said. ■

Ontario Court Awards 26 Months' Pay to Dependent Contractors

ASSUMING RISKS IN INDEPENDANT CONTRACTOR RELATIONSHIPS

By Rich Appiah and Andrew Carricato



Relationships between businesses and workers take different forms. The most common relationship is that of the employer-employee, in which an employee enjoys a guarantee that he/she cannot be dismissed without some form of notice or pay in lieu. On the other hand, businesses often enter into independent contractor relationships with their workers, and for good reason. If properly structured, the relationship allows businesses to avoid payroll taxes and the obligation to terminate with notice.

While Canadian courts have articulated clear principles to identify working relationships, applying those principles can be difficult. Making matters worse is the oft-ignored “dependent contractor” relationship that lies in the middle of the spectrum. Dependent contractors are

neither employees nor independent contractors. Instead, they are self-employed workers subject to a high level of control and economic dependency due to the complete or near-complete exclusivity of their work for a business.

Like employees, dependent contractors are entitled to notice of termination or pay in lieu thereof, and as the case of *Keenan v. Canac Kitchens* demonstrates, the liability to provide them with notice upon termination can be significant. In *Keenan*, an Ontario court awarded an unprecedented 26 months’ reasonable notice of termination to long-serving plaintiffs. This appears to be the highest compensation award ever granted to a dependent contractor.

In structuring their relationships with their workers, businesses ought to be

mindful of this decision. Lawrence and Marilyn Keenan worked as delivery and installer leaders for Canac for approximately 32 and 25 years, respectively. They started working as employees. In 1987, Canac asked the Keenans to sign an independent contractor agreement and told them that henceforth, they would carry on their work as independent contractors.

The Keenans signed the agreement and continued their work as they had before. Together, they supervised the delivery, installation and service of Canac’s kitchen cabinets until Canac dismissed them in 2009. Believing that they were entitled to greater notice of termination than provided by Canac, the Keenans sued. The result was a blow to Canac’s bottom line.

Canac argued that the Keenans were independent contractors not entitled to any

legal words

notice of termination. The court disagreed, finding that they were dependent contractors, in light of the following factors:

- (a) With the exception of a few weekend jobs, the Keenans did work exclusively for Canac for over 20 years.
- (b) Canac maintained effective control of the business. Canac established service standards, received deficiency notices and complaints, dictated work flow, set deadlines and provided support with respect to payroll obligations. While the Keenans were responsible for paying installers, the installers were not the Keenans' employees and the rates of pay of both the installers and the Keenans were set and eventually paid by Canac.
- (c) By providing an office and a filing cabinet at its business premises, as well as a pager, car phone and mobile phone, Canac supplied the Keenans with many of the tools they required.
- (d) After signing the agreement, the Keenans continued to be paid on a piece-work basis for each box or unit installed. There was no genuine

opportunity to generate additional profit and there was no correlation between the degree of risk assumed by the Keenans and the expectation of profit.

- (e) To the outside world, the Keenans were Canac representatives, and the Keenans considered themselves loyal employees of Canac. They enjoyed employee discounts, were required to wear the company logo on clothes and the vehicle they used for work and had company business cards. Lawrence even received a ring for 20 years' service.

The above-noted evidence overwhelmingly favoured the conclusion that the Keenans were dependent contractors. As a result, the court concluded that they were entitled to pay in lieu of 26 months' reasonable notice of termination at common law, amounting to over \$124,000 in damages. The court also awarded the Keenans \$70,000 in legal costs as a result of the wrongful dismissal.

TIPS FOR HR PROFESSIONALS

Keenan v. Canac Kitchens should remind businesses of the risks they assume (or may not avoid) when entering into independent contractor relationships. Just because you have an independent contractor agreement with workers does not mean that they are independent contractors. Keep the following tips in mind:

- (a) When retaining independent contractors, consider your organization's liability if they are later deemed to be employees or dependent contractors. Your organization may be required to pay years of taxes and statutory withholdings and deductions. Upon dismissal, pay in lieu of notice of termination may also be owing.
- (b) At the hiring stage and throughout the course of the relationship, carefully consider the factors outlined above. No one factor is determinative. When in doubt, seek legal advice.
- (c) Include a termination clause in your independent contractor agreements that limits the worker's rights to those set out in the *Employment Standards Act, 2000*, in case the worker is dismissed and later found to be an employee or dependent contractor.
- (d) When introducing a new contract that imposes such limitations to existing workers, provide them with a new benefit – known as “consideration” – to render the contract enforceable, particularly where they were not bound by the limitation in the past. Consideration can take the form of a promotion, an increase in compensation or a one-time bonus.
- (e) Give workers the opportunity to obtain independent legal advice before requiring them to enter into any independent contractor arrangement.



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Rich Appiah is a partner at Israel Foulon LLP in Toronto. He and his associate, Andrew Carricato, regularly advise employers with respect to the many complex issues that affect employment relationships.

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A Fine Balance

SETTING WORK-LIFE BOUNDARIES
IS GOOD FOR YOUR EMPLOYEES
AND GREAT FOR BUSINESS

By Melissa Campeau

Line up any 10 of your employees – six of them are feeling overloaded, according to the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA). A full 58 per cent of us feel we've got too much going on when it comes to our responsibilities at work, at home and in our community.

There are a host of reasons for this. Corporate downsizing has meant many employees are expected to pick up extra duties. Members of the so-called sandwich generation are coping with the dual demands of raising children and caring for ailing parents. Add our 24/7 mobile technologies to the mix, and the lines between "work" and "the rest of life" tend to blur. Between the lack of boundaries, external pressure and our own internalized high expectations, there's a powder keg of tension in most workplaces, just ready to pop.

THE TROUBLE WITH THE HUSTLE

With no clear delineation between work life and personal life, both elements can suffer. When regular morning workouts are delayed or cancelled in favour of responding to emails, for example, or family dinners are routinely interrupted by business calls, stress levels can soar. Personal lives can tread heavily on work hours, too: an employee may spend unproductive hours at his desk, distracted by worries over an ailing parent or fielding calls about a child with special needs.

Instead of "doing it all" and "having it all," many people experience a persistent sense of doing many things poorly. They feel neglectful of their health, guilty about missing their child's concert or dissatisfied with their performance at work.

SIGNS OF OVERLOAD

Employees who are overwhelmed by either their personal lives or work duties – or both – are at risk of feeling like they've lost

control and may find themselves constantly fatigued and unable to concentrate.

"Someone experiencing those symptoms isn't going to give their best performance at work," said Linda Marmen, director, Corporate Resources for the CMHA Ontario in Toronto.

There's also the issue of presenteeism, where an employee may appear to be busy – or even log lengthy hours in the office – but isn't actually productive.

"There are people who will keep taking on more and more work," said Marmen, "but they're not finishing things or working well."

While many people will be acutely aware of feeling out of control or unbalanced, others can slip into this state without realizing it's happened.

"Often, it's up to a manager to notice that something is wrong," said Marmen.

MENTAL HEALTH AT RISK

If left unchecked, constant stress can lead to burnout – a state of emotional and physical exhaustion that makes a person incapable of functioning at work (or at home).

"Burnout is certainly the extreme outcome," said Sheryl Boswell, B2B and B2C marketing lead for Monster Canada. "That's the breaking point. Employers should get ahead of problems well before you have a burnout situation."

For someone with an underlying mental health issue, prolonged stress can contribute to the presentation of an anxiety or mood disorder. In fact, Statistics Canada reports that employees who consider their days to be quite a bit or extremely stressful were three times more likely to suffer a major depressive episode, compared with those who reported low levels of general stress.



“YOUR BEST RESOURCE IS YOUR EMPLOYEES. COLLABORATE WITH THEM TO FIND OUT EXACTLY WHAT IS GOING ON. NOT ONLY WILL THEY HELP TO IDENTIFY PROBLEMS, THEY WILL LIKELY HAVE GREAT INSIGHT INTO THE OPPORTUNITIES THAT EXIST FOR IMPROVEMENT AND CHANGE.”

— LINDA MARMEN, DIRECTOR, CORPORATE RESOURCES,
CANADIAN MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION ONTARIO

THE BUSINESS CASE FOR BALANCE

Setting aside the more serious concerns of burnout and mental health issues, workers who constantly feel overwhelmed and off kilter can have a negative impact on a business' bottom line.

In a 2012 study by researchers at the University of Western Ontario, one-third of respondents felt their overloaded work and home responsibilities had a high tendency to cause them to lose sleep or significantly reduce their energy levels. In fiscal terms, this translates to lost productivity and a greater number of sick days.

Employees who attempt to stay on top of tasks by spending excessive amounts of time at their desk may be spinning their wheels, as well. Multiple studies have found an inverse relationship between hours worked and actual accomplishments. One 2005 study of a construction project, for example, discovered that employees who worked 60-hour weeks over a prolonged period were 24 per cent less productive than crews working 40-hour weeks.

WHY SO DIFFICULT?

While external factors like corporate downsizing, mobile technology and family pressures are certainly partly to blame, the root of the problem may be internal.

"We have very high expectations of ourselves," said Boswell. "There's the pressure of raising children or of caring for elderly parents, and we really feel we can do it all. But these expectations are often wholly unrealistic because we're still human. The pressures are going to lead to problems down the road because you can't do everything."

HR AT RISK

HR professionals are more aware than most about the importance of balance, but also more susceptible to imbalance.

"HR people feel the need to set an example," said Boswell. If they work in an environment that doesn't encourage flex time or provide paid personal days, they may become excessively stressed by an inability to meet the demands of family life. "Because HR professionals are the ones putting the policies in place and enforcing them, they might sense extra scrutiny if they contravene them by, say, leaving early to tend to personal issues."

In addition, many people drawn to the HR field have a compassionate and caring nature.

"This comes with some negatives," said Marmen. "Our job can take on a counseling role when employees with personal issues seek us out." When this happens constantly, an HR professional can experience compassion fatigue, a form of chronic stress that makes it difficult to leave work challenges at the office.

EMPOWERED AND SATISFIED

If sheer workload is a significant stressor for an employee, there may be solutions that reduce effort while still getting the job done.

"Your best resource is your employees," said Marmen. "Collaborate with them to find out exactly what is going on. Not only will they help to identify problems, they will likely have great insight into the opportunities that exist for improvement and change."

One issue employees frequently cite as a job stressor is a lack of autonomy.

"The days of micromanagement need to go away," said Boswell. "There's a time and place for that level of direction – when you're onboarding a new employee, for example." She adds that a lack of freedom can lead to frustrations at work that carry over into the rest of life. "If there's some element of independence for employees, they'll feel more empowered, and that makes for a more satisfied workforce."

REMOTE CONTROL

Being in greater control of your work environment may also mean working from home on occasion. While this can help employees free up time for life's other commitments, it's not always the perfect solution.

"A lot of employers think that to encourage good work-life balance, they need to allow employees to work from home. But I don't think it's for everybody," said Boswell. "It's not for every company and not for every employee. You definitely need to put some policies in place, define what it looks like and establish a trial period to determine if it works."

It's not always what employees want, either.

"A solution might be as simple as letting somebody come in a little bit later and then leave later, or come in earlier and leave earlier, without affecting the core work that needs to be done," said Boswell. "We're so plugged in nowadays that it's not the issue it once was."

Paid personal days can help employees tackle external commitments, as well. And when it comes to some tougher challenges, employee assistance programs can be an effective tool.

"In most cases, this means there's someone an employee can call if they need help with elder care, child care or legal help," said Marmen. The upfront expense to an employer pays dividends down the road. "If you can get ahead of a problem and help an employee solve a challenge that they may not want to speak to a manager about, then you've got that person and that productivity back."

SETTING BOUNDARIES

While all these strategies can help, an employee needs to believe in the benefit of setting boundaries – something that's difficult in a culture that doesn't always seem to value balance. More than half of the respondents in the 2012 University of Western Ontario study said they chose to take work home with them, putting in an average of seven extra hours per week from home. Nearly two-thirds spent more than an hour each day catching up on emails. And one-third spent more than an hour emailing during their days off.

"This is what bothers me about companies that say they have great wellness programs," said Marmen. "Many times when you ask those employees how it is to work for their organization, they say they are unable to take advantage of the wellness program because of the demands of their job. How can there be wellness when workers are on duty 24/7? Even if off-hours work isn't officially encouraged or condoned, it's still typical in plenty of organizations."

"In my job there's no particular requirement to respond to emails that come in during the evenings or weekends, but I still tend to respond to them," said Marmen.

To help establish those boundaries, an organization needs to make it clear that no one is required to work beyond set hours.

“Then it’s up to employees to turn their devices off and respond during regular business hours,” said Marmen.

THE MILLENNIAL MOVEMENT

It’s a tall order, attempting to shift North American corporate culture, but the wave of millennials entering the workforce is likely to have a major impact.

“I’ve found a huge change in thinking when it comes to people under 35,” said Marmen. “They tend to prioritize work-life balance and will put that balance before having the fancy cars and big houses. They value that balance more than prior generations in the workforce.”

Millennials will work to find a company that delivers on its promises of balance, too.

“They’ll do all the research upfront when they’re job hunting,” said Boswell. “They’ll go into an interview with an employer and say, ‘This is what you say your work environment is. Could you give me an example that actually makes it real for me?’”

Employee-employer relationships are evolving, says Boswell.

“It’s not this boss/employee mentality any more. You’re both there to do one thing: Make the company successful,” she said.

If employees are saying their satisfaction, wellness and productivity are all tied to a better work-life balance, a forward-thinking organization would do well to listen and commit to that balance. Success might very well belong to those organizations willing to making it happen. ■

TAKE CONTROL

Empower employees to find their own balance with these suggestions for managing stress and defining boundaries:

- Take charge of email. Set one or two specific times each day to respond to messages, then turn off notifications to reduce distractions.
- Just say no. Don’t respond to off-hours emails. Use the auto-message feature to inform people of your office hours, and give them a sense of when to expect a response.
- Take breaks. A 10-minute pause every two hours helps people recharge and refocus, and increases productivity.
- Set tomorrow’s priorities at the end of each day. Make a list of what needs to be done and be reasonable about what can actually be accomplished in that timeframe.



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Dads are People, Too

THE IMPERATIVE FOR CHANGING OUR EXPECTATIONS AROUND FATHERHOOD AND WORK

By Cathy Gallagher-Louisy

How often do we hear the term, “working fathers”? Work-life balance and flexibility issues have traditionally been regarded as “women’s issues.” However, studies show that more and more men and fathers are seeking balance and facing the great stigma around fatherhood that still exists in our society and workplaces.

“We need to change the conversation on fatherhood in the workplace,” said Cameron Phillips, founder and president of Bettermen Solutions and self-described “dadvocate.”

“We are influenced by very powerful societal gender roles,” said Phillips. “Culturally, men still feel immense pressure to be breadwinners and women still feel immense pressure to be good moms. A man’s definition of his self-worth is still tied to what a he does for a living and how much he earns. Unfortunately, workplace culture still encourages men to stick the fatherhood card in the back pocket.”

Yet, studies are showing more men are struggling with work-life balance challenges.

“I host workshops for men,” said Phillips. “I find that when one man opens up about the challenges he is facing, others chime in as well. Often they share that they thought they were the only one.”

In many cases, fathers want to be just as involved in parenting as mothers, and HR professionals can help to provide supports for them to do so. Changing the societal view of fatherhood could have profound implications for women and men, and gender equality.

REDEFINING FATHERHOOD INCREASES GENDER EQUALITY

“This is the key to smashing the glass ceiling,” said Phillips. “We’ve spent the last 40

years trying to empower women at work, and not enough effort empowering men to be more involved in the home. To paraphrase Gloria Steinham: women will not be respected outside of the home until men are respected in it.”

There is significant evidence from Canada and Europe that shows that providing flexible work arrangements and paid paternity leave options for men has positive impacts for women.

As reported in a recent *National Post* article, Quebec fathers who take paternity leave end up doing more housework in the long run even after returning to work. This can have tremendous impacts for working mothers’ careers. Quebec’s Parental Insurance Plan (QPIP) provides three to five weeks of paternity leave that can only be taken by fathers, and cannot be transferred to mothers. A Cornell University analysis found that since the introduction of QPIP, the incidence of men taking paternity leave is up a whopping 250 per cent.

“The ‘use it or lose it’ quota is really effective because, essentially, it plays on people’s loss aversions,” said Cornell University researcher Ankita Patnaik. “It’s the idea that if dads aren’t using it, you’re going to waste it.”

Long-term evidence from several countries in Europe supports the concept of “use it or lose it” paid paternity leave.

“Let’s look at the example of Sweden,” said Phillips. “As early as the ‘70s, men could take paternity leave. The idea was that if you open up paternity leave up to dads, the consequence would be more women in the workforce. However, it didn’t have the intended effect. Then in 1995, they introduced a ‘use it or lose it’ paternity leave with financial incentives for fathers to take the leave. Finally, they saw the results they were seeking.”





“WE’VE SPENT THE LAST 40 YEARS TRYING TO EMPOWER WOMEN AT WORK, AND NOT ENOUGH EFFORT EMPOWERING MEN TO BE MORE INVOLVED IN THE HOME.”

— CAMERON PHILLIPS, FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT, BETTERRMEN SOLUTIONS

As reported in *Business Insider*, the six per cent of Swedish fathers who did take paternity leave prior to 1995 were stigmatized and derided as unmanly “velvet dads.” When the Swedish government implemented financial incentives for men to take paternity leave, it became normal for men to take a month or two, or even longer. Today, 80 per cent of fathers in Sweden take at least a third of the 13 months of paid parental leave available to the family.

But how does this affect women?

As the idea of taking paternity leave becomes more normalized, workplace cultures begin to change. Many employers begin offering more flex-time options, which benefit women as well. Significantly, the pay gap between men and women starts to narrow. One study on Sweden’s system showed that a mother’s future earnings increased by seven per cent for every month of parental leave her husband took off.

But the impacts go well beyond the workplace.

As reported in the *New York Times*, fathers who take longer paternity leaves are more likely to perform certain daily child care tasks nine months later than those who take no leave.

Thus, says Phillips, providing more support to men not only increases a father’s relationships with his kids – which is beneficial to children – it also reduces the limiting gender roles of the mother as caregiver and homemaker, and father as breadwinner.

“As a society, in North America, we hold fatherhood in such low regard,” said Phillips. “We really do a disservice to both men and women with this thinking. Imagine a mom at the grocery store with three kids under five years old, with dirty clothes, ill-behaved and out of control. We tend to judge the mother. Now imagine a man in the same situation. We tend to think, ‘Poor guy.’ The subtext is that dads can’t handle their kids – that they are out of their depth. When a man is pushing his baby in a stroller, we tend to think ‘What a great dad.’ We need to change this view that men can’t handle parenting or that good fathers are exceptional. We need to

create a culture that values parenthood from both parents.”

HOW CAN WE IMPROVE?

Ideally, we need national legislation to provide the kind of paid paternity leave that is offered in Quebec and several European countries. However, until then, employers can do a lot to improve the view of fathers in the workplace.

According to Phillips, employers need to recognize that gender-neutral policies are not enough. Here are some specific suggestions that employers can start to implement right away:

- Encourage dialogue and regular meetings of working dads.
- Create a working dads’ task force to talk about dad-specific challenges in the workplace.
- Assign a working father to co-lead a working parents group.
- Share examples of fathers who are doing it well as role models for others.
- Change internal and external branding to value fatherhood. Consider the images used in benefits communications and family-oriented policies.
- Bring in speakers to address fatherhood, and the challenges of work-life balance for dads.

“Anything and everything that employers can do to support fatherhood will make a difference,” said Phillips. “It could be as simple as giving a picture frame to new dads. It could be as bold as offering paid paternity leave – not calling it vacation or personal time off, but paternity leave – and actually encouraging men to take it.”

CANADIAN EMPLOYERS LEADING THE WAY

While we are waiting for strong legislative change, some Canadian employers are taking the lead.

VanCity, a financial services company in British Columbia, was one of the first companies to really recognize the importance of dads and provide significant supports.

“At VanCity, we believe our employees’ whole lives are important because

we know a well-balanced life is critical to workplace success,” said Tamara Vrooman, CEO at VanCity. “For this reason, we support parental leaves that recognize our employees’ individual situations. Parental leave, and our top-up benefit, is open to all employees who are natural or adoptive parents of new children to their families. In addition, VanCity supports the responsibilities of new fathers by offering paid leave when their child is born.”

Another leading organization, TD Bank Group, offers a number of flexible and paternity leave arrangements for their employees.

“At TD, flexibility can take different forms, depending on the needs of the employee and the business. The culture of flexibility helps employees meet their commitments at work, at home and in their communities,” said Karen Sihra, senior manager, Corporate Diversity at TD Bank Group. “It’s especially useful for those returning from a leave, new parents or caregivers of elderly or ill parents and can involve different start and end times, job partnerships or a condensed work week.”

The impact to employees’ lives is profound.

“My wife and I are both TD employees,” said Kelly Milroy, associate vice president of investor relations with TD Bank Group. “The flexibility TD has offered both of us has allowed us to balance the demanding schedules of our children – in grades 5 and 8 – who are very active in both athletics and the arts. I myself [am active in] the hockey and lacrosse communities in Oakville. Without the understanding of my employer, I would not be able to do that.”

As a society, we will benefit from redefining fatherhood and providing more work-life flexibility and gender equality for all employees. ■

Cathy Gallagher-Louisy leads The Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (CCDI)’s Research and Knowledge Services portfolio. CCDI has become the trusted advisor for all issues related to diversity, inclusion, equity and human rights management within Canada’s workplaces.

A Productive Workforce is an Engaged Workforce: The Case for Enterprise Social



By Brian Morgan, Senior Human Resources Manager at Microsoft Canada

As HR professionals, we often challenge ourselves to think about what is involved to create a truly productive workforce environment. Is it maximizing labour and resources? Offering employee incentives? Cutting down the time it takes to complete a task? Using new technology to communicate more efficiently? While productivity comes in a variety of different shapes and forms, I think we could all agree that keeping employees engaged is at the forefront of the equation.

As all HR professionals know, an organization's greatest resource is its people. Ensuring that your workplace community fosters an environment where employees feel motivated and empowered to succeed is fundamental to success. A key factor in nurturing engagement is providing employees with feelings of inclusion – this is essential in order to retain top talent.

At Microsoft, we use our Enterprise Social network, Yammer, to encourage and maintain employee engagement and promote open dialogue between different business groups, segments and geographies. Within our big organization, Yammer helps our workforce stay connected.

When employees have a holistic understanding of a project or issue and an opportunity to contribute to decision-making, they are eager to adopt the changes because they feel they had a hand in creating them. Collaboration tools like Enterprise Social benefit companies by enabling them to listen to their employees better. By giving every employee a say in the conversation, organizations can develop a participatory decision making process. In fact, among our own customers, 80 per cent of Enterprise Social users report they are now more

informed about what is happening inside their organization than before having the technology.

In the 21st century, three generations now fill the office, each with different work and communication styles. According to Forbes, millennials are projected to make up 75 per cent of the global workforce by 2025 – and they expect instantaneous feedback and clear access to information. Millennial employees are comfortable with technology and have grown to expect tools that provide transparency – many do not remember a time when instant messaging and social media applications did not exist.

On the other hand, a study by Deloitte found that baby boomers prefer face-to-face contact with colleagues and clients, while Gen X-ers, who joined the workforce in the dotcom era, like to communicate via email. To make matters more complicated, within the next five years, Deloitte expects that 40 per cent of workers will be located outside the office. This is where the power of Enterprise Social tools like Yammer becomes so important. Yammer integrates with Office 365 and allows the user to choose how they want to engage with it – only on the platform, through their inbox or a combination of both – making it possible for teams to communicate and collaborate regardless of their preferred work style.

According to Deloitte's Global Human Capital Trends 2014 report, it is essential for employers to provide an environment where employees believe they are making a difference. This is another way Enterprise Social tools like Yammer can help. When people don't feel connected to the company's goals and objectives, they begin to feel disengaged, and disengagement often leads to dissatisfaction. Dissatisfied workers result in greater

absenteeism and lower productivity, showing the full circle relationship between employee engagement, productivity and Enterprise Social solutions.

Technology is also dramatically impacting the nature of collaboration between employees when it comes to geography. Enterprise Social tools make it possible for teams to work in remote locations across the world, quickly and easily sharing resources, information and ideas. Almost 70 per cent of users agree that Enterprise Social improves collaboration across offices. Enterprise Social tools also assist in breaking down barriers within an organization, giving employees that work on different teams greater visibility to information, allowing for increased cross-collaboration and information sharing.

With Yammer and Office 365, it's easy for employees to collaborate to make informed decisions quickly. This in turn leads to greater productivity. McKinsey Social Institute reports that organizations have the potential to increase worker productivity by 20 to 25 per cent when using Enterprise Social, which can lead to more efficient business processes.

So, how will you ensure your organization achieves workplace productivity? Start by asking employees if they feel engaged, informed and have the right tools for effective collaboration. If you aren't using an Enterprise Social tool, start by testing one out and see the transformations in your workplace. Yammer is free to use for the first month, so you can test it in your workplace and see if it's right for your employees.

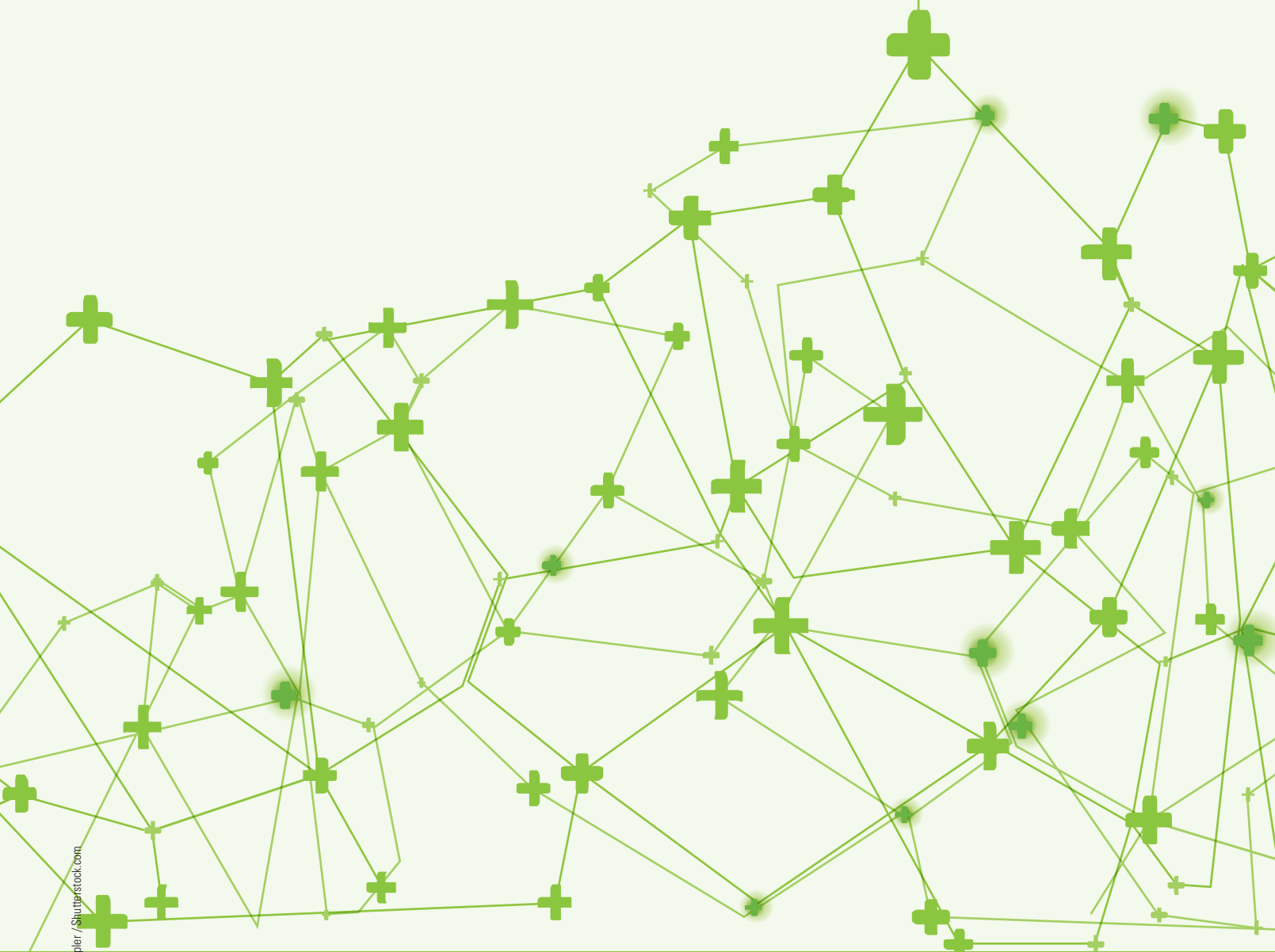
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Positive Psychology

AN INTERVIEW WITH DR. ROBERT BISWAS-DIENER

By Craig Dowden, Ph.D.



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Coaching

Coaching, and the field of positive psychology more broadly, is getting a lot of attention in HR circles these days. Dr. Robert Biswas-Diener, one of the industry leaders in positive psychology coaching, has written several books on the topic.

What initially sparked your interest in positive psychology coaching?

Robert Biswas-Diener: It was the marriage of two loves of mine: positive psychology and coaching. It turns out they are natural bedfellows. At one point in my career, I had gone to graduate school to become a clinician because I really liked the idea of working one-on-one with someone to help them. I learned that I did not want to do that where depression is concerned. I think therapy is noble, but I did not want to work with depressed people all day because it was not my best talent.

I also was a positive psychology researcher. I was researching happiness and I quite loved that, but I was frustrated on that side because there were not many opportunities as a researcher to dynamically and practically help individuals.

When I thought of coaching, I realized there is an opportunity to put both of these together, merging my research expertise with my desire and ability to work with people one-on-one – and positive psychology coaching was born.

When you are working with executives or within an organizational context, what positive psychology interventions or principles have you found to be most valuable? Which ones do people or leaders gravitate towards?

RBD: The first and easiest one is strengths. Strengths psychology is about capitalizing on people's natural passions and talents. Strengths psychology is the easiest to sell, in part, because it is already accepted within the business world. The Gallup Organization has the StrengthsFinder, and has published bestselling books on strengths. It is easy to say we are going to leverage strengths for productivity or for the bottom line.

However, when you come in with something like happiness, almost by definition, that word seems a bit fuzzier, and it takes a bit more selling.



feature

What kinds of positive psychology interventions do you find people to be initially resistant to, but when they dive in, the light goes on and there is a shift in their perspective?

RBD: You can take, for example, something like gratitude. If I go into a company and say, "Everyone should be grateful, so we are going to teach mindfulness skills and appreciation skills and have a hug-a-thon," it will raise more than a few eyebrows and it would not be a good fit for a lot of organizational cultures. But if I go in and say, "You probably already have some type of employee recognition program, which is essentially gratitude. We are going to evaluate what that employee recognition is and think about ways that we might improve it based on the science of gratitude or positive psychological science." This is a much stronger message and better fit.

Where do you feel the field needs to go next?

RBD: I believe one of the main trappings of positive psychology is the almost exclusive focus on increasing happiness. Although this is a valuable endeavour, I think we need to widen our outcomes from happiness to trust, appropriate risk-taking, creativity,

etc. to move the field forward. For example, if I could show you eight interventions that would raise trust, that seems every bit as important to me as eight interventions that would raise happiness.

What advice would you have for HR executives who are exploring engaging with someone for positive psychology coaching or positive psychology interventions?

RBD: It comes down to being a smart consumer. If I were going to advise a leader, I would say what you want is to look for sophistication. One place that you can find sophistication is how much a potential coach attends to negative psychology. Are these people only saying that we should be happy all the time? That we can only manage around strengths? Or are these people saying that there is a time for happiness as well as a time for frustration or anxiety? When you hear this balanced message, you know these people will likely bring interventions to the table that are more natural, because negativity is a part of life and probably will fit with your personal experience of life as a leader. ■

Craig Dowden is president and founder of Craig Dowden & Associates.

{ STRENGTHS PSYCHOLOGY IS ABOUT CAPITALIZING ON PEOPLE'S NATURAL PASSIONS AND TALENTS. }



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CANADIAN COMPANY MAKES WEEKLY TRAINING SESSIONS COUNT

By Shawn Gill

Since London, Ont.-based Voices.com first began setting aside 30 minutes each week for company-wide training sessions in 2011, the results have been a more knowledgeable, productive and happier workforce.

The company, which provides an online marketplace connecting businesses with voice-over talent, brought in weekly training sessions after its employees had cited an interest for additional on-the-job training in an annual employee survey. “Training Tuesdays” target a multitude of rotating topics that are discussed for 30 minutes once per week.

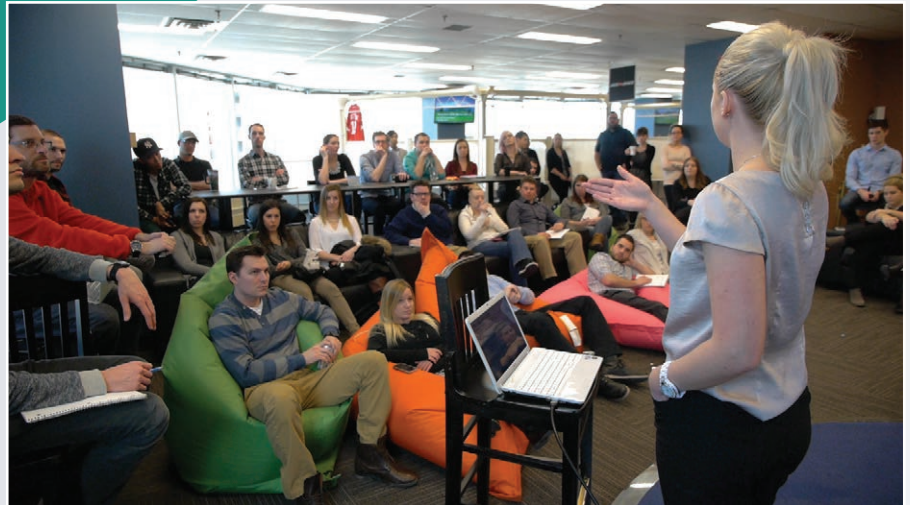
At its core, Voices.com’s business relies on identifying voice talent and matching it with prospective customers. But the skills needed to evaluate voice talent – basically the skills of a casting director – are specific skills that most of the growing company’s new hires have had little to no previous training on.

Because of its centrality to the company’s bottom line, voice talent evaluation training is a Training Tuesday session that is frequently offered. But it is far from the only training exercise that the company runs.

“Usually, during a 12-week period, we’ll loop through the same training session. This way, people know what training sessions are coming up and where they can learn that knowledge and become more seasoned employees,” said Kaitlyn Annaert, the company’s human resources manager.

GROWING THROUGH CONTINUOUS LEARNING

In one popular recent training day session, employees were taught how to improve their LinkedIn profiles, including what company information they should or shouldn’t post on the popular professional networking website. Other well-received



A sales-related Training Tuesday session

sessions include training on what is and isn’t appropriate to post about the company on Twitter, Facebook and other social media platforms.

Training Tuesdays are also used to train staff on a wide assortment of skills and company and regulatory policies: from how to master different elements of Salesforce, the company’s customer relationship management (CRM) system, to how to make the most of the Voices.com employee benefit packages, to lessons on how staff can more productively adhere to internal processes and procedures.

“Sometimes things can be swept under the rug if they’re not practiced all the time,” said Annaert. “We try to reiterate what’s important so that everyone can stay sharp.”

Training sessions take place in Time Square, a large, open concept meeting space in a prominent area in the office, replete with couches, beanbag chairs and a TV screen for slide presentations. The casual setting ensures that everyone can feel comfortable and relaxed as they take in the information.

Invites for each session generally go out on the company’s CRM a day in advance, giving each employee a chance to do some

reading on the session’s topic and then decide whether or not to sign up.

INFORMATION IS POWERFUL

Using Salesforce, the company’s HR department can track which employees are attending what sessions, who’s getting the training they need and who, perhaps, is not. If it’s determined that someone is struggling in a particular area, HR can quickly check whether or not that person has attended the related training session and use that information to determine whether or not to make it mandatory that the person attend the training session the next time it is offered.

“The training sessions really help with quarterly performance reviews. We’ll look at what areas each employee has been trying to improve and putting effort into, and from there you get a sense for who really wants to expand their knowledge base,” said Annaert.

Employee buy-in for Training Tuesdays is reflected in high attendance rates at the weekly sessions as well as the positive feedback the weekly training sessions receive in Voices.com’s annual employee satisfaction survey.



A Voices.com Training Tuesday session

Annaert says that the principal reason the program is so popular among staff is because it is responsive to their needs.

“We’re using their input and bringing back popular training sessions based on their requests. Also, to keep the sessions interesting and relevant to staff, one of the nice things we do is we will occasionally bring in outside speakers. Maybe an industry professional can speak at a higher level about a certain topic,” said Annaert.

By occasionally enlisting the help of outside experts for their training sessions,

Voices.com is able to keep them vital, offering its staff an opportunity to take fresh perspectives on a variety of topics pertinent to their day-to-day work lives.

THE TRAINING TUESDAYS MODEL

Annaert says that another company looking to adopt a similar training program should start by first undertaking a needs analysis to determine both what topics employees want training on and what topics will best help the company.

For Voices.com, the survey process didn’t stop there. The company regularly surveys its employees and their feedback is used to help determine what topics are covered in training.

Though each training session is open to every employee in the company, Annaert says that employees most often attend and get the most out of training sessions that are closely aligned with their particular roles.

“Even though it’s nice to learn about a new process that another department is involved in, we find that people will enjoy and participate more often in the training sessions that are more geared towards what they do on a daily basis. So, if it’s sales-related training, there will be more sales people there and taking more away from it because it more directly impacts their work,” she said.

The fact that the weekly training exercises offer Voices.com office workers a productive opportunity to get away from their desk and shift their focus for 30 minutes or so each week also doesn’t hurt their appeal, says Annaert. ■

Photos courtesy of Voices.com

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Care Package

HOW ARE CANADIAN COMPANIES SUPPORTING CAREGIVERS AT WORK?

By Sarah B. Hood

The acclaimed film *Still Alice* won Julianne Moore an Oscar for her portrayal of a woman battling early-onset Alzheimer's disease. It clearly illustrates how one family member's illness has a ripple effect of consequences for the working life of all the others, and in doing so pinpoints an increasingly critical workplace reality.

An estimated 35 per cent of working Canadians are also caregivers; The Conference Board of Canada estimates that the annual cost of lost productivity due to workers' long-term caregiving responsibilities is \$1.3 billion, not counting

those who take time off to look after a child with the flu or a spouse with a broken ankle.

"Many are still seeing this as low-profile, but we see absenteeism, job loss and people having to take early retirement. And we see people under a lot of stress," said Dr. Donna Lero, a professor at the University of Guelph's Centre for Families, Work & Well-Being, during an expert panel discussion on the topic in January 2015. "There is evidence that flexible work arrangements can have a significant impact on absenteeism. [But] even those employers who have good policies and practices

on the books sometimes see that employees do not take them up [for fear of job loss]."

In 2014, the Government of Canada launched its Employer Panel for Caregivers to identify and share best practices for supporting working caregivers. It received feedback from 114 employers representing 18 industry sectors. The panel's January 2015 report, *When Work and Caregiving Collide: How Employers Can Support Their Employees Who Are Caregivers*, reveals that flexible hours and technology are the tools most often used to assist caregivers to continue



FLEXIBLE HOURS AND TECHNOLOGY ARE THE TOOLS MOST OFTEN USED TO ASSIST CAREGIVERS TO CONTINUE WORKING WHILE ALSO MANAGING THEIR CAREGIVING RESPONSIBILITIES.

working while also managing their caregiving responsibilities.

Marcella Daye, a senior policy analyst with the Canadian Human Rights Commission, says that human rights legislation prohibits discrimination on the grounds of family status, which has been interpreted to include “normal duties and caregiving obligations that flow from our family status.”

“Most employees actually manage their caregiving and their work obligations without their employer even knowing that there is an issue,” said Daye. When difficulties do arise, “if an employee [would not normally be] allowed to take off time and make it up later, switch shifts or forego pay, human rights law is saying that in certain cases there will be a legal obligation to go further and seek out that flexibility.”

She suggests re-examining benefits, leave policies and collective agreements to include a broad definition of family.

“As much you can, build inclusivity into your leave,” she said.

Dr. Jack Watters, vice president, External Medical Affairs at Pfizer Inc.,

says his company has many programs, including backup family childcare that employees can access when they’re needed to care for an adult. Pfizer has also spearheaded ReACT (for “Respect a Caregiver’s Time”), a coalition of over 30 companies and non-profit organizations. ReACT seeks to open up the conversation about caregiving challenges to support workers while reducing the impact on employers.

“The only way we will be able to serve our caregivers in the workplace is by talking about it,” said Watters.

“It’s all about attracting and retaining top talent,” said Stephen Shea, managing partner, Talent at Ernst & Young, which already offers employees numerous flexible work arrangements. “Looking at the way you schedule shifts is far cheaper in the long run than replacing employees constantly.”

Flexibility appears to be key in a caregiving situation.

“A flexible workplace is probably the most powerful tool,” said Caterina Sander, vice president of Habanero Consulting Group. The firm empowers its workers to

have as much control over every aspect of their jobs as possible, thereby fostering a strong commitment to the work.

Sander encourages companies to employ technology that enables people to be plugged in and communicate when they’re forced to miss work.

Dr. Joel Sadavoy is Pencer chair and head of geriatric psychiatry at Mount Sinai Hospital’s Reitman Centre for Alzheimer’s Support and Training, which has spearheaded the Working CARERS Program, delivered nationally through EAP provider Ceridian.

The program takes an innovative approach by actually training caregivers how to change their own behaviour in order to minimize stress; it also has a research arm.

“Working caregivers are often invisible in the workplace; they might not identify themselves, and the cost is high if they don’t,” he said. “We have to engage the employee; we think the way to do this is at the manager level, but a lot of managers may need [training]. We also have to demonstrate cost-effectiveness.”

BMO is one of the employers participating in Working CARERS.

“We had standing room only in some of our introductory sessions,” said Natalie Scott, BMO’s managing director, Global Benefits & Recognition. BMO is advocating on the issue with other employers. “We’re applying a bit of peer pressure, being able to say, ‘What are you doing in the area of caregivers?’”

The caregiving discussion is going to continue well into the future, so companies should be constantly searching for best practices and how to navigate difficult situations.

“This is *the* issue of our next 10 to 20 years,” said Daye. “I think we’re up to it, but we need to move quickly to find solutions and implement them to the best of our Canadian ability.” ■

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The New Culture Wars

BECOMING IRRESISTIBLE THROUGH YEAR-ROUND ENGAGEMENT

By Josh Bersin



As the economy continues to improve and the labour market tightens, it is becoming clear that the war for talent is over, and talent has won. The burning question in employers' minds is how they can stop their employees from leaving to seek other opportunities.

There was a time when HR could simply offer more vacation days and retention bonuses to keep people around, but today, employees are looking for much more. They are not just looking for more money or a career; they are looking for an experience.

Conventional wisdom has long stated that to retain an employee, you must engage that individual. But how can you tell who's really engaged? Employees who appear highly engaged on paper may be the first out the door when a better opportunity comes along. So,

how do you achieve true engagement – leading to increased productivity, increased trust and, therefore, increased loyalty? This is the primary issue facing HR and business leaders today, according to Deloitte's Global Human Capital Trends 2015 report.

One of the reasons engagement is such a challenge is because organizations tend to not look at engagement through the right lens. Today, it's no longer enough to show your employees how much you want them. True engagement happens not when employees know that you value them, but when they find passion, fulfillment and constant growth opportunities in their current work environment. Simply put, true engagement happens when employees find the organization for which they work "irresistible."

talent management

AN IRRESISTIBLE COMPANY CULTIVATES A CULTURE WHERE YOU DON'T HAVE TO MAKE A SERIES OF SMALL, CONSCIOUS EFFORTS TO ENGAGE YOUR EMPLOYEES – BECAUSE EVERYTHING YOU DO ALREADY DRAWS THEM INTO YOUR MISSION AND VALUES.

IT ALL STARTS WITH CULTURE

Culture can be defined by the embedded behaviours and systems that govern what happens when management isn't around. It's the undercurrent that influences not only what decisions are made, but how your company approaches its mission, operates day-to-day and treats its employees. An irresistible company cultivates a culture where you don't have to make a series of small, conscious efforts to engage your employees – because everything you do already draws them into your mission and values.

Establishing this culture isn't easy, but it's worth it. It takes a fundamental shift in the way your entire organization approaches everything, starting with the day-to-day functions that impact your people most directly – their jobs, their managers and their work environment.

BRINGING MEANING AND FLEXIBILITY TO WORK

Today's employees want meaningful work; they're looking for experiences that matter. They want to believe in what they do. They want leaders who inspire confidence, exude a clear vision and encourage a culture of engagement from the top down. They want an environment in which they are empowered to approach their jobs

with flexibility and autonomy, where they have the freedom to assign the right person to the right job and the ability to put their own stamp on the outcome.

People want to think and be challenged, but they also want the freedom to solve those challenges in whatever way they choose. This is especially true of millennials, where two-thirds want the freedom to be creative in their jobs. Being given this flexibility to execute your task in furtherance of a larger objective is essential to finding meaning in your work. An irresistible company increases engagement across all levels by allowing this mission-driven autonomy to permeate throughout the entire organization – not just in the C-suite.

Once people understand your company's mission, you need good managers to work with employees to determine how they can best contribute to that mission. Whether through facilitating a job transition to a role that better suits, or enabling learning opportunities that promote higher skill levels, managers need the flexibility to utilize their people in a way that adds value to the organization and inspires their best work.

FOSTERING RECOGNITION VS. RATING

Unfortunately, most companies approach employee reviews through a performance management process that can hurt employee morale and performance. Today, only 10 per cent of companies believe their performance management process is an effective use of anyone's time, and 35 per cent believe the process actually drives no value at all, according to Deloitte's report. The good news is that many companies are acknowledging the problem and taking steps: over 50 per cent of companies surveyed as part of the Global Human Capital Trends 2015 report indicate that they are updating their performance review process in the coming year.

How do we develop a performance management process that engages employees and improves performance? By focusing on coaching and development, rather than evaluation, and providing a continuous feedback loop to both managers and employees. Modern performance management processes allow employees to grow and thrive, rather than feel trapped inside a rigid structure that ignores their individual needs. After all, people want to be recognized for their efforts. We've seen over and over again that companies that have a culture of recognition experience a marked increase in their retention rates compared to those that don't.

In their quest to create an irresistible employee brand, HR professionals must rethink their approach to employee engagement. Developing new tools to make your company irresistible starts with fundamentally shifting the way you think about your people. This shift must happen not only in how you manage them or how you empower them, but also in how you view them – as partners in your business, not just as employees. ■

Josh Bersin founded Bersin in 2001 to provide research and advisory services focused on corporate learning, and is responsible for Bersin by Deloitte's long-term strategy and market eminence.

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Western Business Bias

CHALLENGES FOR WESTERN LEADERS IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD

By Gurnek Bains

A gap exists with respect to the psychological mindset between western cultures and emerging market cultures, and yet the western business model has generally been the default setting for global business. As the world's business landscape becomes increasingly globalized, western leaders may need to assess their cultural biases to become more attractive and welcoming of emerging markets.

At one level, most western multinational businesses would feel they've been successfully operating on a global scale for years. Yet, if you scratch the surface, the new multipolar world is creating new challenges and asking deeper questions of global corporations and their leaders.

As a rapidly growing number of organizations from emerging markets are becoming leaders in business growth, western-based companies will need to question some of their cultural assumptions and look at what they can learn from other cultures. The issue for western leaders is whether the skills that made them successful as a leader within the western world will also lead to success abroad, particularly in emerging markets. Furthermore, western leaders will need to be aware of their own weaknesses, which they need to manage as they step onto the new global stage.

ANALYTICAL VS. FLEXIBLE

The analytical, process-oriented, organized and structured approach that is the default setting of many western multinationals has given western societies an edge over others in past. However, this thinking style may increasingly prove to be too slow-moving, inflexible and cumbersome in a dynamic and fast-moving world, where the unpredictable currents of change require a more intuitive, emergent and flexible set of responses.

In fact, in an assessment of close to 1,500 senior executives in seven world regions, flexible, open-minded and inclusive thinking is a challenge for many western leaders. African, Indian and Latin American leaders tend to display a particularly high tolerance towards difference.

COMMERCIALITY VS. HARMONY

Western leaders out-score emerging market leaders in terms of commercial thinking. Western leaders also tend to be more analytical, particularistic and reductionist in their approach. They get to the point quickly in business, which allows them to make fast decisions when necessary. However, this approach runs the risk of neglecting the human aspect of business. When placed within an emerging market business context, western leaders may face problems, as non-western cultures are more inclined towards holistic, synthetic thinking and for both seeing and wanting to achieve interconnectedness and harmony between different elements.

**THE FUTURE BELONGS TO THOSE WITH
THE VISION TO SEE BEYOND THEIR
DOMINANT NATIONAL CULTURES.**

culture

RESPONSIBILITY AND RULE FOLLOWING

One of the key strengths of emerging markets lies in their execution. Emerging market leaders tend to do what they are supposed to do and stick to procedural rules and guidelines.

This can be explained by different styles of upbringing. In India, for example, students are taught to memorize and recapitulate rather than question and interrogate. In western cultures, by comparison, there is a much stronger emphasis on critical thinking. Although critical thinking is a virtue, it can create issues when westerners are working with cultures that have a more ritualistic mindset.

Due to this mindset and the fact that they are used to being told what to do, employees from emerging markets are less likely to take initiative than their western counterparts. A challenge for western leaders will be recognizing the need for direction in these cultures and to encourage those employees to show initiative.

WHAT CAN WESTERN LEADERS LEARN FROM OTHER CULTURES?

The future belongs to those with the vision to see beyond their dominant national cultures.

For example, western people can learn how to strive for balance and harmony, as is critical in the Chinese culture. Western

businesses operating in China that do not develop genuine respect and empathy for its people and culture will always just be “tolerated outsiders.”

Energy, joy, the ability to live in the moment and a strong sense of community are key elements of Africa’s DNA that western leaders need to be aware of, especially considering the unprecedented growth Africa is experiencing.

Western executives can also learn from Latin America’s visionary, emotionally compelling leadership style, which engages their followers’ hearts and minds.

India’s intuitive thinking style and inherent instincts around diversity represent themes that western leaders can and should build upon if they wish to maintain a competitive advantage in today’s globalized economy.

Leaders nowadays must be culturally aware of the global market and take time to learn practices and traditions outside of the western landscape. Understanding and integrating cultural practices from across the globe are key to success on a global scale. ■

Gurnek Bains is founder and chairman of YSC and has worked for over 25 years with senior leaders around the world.

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Report Abuse

LIABILITIES SURROUNDING CYBER-BULLYING IN THE WORKPLACE

By Melanie Warner

When talking about cyber-bullying, there is an immediate link to the young, mainly because of high-profile and tragic stories, such as those of Rehteah Parsons and Amanda Todd. Both instances lead to heartbreaking consequences, leaving Canadians with a deep reminder of the ramifications associated with cyber-bullying. However, cyber-bullying isn't an issue solely related to teens; it's seeping into our workplaces.

A Pew Research Centre study from October 2014 states that 40 per cent of adult Internet users have personally experienced on-line harassment, ranging from name-calling and embarrassment to physical threats, stalking and sexual harassment.

A spike in the number of arbitration cases dealing with instances of cyber-bullying is pointing towards the problem spilling over into the workplace. For example, in *Canada Post and CUPE*, a 2012 decision, a postal clerk was dismissed for just cause for Facebook posts containing offensive, vulgar and threatening material primarily directed at her work supervisors. The expectation is

we'll see more of such cases and direction from arbitrators as this issue becomes increasingly prevalent and publicized.

LEGAL ENFORCEMENT

Amended in 2010, the *Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA) states that employers have an obligation to prevent and address violence and harassment in the workplace, including cyber-bullying regardless of where and when it occurs. Many employers can feel reluctant to speak to employees about the darker side of human behaviour, however it's important they have violence and harassment policies, programs and training in place to avoid penalties. Failure to comply with the OHSA includes, for individuals, a fine of up to \$25,000 and/or imprisonment of up to 12 months and a fine of up to \$500,000 for corporations.

Consequences are not only limited to OHSA penalties – employers can also be sued for negligence and/or failure to maintain a safe workplace and may also face human rights complaints if there is failure to address violence or harassment directed at a person

WHAT SOMEONE MIGHT DISMISS AS A WORKPLACE PRANK MIGHT ULTIMATELY RESULT IN RECEIVING A CRIMINAL RECORD AND EVEN TIME IN PRISON.





because of their race, religion, sex, sexual orientation or any other prohibited ground under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

It's important for both employers and employees to be aware of and understand that there are Criminal Code provisions that can be used to penalize online bullies, as well. These amended provisions (embodied in Bill C-13, Protecting Canadians from Online Crime Act), which criminalize cyber-bullying, came into force in March 2015 and specifically prohibit the non-consensual publication/distribution of intimate images online. What someone might dismiss as a workplace prank might ultimately result in receiving a criminal record and even time in prison.

In one example of a criminal record being imposed, in October 2014 the Ontario Court of Appeal convicted a man of criminal mischief and criminal harassment after he posed as his

ex-girlfriend and separately as a colleague online and made degrading comments about them. He pleaded guilty and was sentenced to five months in prison, a suspended sentence and two years of probation for the criminal mischief conviction, and two years of probation for the criminal harassment conviction.

PREVENTING CYBER-BULLYING

Labour and employment lawyers are often asked about the extent to which employees can expect privacy with respect to their online conduct inside and outside of work. The short answer is that employees should never assume they have an absolute right of privacy in such communications. The Internet can no longer be considered a private medium, particularly as online communications impact the workplace and, importantly, workplace relationships.

This message has yet to percolate down to many employees and, with potentially criminal consequences, there is a clear and present need for employers to temper any employee expectations of privacy. Employers need clear and communicated policies emphasizing that personal use of work IT equipment should be kept to a minimum; elaborating the employer's right to monitor suspicious activity; and informing employees that they can and will be disciplined for improper online conduct that has a "nexus" to work.

Employers should explain how employees can address concerns about improper online conduct and be clear about the potentially criminal consequences of inappropriate online conduct. It's critical for employers to draw up policies that prohibit any disparaging, harassing and threatening comments directed at the employer, colleagues, clients/customers, suppliers and competitors, and that prohibit the disclosure of confidential/sensitive company or personal information about coworkers.

Additionally, employees should be encouraged to voice their concerns, and instructed to never reply to messages or posts from cyber-bullies and make copies of all messages or posts, including pictures.

With much of our lives existing online, it should be understood that the manifestations of our online selves are no longer private, nor do we represent just ourselves. Employers need to communicate this to their employees and communicate clear-cut policies surrounding conduct in an online environment. Such policies will not only prevent workplace cyber-bullying, but will help promote a safer workplace. ■

Melanie Warner is a partner at Borden Ladner Gervais LLP.

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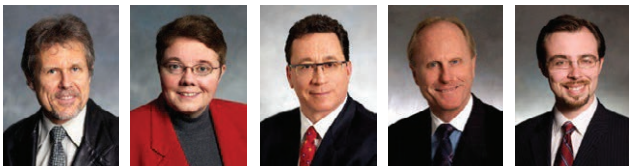
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HR Career Paths: Christine Stewart

INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY SPECIALIST

By Lisa Kopochinski



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Christine Stewart originally planned a career in education, but after graduating from the University of Toronto with a bachelor's degree, a position within the HR department during a summer internship at PricewaterhouseCoopers derailed her plans.

As manager of human capital information and technology for PwC, she has been with the firm in the Toronto office for 20 years.

"I started with PwC as a student working summers out of high school and through university," said Stewart, who grew up in Scarborough. "I was lucky enough to be exposed to all areas of the business. During one of my assignments I had the opportunity to spend time in our HR department and after graduation was asked to return for a six-month contract. From that point on, my career goals changed. I returned to school so I could complete my education in human resources and, ultimately, my CHRL designation."

She says that her very first position in human resources was in a generalist role supporting several HR directors. After a short time she was approached to take on a role on the technology side – an area where the firm was looking to expand. From that point on, she was hooked.

"In this role, I was responsible for system support, user training and business process documentation," she said. "The fast-paced dynamic environment was exciting. And since this role was fairly new and unique at the time, it afforded me the opportunity to

COMPANIES ARE MAKING THE INVESTMENTS IN TECHNOLOGY BECAUSE THEY ARE SEEING THE BENEFITS. A CAREER IN HR INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY CAN OPEN THE DOOR TO MANY OPPORTUNITIES.

tailor the role to the needs of the business. My role expanded from there as we implemented and supported more HR systems from recruitment to performance management and everything in between."

HR Professional recently sat down with Stewart to chat about her current position as manager of human capital information and technology, and what keeps her motivated.

You've been in your current position for seven years. How did this come to be?

Christine Stewart: I was already working in a technology role and had participated in a number of projects and initiatives including system implementations, business process improvements, compensation



analysis and metrics/reporting planning. The role of human capital operations manager was a perfect fit for me and the next step in my career.

What do you like most about your job?

CS: I have the opportunity to work with a variety of people from all areas of the firm – external vendors, and both internal and external consulting teams. I've learned so much over the years from these people while developing a solid network of expertise. I definitely enjoy the variety of work I am exposed to. There are always opportunities in my role to participate in project-based work, strategic planning and process improvements.

career paths

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

CS: There is no typical day, which is what keeps me motivated and continuously learning. I spend a considerable amount of time consulting to the business ensuring that systems and information are meeting their needs as well as developing strategies to streamline and automate business processes and the movement of information between systems.

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

CS: As with any role, there are always challenges finding resources with the perfect balance of human resources and technology skills. However, the landscape of HR systems is changing rapidly. With the introduction of Software as a Service (SAAS) models, the power and control over systems reside with the users and no longer solely within an IT department.

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

CS: It definitely is an asset to have analytical problem-solving abilities, a curiosity for learning and a passion for customer service. My team is responsible for user support for a number of HR systems. Issues are typically escalated to us after all other avenues have been exhausted. Having these skills allows us to understand the issue and develop workable solutions.

What are your ultimate career goals?

CS: I definitely see myself staying in this area. Recently, I had the opportunity to participate in a major implementation to replace our HRMS and payroll systems. Our new model is changing not only how we work in HR, but also our overall technology strategy and how we leverage information and resources. There are so many more opportunities ahead to expand how we are leveraging technology in HR.

What advice do you have for others interested in pursuing an HR career specializing in information and technology?

CS: I have seen the landscape of HR technology change over the years. Companies are making the investments in technology because they are seeing the benefits. A career in HR information and technology can open the door to many opportunities. No longer is technology a secret world locked behind a server room door. The power to access information, make business decisions and drive initiatives resides in the hands of the user. Those who choose a career in HR technology will be seen as a leader and business partner in their company.

Away from your job, what do you like to do?

CS: I am the mother of two busy teenagers so in my spare time I spend as much time as I can with my family. Both my children are involved in volunteer work and we've tried to make that a family activity to spend time together and help our community at the same time. ■

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WORKPLACE CULTURE CARRIER

By Lisa Gordon

These days, it's rare to stay with the same company for 25 years. But Christine Discola has never grown tired of working at the Canadian branch of Citigroup Inc., the global banking and financial services organization where her human resources career was founded and has flourished ever since.

Today, Discola is director and country human resources officer for Citigroup Canada, responsible for leading the HR function for Citi's 3,000 Canadian employees and all of the organization's business lines.

HR Professional sat down with Discola to discuss the evolution of her career, a few of the challenges she's experienced along the way and the importance of defining a personal brand.

When did you decide you wanted a career in human resources?

Christine Discola: When I started at Citi, HR was not initially on my radar screen. I was studying economics and sociology at the University of Toronto, and labour relations intrigued me a lot. I started working in customer service at Citi supporting our Investor Finance Group while I was still at school, and I remember admiring the individuals working in HR and became interested in learning more. I applied for a job as a compensation analyst but didn't get it; however, I must have made a positive impression because they did call me again. I haven't looked back!

What was your first HR job?

CD: My first job in HR was an HR assistant role at the front desk. I interacted with staff; it provided me with great exposure to the business. We were revamping a number of policies at the time, and I had the opportunity to start from the building blocks. It was a great starting point for me.

IN A NUTSHELL

First job: When I was 15, I worked at Second Cup – and I remain to this day a French vanilla Second Cup fan! That was when you didn't have the barista title and coffee houses weren't as sophisticated as they are today.

Childhood ambition: I remember coming to downtown Toronto with my parents. I'd look up at the towers and I'd say, "One day, I'm going to be in the corner office of the top floor of the tallest building in Toronto." I had no idea what that meant at the time, but I always used to "play office," and the notion of being at a corporate desk, with paper all around, somehow appealed to me. So, today, I'm on the second-highest floor in a corner office – it may not be the tallest building in Toronto, but I'll take it!

Best boss and why: I've been lucky to have great bosses; I've learned from all of them. I really appreciate a boss who has trust and openness, but is not afraid to challenge me with new assignments and new ideas.

Current source of inspiration: My current, past and future inspiration will always be my family – I am inspired and work to inspire my two amazing kids. Beyond that, it's my own team. I feel a huge sense of loyalty to them. Every day, I want to make this the best place to work for them.

Best piece of advice you ever got: That's an easy one. I will never forget it. It came at a pivotal time in my career, when my mentor had left Citi and I was to assume her role. I felt I could never fill her shoes. A senior Citi leader I really respected just looked at me and said, "Jump right in." Translation: be fearless, believe in yourself and you can do it!

Favourite music: My kids would be horrified by this, but I love R&B and I love dancing to it. My dad really likes classical music, and plays his favourite classics on the piano, and I also like to relax to that.

Last book you read: *I am Malala* by Christina Lamb and Malala Yousafzai. It's something I've since given to my son and my daughter to read. I found it so extremely powerful. It wasn't only about how one child can change the world, but it was also about her family and everything they went through to see their daughter suffer and heal, and the eventual pride they felt.

How you spend your time away from work: I love entertaining and cooking, so I always have family and friends over. There isn't one free weekend! I also love to play tennis.

Tell me about your current job. What are your main areas of responsibility?

CD: I'm privileged to be the country human resources officer for Citi in Canada. I have direct accountability over the organizational capability of most of our employees, although we have a separate HR team for our CitiFinancial division, with whom we work closely. We administer all HR programs and our talent and leadership management agenda, partnering with the CEO and leadership team to execute on the business strategy. We are a department of 22 people, based in Toronto.

What do you love about your job?

CD: First, leading my team is something I absolutely love about my job. As my team has grown over the years, I've loved my job more. They are the reason for my success;

I love building and executing strategies with them! We've gone through some significant periods of change over the last few years, and as an HR team we've remained focused on what we need to do. We are culture carriers – we're aware of that. Second, I just love this organization, otherwise I wouldn't have stayed here for 25 years. The time has truly flown by, and I think that's a reflection of how dynamic this place is. It's a fast-paced organization that suits my personality just fine. It's been a great ride for me here.

What are the challenges you experience in your job?

CD: The business environment has changed over the past five or six years, and that means the talent environment changes as well. There are regulatory and competitive pressures today – global

economic pressures. It's a terrific opportunity to reinvent ourselves and really deliver on organizational capability. We are singularly focused on defining our client and product set. There is also the challenge of engagement and retention. That's a reflection of the evolution of the talent profile, and the different set of expectations presented by the next generation. They are pushing boundaries and challenging our conventional ways of thinking. We need to redefine our employee value proposition and how it relates to our brand.

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

CD: What I've tried to do with my team is focus on our common purpose – keeping business priorities front and centre, but ensuring we're caring for our employees. We've had some very intentional sessions

KNOW YOUR STRENGTHS AND WHERE YOU CAN ADD VALUE AS AN INDIVIDUAL. IT'S IMPORTANT TO TAKE TIME AND DO AN INVENTORY OF WHAT YOU LIKE TO DO, AND WHERE YOUR STRENGTHS ARE.



Sergii Karolko / Shutterstock.com

on defining our common purpose so that we can be completely aligned as a team. We also have to demonstrate resiliency, adaptability and flexibility, as well as continue to evolve our skills and expertise. Resilience has been a key theme for me, personally, and I share that with my team.

What skills are important for success in HR?

CD: In a lot of ways, it depends on the organization in which you work. But, there is a core set of skills. The first thing is business acumen. You can't support a business if you don't understand its drivers. The next thing is influencing skills – they are so critical. You need a strong internal and external network, and through that you win trust and buy-in when you need to. Coaching and consulting skills are important. As HR continues to evolve, the importance of these grows – they help our organizations to identify and resolve issues that are important to them. And, finally, I'd say one of the most important skills HR needs to have is excellent communications skills – in particular, writing skills. Writing skills are so tremendously important; a great deal of the persuasion and influence we rely on is through presentations, business cases, emails and other written words, especially in a global organization. Be succinct, be clear and be impactful!

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

CD: The number one thing is to be focused on cultivating your personal brand.

Know your strengths and where you can add value as an individual. It's important to take time and do an inventory of what you like to do, and where your strengths are. Build your brand and continue to hone it. It is so critical at any stage of your career. Also, be open to possibilities. There are so many paths you can take.

What's the future of HR?

CD: I've been reading so much about culture lately; it's something I think organizations need to continue to focus on, especially in the competitive environment we are in. Culture drives performance, engagement and business

results. Organizations need to pay attention to the work environments they are creating. It has to be a focused effort, and it can't happen without making sure everyone is moving in the same direction.

Second, digitization. We're seeing it now with how businesses interact with their clients and it will impact how HR interacts with its clients – the leaders and employees of an organization. Over time, that technology will get more sophisticated, as we are seeing today. HR will continually evolve; we'll have to change how we do things and refocus on other strategic areas, like analytics. ■

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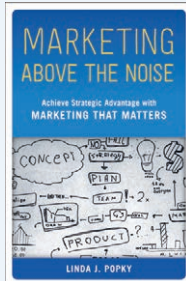


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OFF THE SHELF

By Alyson Nyiri, CHRL



MARKETING ABOVE THE NOISE: ACHIEVE STRATEGIC ADVANTAGE WITH MARKETING THAT MATTERS

By Linda Popky
Bibliomotion, 2015

Marketing and HR share many similarities. Both are focused on conversations, content and communities. Via the Internet, both disciplines can have real conversations with real people but as Popky points out, this is only the beginning. Marketing and HR need to provide content to these conversations and must show up in the communities where the audiences are gathering online and off.

In the language of marketing, the key is to engage in conversations – find a topic of interest, ask a question and then *listen* to the response.

Talking point

While Popky's book is primarily for those charged with marketing, what HR will find interesting is how the strategies used to engage customers could be used to engage employees.



THE STAY INTERVIEW: A MANAGER'S GUIDE TO KEEPING THE BEST AND THE BRIGHTEST

By Richard Finnegan
AMACOM, 2015

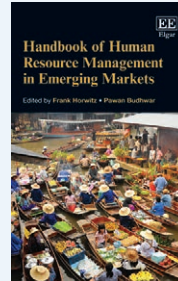
Written for front line managers, *The Stay Interview* provides a step-by-step process for managers to conduct meetings with employees.

Stay interviews are private, individual meetings with each employee, meant to reinforce good relationships, forge new ones and help repair those that are strained.

The interview is not intended to craft development plans. It reveals what is important to employees and how their desires can be satisfied. They are focused on making employees' work lives more rewarding and comfortable.

Talking point

The Stay Interview questions: When you come to work each day, what things do you look forward to? What are you learning here? Why do you stay here? When was the last time you thought about leaving our team? What prompted it? What can I do to make your experience at work better for you?



HANDBOOK OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN EMERGING MARKETS

Edited by Frank Horwitz and Pawan Budhwar
Edward Elgar, 2015

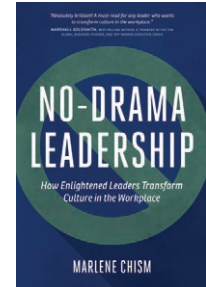
Emerging markets account for more than 50 per cent of global economic output and in 10 years their equity market capitalization is expected to reach US\$80 trillion, 1.2 times more than the developed world.

In western countries, diversity management practices have been focused on change in organizations. Typical practices include flexible work, work-life balance, diversity awareness training, etc.

For emerging markets, the focus is on linking economic development, nation building and the resolution of inequalities at the societal level.

Talking point

The labour mobility policies of the EU allow workers from these transitional markets into the more mature Western European markets, draining their home markets. How should Western markets respond to this influx of workers?



NO-DRAMA LEADERSHIP: HOW ENLIGHTENED LEADERS TRANSFORM CULTURE IN THE WORKPLACE

By Marlene Chism
Bibliomotion, 2015

No-Drama Leadership introduces a new model for leadership. First is the change in language: the drama perspective is about seeing obstacles and the enlightened perspective is about seeing opportunities. Second, considering all employees across the organization as leaders creates an identity transformation needed in organizations. *No-Drama Leadership* builds a culture of enlightened leaders who are aware, aligned and accountable.

Chism uses these three values to demonstrate how enlightened leaders can navigate through change, enhance communication across the organization and execute course corrections.

Talking point

Chism quotes Peter Drucker, who predicted that when we write of our time in a few hundred years, the most important event those historians will see is not technology or the Internet, but of a change in the human condition. Because of so many choices, people have to manage themselves. ■

From Procrastination to Motivation

THREE INCREDIBLY SIMPLE HACKS

By Matthew Pollard

Procrastination can be an incredibly destructive thing: first, you simply decide to check Facebook or take a coffee break before getting to work on a project, and somehow before you know it, the due date has arrived and you've accomplished almost nothing. It can be a tricky thing to tackle; often, one can't quite pinpoint why they are not doing the work they should be doing, apart from this feeling of dread bubbling up within them. However, by applying a few straightforward strategies, a person can turn their procrastination on its head and harness more motivation than they ever thought possible.

1. UNDERSTANDING WHY ONE PROCRASTINATES

This seems deceptively simple, but it is a key part of banishing procrastination forever. People procrastinate for myriad reasons – some are afraid of failure; conversely, others are afraid of success, and the added responsibility and scrutiny that might come with it. Some may not understand the task and may be afraid to ask for help, they may simply dislike the task itself or they may have so many tasks to complete that they may not know where to start. Finally, some people plan poorly, or feel almost paralyzed trying to begin a task they don't believe they will be able to complete to perfection.

Once someone understands why they procrastinate, they can more easily identify where their hesitation is rooted and overcome it rationally. For example, a person who fears failure can intellectually understand that procrastinating on a project will only contribute to the realization of that fear, and that will help spur them to get to work.

2. PLANNING AHEAD

No matter what the reason for one's procrastination, planning ahead is a surefire way to increase motivation and, in turn, productivity. One can do this by creating a "to-do" list at the end of every workday for the next one, starting with any meetings or previous commitments for that day. Then, add any uncompleted tasks from the current day, as well as what they would like to accomplish the next day.

It is important to create a list the evening before for several reasons: it ensures you won't forget any early meetings or calls, allows for ample time to remember anything that may have been forgotten and allows you to subconsciously begin working on the next day's tough problems. Finally, the person who writes their "to-do" list the previous evening walks into every workday feeling prepared and confident, rather than anxious and easily distracted.

3. PINPOINT THE BEST BEST WORKING TIMES

People are unique, and part of this individuality is that they do their best work at different times than others would. Some people can easily identify this within themselves, while others may need to employ trial and error to discover whether they work best in the early morning, late at night or somewhere in between.

Pinpointing one's best working time allows a person to plan their day strategically: for example, scheduling writing tasks during the afternoon if they know that is when they tend to be most productive. On the other hand, if a person is best at working in the morning when they are fresh, they should start their day with more challenging tasks than checking their inbox.

Turning procrastination into motivation is as simple as managing your thinking. Employing these simple yet effective mind hacks can ensure one tackles that "to-do" list promptly, and with ease. ■

Matthew Pollard is an entrepreneur, published author, international speaker, coach and consultant.



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